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Comprehensive review of special political missions

Overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/83](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report regarding the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions, including efforts towards improving expertise and effectiveness, transparency, accountability, geographical representation, gender perspective and the equal participation of women, as well as youth participation. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to include in the report information on the impact of the reforms on the implementation of the mandate of special political missions. The report, which is the tenth submitted to the Assembly on this item, covers the period from August 2021 to July 2022.

* [A/77/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [76/83](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions, including efforts towards improving expertise and effectiveness, transparency, accountability, geographical representation, gender perspective and the equal participation of women, as well as youth participation.

2. Special political missions play a vital role in the maintenance of international peace and security by contributing to the prevention and resolution of violent conflict and to peacebuilding in some of the world's most complex contexts. Special political missions undertake a wide spectrum of critical functions, from engaging in preventive diplomacy and supporting the implementation of peace agreements to assisting Member States in the promotion of human rights and enhancing the meaningful participation of women, as well as advancing the engagement of youth and other marginalized constituencies in political and peace processes. They also play a vital role in strengthening the partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations which represent a central pillar of the Organization's work in peace and security. Across all of these areas, special political missions cooperate closely with United Nations development, human rights and humanitarian entities in implementing integrated and effective responses.

3. The breadth of the work carried out by special political missions has expanded, as Member States continue to turn to those missions to address complex and evolving challenges in a deteriorating peace and security landscape. The United Nations special envoys and advisers are directly supporting peace processes, bringing conflict parties to the negotiation table and working to end violence. The effort by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen to broker a nationwide truce and promote an inclusive political process to end the conflict is a case in point.

4. The United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, as well as the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region, are working with national and regional actors to address emerging crises early on, before they escalate and become more costly for all concerned, and to support regional solutions to cross-cutting peace and security threats such as terrorism and violent extremism, transnational organized crime, piracy and maritime insecurity.

5. Country-based missions, for example, in Libya, Somalia and the Sudan, are supporting political transitions and working with national authorities in areas including electoral assistance, human rights, the rule of law, constitutional reform, reconciliation, countering hate speech and disinformation and addressing climate-related security risks. Moreover, sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels play an important role in supporting the implementation of Security Council sanction measures.

6. In the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [75/1](#) of 21 September 2020, Member States agreed that today's interconnected challenges could be addressed only through reinvigorated multilateralism and called for the diplomatic toolbox of the Charter of the United Nations to be used to its full potential, including preventive diplomacy and mediation. Special political missions are a vital component of this diplomatic toolbox, designed and deployed to advance the pacific settlement of disputes as foreseen under Chapter VI of the Charter. As such, they are essential to the vision of a stronger, more networked and inclusive multilateral system

which the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982), submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, seeks to further.

II. Key operational developments

Africa

7. Through an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General (and the President of the Security Council (S/2021/719 and S/2021/720), the mandate of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) was renewed for a three-year period until 31 August 2024. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA continued to carry out good offices in the subregion. Office personnel conducted visits to countries preparing for elections, such as the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. He also visited Chad on several occasions in the context of the unfolding political transition. UNOCA served as secretariat of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which provided a framework for confidence-building as well as conflict prevention and resolution for the States of the subregion.

8. The Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region supported the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. The tenth summit of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework was held in Kinshasa on 24 February 2022. The summit’s deliberations were focused on strengthening good neighbourly relations and enhancing cooperation to address the threat posed by foreign armed groups in the region. The Office accelerated the implementation of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region and its action plan for 2021–2023.

9. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa discharged good offices and was actively engaged in preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention efforts in the region. The Office of the Special Envoy collaborated with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and other partners in supporting mediation processes and enhancing subregional capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting issues, including promotion of the women, peace and security agenda. The Office supported the mediation efforts of the High Representative for the Horn of Africa Region, appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, by providing logistic, technical and political support. In addition, the Special Envoy regularly travelled to Khartoum and Juba to meet with stakeholders regarding outstanding issues related to Abyei and subsequently briefed the Security Council on the latest developments in this area.

10. On 8 October 2021 in Geneva, with the support of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the 5+5 Joint Military Commission adopted an action plan for a gradual, balanced and sequenced process of withdrawal of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces from Libyan territory. The plan specifically references the role of the UNSMIL ceasefire monitoring component in supporting its implementation. On 10 October, the first team of United Nations monitors was deployed to Tripoli. Following the departure of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Libya on 10 December 2021, the Secretary-General appointed Stephanie Williams as his Special Adviser on Libya to lead good offices and mediation efforts. The Special Adviser, with the support of UNSMIL, facilitated three rounds of consultations of the joint committee composed of members of the House of Representatives and the High State Council towards agreement on a constitutional

framework for elections. The leaders of the House of Representatives and the High State Council subsequently held a high-level meeting on the Libyan constitutional track under United Nations auspices in Geneva on 28 and 29 June 2022 at which they reviewed the outstanding provisions of the 2017 Libyan draft constitution.

11. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) supported the Government of Somalia in conducting the indirect electoral process, which culminated in the election of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as the tenth President of Somalia on 15 May 2022. Advocating for women's participation in the electoral process to ensure increased political representation, the Assistance Mission supported efforts to implement a 30 per cent quota for women in parliament. The Assistance Mission provided good offices assistance to the federal Government of Somalia and federal member States towards the implementation of the electoral agreement. UNSOM supported Somalia in advancing national priorities such as strengthening of the rule of law and security institutions and provided technical support to the federal Government of Somalia with respect to protection and promotion of human rights.

12. The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) supported the transition of the Sudan by providing assistance in peacebuilding, human rights, the rule of law and civilian protection. The Transition Assistance Mission also supported the peace process, including the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, focusing on support to security arrangements notably through operationalizing and chairing the Permanent Ceasefire Committee for Darfur. UNITAMS coordinated resource mobilization and debt relief, including by convening the core group of the Friends of the Sudan. After the military coup of 25 October 2021, UNITAMS prioritized its good offices mandate and collaborated with the African Union and IGAD as part of a trilateral mechanism to facilitate an inclusive political process with a view to assisting the Sudanese parties in fostering a new political agreement, restoring constitutional order and achieving the country's transition.

13. The United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) advanced preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention in the region in close cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and supported the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. UNOWAS also worked with member States in the region to promote good governance, the rule of law, human rights and the participation of women and youth in political and peace processes. The Office facilitated consultations and consensus-building among political actors in the lead-up to national elections and remained engaged in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali, countries currently in transition. It also focused on analysing the impact of climate change on peace and security in the subregion. The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, facilitated the implementation of the judgment of 10 October 2002 of the International Court of Justice on the land and maritime boundary dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria.

The Americas

14. The Security Council, pursuant to its resolution [2603 \(2021\)](#), extended the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia until 31 October 2022. The mission continued to verify and advance three key aspects of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Government of Colombia and the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army, namely, the political and socioeconomic reintegration of former combatants; security guarantees for women and other vulnerable communities, social leaders, human rights defenders and former combatants; and the implementation of the restorative sentences to be issued by the Special Jurisdiction

for Peace. The Verification Mission supported strengthening the sustainability of initiatives to reintegrate former combatants and advocated for preventing and addressing violence against former combatants and community leaders. With a view to building confidence in the transitional justice process that had made considerable gains during the period, the Verification Mission strengthened its engagement with the Special Jurisdiction, victims and national and local authorities as the issuance of restorative sentences drew nearer. The Verification Mission and the United Nations country team provided support for the work of the Truth Commission of Colombia which published its landmark final report on 28 June 2022.

15. In Haiti, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) conducted good offices to create political space for dialogue, provide strategic and advisory support to police development and promote and protect human rights. BINUH together with the United Nations country team operated in an increasingly challenging context after the assassination of the President of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, in July 2021. The security situation has been marked by escalating gang violence, killings, sexual and gender-based violence and kidnappings committed by armed gangs. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2600 \(2021\)](#), the Secretary-General conveyed the findings of an independent assessment of the mandate of BINUH in a letter to the Council dated 29 April 2022 ([S/2022/369](#)). The assessment concluded that a special political mission remained the most appropriate and effective structure for addressing the core challenges in Haiti across the political, security, rule of law, humanitarian and development fronts.

16. Subsequently, in its resolution [2645 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of BINUH until 15 July 2023. In the same resolution, the Council requested the Secretary-General to consult with the Government of Haiti, relevant Member States and regional organizations regarding options for enhanced security support for the national police effort to combat high levels of gang violence and to report to the Council on those consultations by 15 October 2022. The Council encouraged Member States and other entities to contribute to the Basket Fund for security assistance to Haiti and encouraged the Office to play a coordination role with regard to external security assistance. Also in resolution [2645 \(2022\)](#), the Council requested BINUH to work with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant United Nations entities to support Haitian authorities in combating illicit financial flows as well as the trafficking and diversion of arms and enhancing the management and control of borders and ports.

Asia and the Pacific

17. In the wake of the Taliban's takeover in August 2021, the Security Council, in its resolution [2626 \(2022\)](#), extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) until 17 March 2023. In the same resolution, the Council decided that the Assistance Mission should focus on coordinating the provision of humanitarian assistance and the delivery of basic human needs, providing outreach and good offices for dialogue between Afghan stakeholders and the international community, promoting good governance and the rule of law, promoting human rights, supporting and promoting gender equality and monitoring, reporting and advocating with regard to the situation of civilians. UNAMA engaged with the de facto authorities to advocate for unimpeded humanitarian access, the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, the formation of an inclusive administration reflecting the diversity of the Afghan people and resolute actions to counter the threat of terrorism. Focus was also placed on advocating for the right of girls to education and the right of women to work and enjoy equal participation in society.

18. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar engaged with the international community and key regional stakeholders to create conditions conducive to the safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees. The Special Envoy continued to focus on accountability for serious crimes committed in Myanmar, including against the Rohingya and other minorities. Since the military takeover of February 2021, the conflict in Myanmar has intensified and contributed to the internal displacement of more than 1 million people. The Special Envoy engaged with key stakeholders to advance a Myanmar-led process in line with the needs and will of the people and supported by a coordinated international strategy grounded in regional unity. The Special Envoy cooperated closely with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and worked in a complementary manner with the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar to support the implementation of the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus, including through addressing the significant humanitarian needs, cross-border impacts and regional implications of the Myanmar crisis. The Special Envoy also engaged the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union and other key stakeholders to advance these objectives. Through regular engagement with the Security Council and the General Assembly, the Special Envoy advocated for a coherent international response in addressing the multifaceted needs of the people of Myanmar.

Europe and Central Asia

19. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) provided good offices and supported regional cooperation to address challenges such as violent extremism and terrorism, climate change and transboundary water management and the situation in Afghanistan and advance the empowerment of women and youth. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia participated in the third annual consultative meeting of the leaders of the five Central Asian States hosted by the President of Turkmenistan on 6 August 2021. She conveyed the firm support of the United Nations for the positive dynamics of regional cooperation, highlighting progress towards addressing common challenges.

20. The Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus maintained its active engagement with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to facilitate discussions that could create conditions for the resumption of formal negotiations. Until the completion of her assignment in the early part of the fourth quarter of 2021, a United Nations senior official pursued consultations with the leaders of the two communities and their representatives, among others. On 27 September 2021, the Secretary-General hosted an informal lunch with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders in New York to discuss the state of play in an effort to reach common ground. While sufficient common ground to allow for resumed settlement talks has not yet been found, constructive efforts to revitalize the work of the joint technical committees, undertaken under the auspices of the Deputy Special Adviser, have led to multiple agreements on issues affecting the daily lives of Cypriots, thus building trust between both sides. Upon the request of the Security Council, the two leaders agreed on a joint action plan on ways to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation in the settlement process/an eventual settlement process in Cyprus, officially launched in their joint presence in April 2022.

21. The Office of the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions worked closely with the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and supported the Geneva International Discussions on security and stability as well as the return of internally displaced persons and refugees. The Co-Chairs (the European Union, OSCE and the Geneva International Discussions) engaged with all participants to encourage constructive

dialogue and progress on core agenda issues. Despite the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Discussions resumed their regular schedule with four in-person rounds held in 2021. The planned two rounds for the first half of 2022 were postponed upon the request of the parties. The Co-Chairs continued their consultations with the participants on the timing and modalities of the next round.

Middle East

22. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2576 \(2021\)](#), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) provided enhanced electoral assistance to the 10 October 2021 parliamentary elections, including through the deployment of 150 United Nations international electoral experts and approximately 550 national support personnel to all governorates. Coordinating with the United Nations Development Programme, UNAMI implemented a project focused on capacity-building for the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq and the provision of direct technical support in the preparation of the elections in Iraq. UNAMI launched a strategic communications campaign to support the Commission's efforts to inform and update voters on election preparations and relevant activities of the United Nations.

23. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) worked with Lebanese stakeholders and international partners to preserve the country's stability despite the multifaceted crisis. UNSCOL, together with the United Nations Development Programme, worked closely with Lebanese electoral stakeholders to support the parliamentary elections on 15 May 2022. The Special Coordinator advocated for making necessary preparations for polling day, such as promoting the effective participation of women, youth and people with disabilities. She called for the prompt designation of a new prime minister and swift government formation; and for the timely organization of the presidential elections by October 2022. The Special Coordinator urged Lebanese political leaders to deliver on urgently needed reforms to alleviate the socioeconomic hardship of the Lebanese people and enable the country's recovery. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs continued to fulfil reporting functions on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#).

24. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) worked with the parties as well as regional and international partners to defuse tensions, encourage improvements on the ground and support advancement of a just, comprehensive two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Advocating for renewed high-level engagement between Israeli and Palestinian officials, the Special Coordinator worked intensively with all stakeholders to solidify the cessation of hostilities that had ended the May 2021 escalation between Israel and militant groups in the Gaza Strip and to prevent the mounting tensions in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, from turning into another widespread outbreak of hostilities. The Office of the Special Coordinator engaged with the parties to improve the delivery of humanitarian and development support to the population of Gaza. The Special Coordinator made concerted efforts to improve the fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority, engaging with the parties, donors and other partners to formulate sustainable solutions that advance a two-State reality.

25. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria worked on promoting common ground among stakeholders in support of a United Nations-facilitated political solution to the Syrian conflict which would meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people pursuant to Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#). Particular effort was focused on building trust and confidence, including by facilitating sessions of the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned Constitutional Committee in line with the mandate of the Office of the Special Envoy and terms of reference, consulting with key stakeholders and encouraging a more constructive international diplomacy,

calling for the release of detainees and abductees and of information on missing persons, advocating for unhindered humanitarian access and increased humanitarian assistance and continuing to appeal for a nationwide ceasefire.

26. In April 2022, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen brokered a nationwide truce between the Houthi movement (which also calls itself Ansar Allah) and the Government of Yemen for an initial two-month period, which was subsequently extended twice for additional two-month periods until October. Since then, there have been neither Houthi attacks in neighbouring countries nor Coalition air strikes in Yemen, which marks the longest period without air strikes since 2015. The extension of the truce provided an opportunity for the Special Envoy to build on his previous consultations in March and May 2022 with a range of Yemeni stakeholders, with the aim of launching an inclusive, multitrack political process to end the conflict.

27. The United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) assisted the parties in implementing the Agreement with a particular focus on engaging with them to support liaison and de-escalation activities. On 13 July 2022, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2643 \(2022\)](#), in which the Council renewed the mandate of UNMHA for one year through 14 July 2023. In that resolution, the Council also called on the parties to support the work of UNMHA and demanded an end to hindrances to the movement of UNMHA personnel.

Work of sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels, and other entities and mechanisms

28. In its resolution [2644 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council decided to extend the authorizations and measures in respect of attempts to illicitly export petroleum from Libya until 30 October 2023 and to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Libya until 15 November 2023. The Secretary-General submitted a report dated 28 April 2022 ([S/2022/360](#)) to the Council pursuant to its resolution [2578 \(2021\)](#), related to the authorizations for inspection, on the high seas off the coast of Libya, of vessels bound to or from Libya to ensure the strict implementation of the arms embargo. By its resolution [2635 \(2022\)](#) of 3 June 2022, the Council extended the authorization for a further 12 months and requested the Secretary-General to report on the resolution's implementation 6 months and 11 months after its adoption.

29. In its resolution [2641 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1 August 2023.

30. In a letter dated 14 June 2022 addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2022/489](#)), the Secretary-General provided an assessment of the progress achieved by the authorities of the Central African Republic on the key benchmarks for the reform of the security sector, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the management of weapons and ammunition, as established in the statement by the President of the Council dated 9 April 2019 ([S/PRST/2019/3](#)). In accordance with Council resolution [2588 \(2021\)](#), he had made the assessment in close consultation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, the Mine Action Service and the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic.

31. In its resolution [2633 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan until 1 July 2023. The Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council dated 3 May 2022 ([S/2022/370](#)) in which he assessed progress achieved on the key benchmarks of the South Sudan arms embargo, established in paragraph 2 of Council resolution [2577 \(2021\)](#). In accordance with this resolution, the Secretary-General conducted the assessment in close consultation with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the Panel of Experts on South Sudan.

32. In its resolution [2627 \(2022\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea until 30 April 2023. Through its resolution [2624 \(2022\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen until 28 March 2023. In its resolution [2622 \(2022\)](#), the Council extended until 30 November 2022 the mandate of the group of experts which provides Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction. Through its resolution [2620 \(2022\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan until 12 March 2023.

33. The Security Council extended, through resolution [2611 \(2021\)](#), the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pertaining to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#) until 17 December 2022. In its resolution [2610 \(2021\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pertaining to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities until 17 June 2024. Through this resolution, the Council also extended the mandate of the Office of the Ombudsperson established by the Council in its resolution [1904 \(2009\)](#) until 17 June 2024. In a letter dated 28 January 2022, the Secretary-General informed the President of the Council that he had appointed Richard Malanjum (Malaysia) to serve as Ombudsperson.

34. Through its resolution [2607 \(2021\)](#), the Security Council renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia until 15 December 2022. Through its resolution [2590 \(2021\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Mali until 30 September 2022.

III. Interactive dialogue with Member States

35. In its resolution [76/83](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to hold a regular, inclusive and interactive dialogue on the overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions and requested the Secretariat to reach out to Member States prior to the holding of that dialogue to ensure wide and meaningful participation.

36. Following consultations with the co-facilitators of the General Assembly resolution and the Bureau of the Fourth Committee, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the Secretariat organized the ninth annual interactive dialogue on special political missions on 3 June 2022. The interactive dialogue focused on activities undertaken by special political missions to further strengthen their cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations.

37. In her remarks, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs highlighted the deteriorating peace and security environment, characterized by regionalized, fragmented and intractable conflicts. She pointed to a number of risks, such as soaring prices of energy and food, the climate emergency, technological disruption, the persisting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and growing inequalities, which could further destabilize countries and regions, including many hosting special political missions. She stressed that renewed geostrategic competition at the global level had hindered international cooperation, adding that the interconnected nature of many global challenges could be addressed only through a reinvigorated multilateralism. She recalled that the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Our Common Agenda" had put forward a vision for an inclusive and networked multilateralism underpinned by stronger partnerships with regional organizations, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. In this

regard, she recalled that special political missions leveraged their partnerships with regional and subregional organizations to achieve the shared goal of preventing conflicts and defusing crises. She noted that support for political processes and peacemaking had been an area of increasing cooperation between the United Nations and its regional partners. In addition, the Peacebuilding Commission brought together a wide range of stakeholders, in particular regional organizations, to address peacebuilding needs at the national and regional levels.

38. The Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support highlighted the growing complexities in operating environments as well as global challenges to supply chain operations. He underscored the need for complementarity and cooperation with regional partners to maximize impact and achieve the scale and effectiveness needed to deliver results and stressed that his department remained fully committed to fostering collaboration with regional and subregional organizations. The Under-Secretary-General highlighted his department's continued engagement with the African Union to enhance interoperability and the strength of cooperation through mutual capacity-building and knowledge exchange and provided a briefing on ongoing cooperation with other regional organizations. He expressed appreciation for Member States' support in medical evacuations of United Nations and other personnel from countries hosting special political missions.

39. During the subsequent exchange, Member States commended the key role played by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and special political missions in maintaining international peace and security despite evolving conflicts and violence. Multiple speakers, including from Member States hosting special political missions, highlighted the contributions of those missions to conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Echoing the analysis in the report of the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda, they welcomed the work of special political missions in building more synergies with regional and subregional organizations. Implementing the women, peace and security agenda and the youth, peace and security agenda was referred to as critical for sustaining peace.

40. Member States encouraged special political missions to continue to strengthen the meaningful participation of women in peace processes, incorporate climate change in conflict analysis and peacemaking activities and utilize relevant technologies to enhance their effectiveness in implementing mandates. Member States also stressed the centrality of the Charter and the need for special political missions to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States while implementing their mandates. They recalled that mandates of special political missions should be focused on addressing the root causes of conflicts. Multiple Member States stressed that special political missions must be equipped with the necessary tools and adequate funding to deliver on their mandates.

IV. Key policy issues pertaining to special political missions

United Nations Transitions and Integration

41. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2594 \(2021\)](#), the first thematic resolution on transitions in United Nations peace operations, the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Security Council dated 29 June 2022 on such transitions ([S/2022/522](#)). The report provided updates on the status of ongoing and recent transitions across relevant peacekeeping operations, special political missions and United Nations system partners, including current and former special political missions operating in Guinea-Bissau, Haiti and the Sudan. The report identified trends and lessons learned across the strategic reconfigurations of the United Nations presence in support of host Governments and local partners. The report emphasized

that national leadership and ownership were critical to successful transitions and that transition planning should be closely aligned with national development strategies and should be focused on early engagement with national stakeholders, particularly to strengthen the capacity of national institutions in activities supported by the mission.

42. Previous experience also demonstrates a positive correlation between the level of United Nations integration and the seamlessness of transitions. Enhancing strategic coherence between missions and United Nations country teams by putting in place modalities for joined-up delivery where needed is therefore an important means of supporting mission transitions. In this regard, building on the recommendations of the Review of United Nations Integration, the Secretary-General is advancing this agenda through his Integration Steering Group and is working to offer incentives and accountability mechanisms for integration and improve coordinated strategic planning.

43. In Guinea-Bissau, the incorporation of the peacebuilding priorities identified by the then United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and validated by the Government of Guinea-Bissau into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework was critical to ensuring a seamless continuation of former mission functions by the resident coordinator and the United Nations country team. UNOWAS played an important role in the process by providing good offices and support to political engagement. In the Sudan, UNITAMS incorporated knowledge gathered by the then African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in the implementation of the State liaison functions into the design of the Sudan peacemaking, peacebuilding and stabilization programme, a joint programmatic framework articulating priorities of the United Nations in the Sudan which support the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS.

44. The experience of recent and ongoing United Nations mission transitions has provided ample evidence of the need for adequate time for planning and resourcing of transitions, as well as the need to consider implications for the post-mandate period. These lessons can help ensure that hard-won gains are safeguarded beyond mission withdrawal.

Promoting a regional approach to peace and security issues

45. Cooperation with regional and subregional organizations is central to the work of the United Nations in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. In this regard, special political missions, especially those with regional mandates, have been at the forefront of efforts to forge closer partnerships with regional and subregional organizations across a wide spectrum of peace and security issues.

46. The United Nations Office to the African Union remained steadfast in pursuit of the objectives of the strategic partnership with the African Union. The Office facilitated the annual joint consultative meeting and joint informal seminar between the African Union Peace and Security Council and members of the Security Council in December 2021, as well as the monthly informal consultations held between the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council and the President of the Security Council to explore avenues for strengthening information sharing and coordination. The Office also facilitated strategic meetings between the Secretariat and the African Union Commission, at the level of under-secretaries-general and the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, which provided opportunities for common appreciation of complex peace and security challenges and charting the way forward, such as through working with regional economic communities on region-specific conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives.

47. In Central Africa, UNOCA and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) held regular meetings to discuss key issues pertaining to regional peace and stability, including the effects of climate change on peace and security. The Office also provided specific programmatic support to the ECCAS Commission. UNOCA worked closely with UNOWAS on cross-regional issues such as the crisis in the Lake Chad basin and maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. In February 2022, the meeting of the heads of United Nations presences in Central Africa, chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, adopted a regional conflict prevention Great Lakes framework.

48. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region continued to deploy his good offices to promote dialogue and strengthen trust and good neighbourly relations between countries in the region. In response to the crisis that ensued following the resurgence of the Mouvement du 23 mars, he conducted shuttle diplomacy among all stakeholders to help reduce tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. The Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region also supported the political track of the Nairobi process facilitated by Kenya under the Conclave of Heads of State on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including organizing consultations between the country's authorities and local armed groups. In complement to these efforts, the Office supported the activities of the Operational Cell of the Contact and Coordination Group on non-military measures towards the full neutralization of foreign armed groups.

49. The Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa coordinated the implementation of the comprehensive regional prevention strategy for the Horn of Africa, providing political leadership to United Nations engagement in the region and ensuring joined-up action and information exchange within the United Nations system. In this regard, the Office regularly engaged with resident coordinators, special political missions and peacekeeping operations in the region to ensure a more coordinated approach. With regard to cross-border initiatives, the Office chaired a task force established in June 2022, which included the resident coordinator offices in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, to consider options for initiating common projects in the Mandera triangle within the framework of conflict prevention.

50. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel attended the summits of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS and participated in joint initiatives on the situations in Burkina Faso and Guinea following the coups d'état in those countries. In addition, UNOWAS organized desk-to-desk discussions with ECOWAS to share analyses and ensure coordinated responses to political and security developments in the region. The Office advocated for national buy-in and international support for regional frameworks for addressing insecurity, notably the G5 Sahel, the Accra Initiative and the Yaoundé maritime security architecture. UNOWAS convened stakeholders and supported regional conversations and platforms centring on women and youth participation in political and peace processes. The Office and its partners held regional conferences on addressing the security implications of climate change, such as farmer-herder conflicts, and the human rights implications of military transitions.

51. Central Asian States continued to rely on the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia as an effective platform for support for their multilateral efforts aimed at enhancing regional cooperation on a range of issues. The Regional Centre, in partnership with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, assisted in developing an updated Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, which was endorsed by the five Central Asian States in March 2022. The Centre convened a meeting of deputy

foreign ministers of the Central Asian States in Dushanbe in December 2021 for the exchange of information on the latest developments and trends affecting peace and security in the region and a discussion on cooperation between the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Governments of Central Asia in addressing existing and emerging challenges through preventive diplomacy tools.

Women, peace and security agenda

52. Special political missions continue to promote women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and political processes and support gender-sensitive peacemaking and peacebuilding. The report of the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda and his Call to Action for Human Rights pointed to the need for all United Nations entities, including special political missions, to renew their commitment to placing women and girls at the centre of their work.

53. In line with Security Council resolution [2493 \(2019\)](#), special political missions designed and implemented strategies for inclusive peace processes. Building on initial high-level strategy meetings in Yemen in 2020, at the Geneva International Discussions and in Afghanistan, in 2021 the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs held follow-up discussions to support inclusive peace processes in Yemen and the Geneva International Discussions. In 2022, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs held high-level strategy meetings on the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

54. In the Sudan, UNITAMS adopted a multi-pronged strategy to encourage a gender-responsive political process. This helped secure a women's participation rate of 30 per cent of those participating in the January–February 2022 consultation and resulted in the formation of an inclusive women's rights group for participation on an equal footing and advising on the next phase of political talks with a view to bringing women's perspectives to all agenda items under discussion.

55. UNAMI supported several initiatives aimed at increasing women's capacities to run as candidates. These included developing analysis on the needs and challenges of Iraqi women entering politics, conducting a digital dialogue prior to parliamentary elections, providing support for targeted measures to increase women's representation and developing a code of conduct to address gender-based violence targeting women candidates. This contributed to a historic proportion of women elected to the Council of Representatives of almost 30 per cent.

56. UNOCA promoted initiatives on the political participation of women in collaboration with the resident coordinator offices in Angola, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. It established partnerships with women's civil society organizations, women parliamentarians and political party leagues with a view to strengthening the political participation of women, providing training to women candidates and advocating for the full application of parity and quota laws in the current electoral cycles in those countries.

Youth, peace and security agenda

57. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), special political missions have advanced the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda in close collaboration with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, Member States, regional organizations and civil society. The mandates of 11 special political missions reference youth and peace and security or the engagement of young people and 15 special political missions currently have youth, peace and security focal points.

58. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2535 \(2020\)](#), the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), convened quarterly meetings of youth, peace and security focal points in special political missions and peacekeeping operations. Those quarterly meetings facilitated coordination with special political missions to implement Council resolutions [2535 \(2020\)](#), [2419 \(2018\)](#) and [2250 \(2015\)](#).

59. The Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region worked with other regional and national partners to implement the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region ([S/2020/1168](#)). Youth, peace and security is one of the 10 thematic priorities in the Strategy. In December 2021, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia held the third dialogue between the Governments of Central Asia and graduates of the Regional Centre Preventive Diplomacy Academy. Young graduates, representing all five countries, shared views and recommendations on issues related to preventive diplomacy.

60. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and special political missions harnessed technologies and innovation to expand the inclusion of young people in political and peace processes in different contexts. Large-scale digital dialogues in Libya and Yemen supported the work of special political missions to advance peace processes, particularly by allowing missions to reach out to youth constituencies which traditionally are not included in such discussions.

61. On 5 and 6 December 2021, UNSOM, UNFPA and their partners organized a workshop with 30 representatives of youth-led and civil society organizations to design a project on youth electoral participation and democratization. Through a series of forums in each federal member State in 2022, the project aimed at supporting dialogue and action to strengthen the role of young women and men in electoral processes at the subnational level.

Geographical distribution and gender representation

62. Under Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Promoting geographical diversity is not only a legal obligation under the Charter, but also a critical factor for the effectiveness and legitimacy of the United Nations as a universal organization. The Secretary-General remains committed to promoting a more diverse workforce.

63. As of 1 July 2022, the distribution of the 1,562 internationally recruited staff serving in field-based special political missions was as follows: 31.6 per cent from the Group of Western European and other States, 26.1 per cent from the African Group, 22.7 per cent from the Asia-Pacific Group, 12.2 per cent from the Eastern European Group and 6.5 per cent from the Latin American and Caribbean Group. Of the 1,970 locally recruited staff, 73.2 per cent were from the Asia-Pacific Group, 16.4 per cent from the African Group, 8.5 per cent from the Latin American and Caribbean Group, 0.7 per cent from the Group of Western European and other States and 0.2 per cent from the Eastern European Group.

64. The Secretary-General is equally committed to improving the representation of women throughout the Organization, including in field-based special political missions. As at 1 July 2022, 36.5 per cent of internationally recruited staff serving in those missions were women, a slight increase of 1.2 percentage points over the previous year. Among the locally recruited staff, 19.2 per cent were women, the proportion remaining unchanged compared with the previous year.

V. Observations

65. The activities and achievements of special political missions described in the present report highlight their contributions to advancing conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. These missions continue to demonstrate their ability to help Member States defuse crises and establish the basis for sustainable peace.

66. As the regional dimensions of conflict become more pronounced, solutions need to be found at the regional level. Special political missions will remain at the vanguard of our efforts to deepen partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and operationalize regional prevention.

67. A strong focus for these missions has been on working with Member States to advance the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and expand the inclusion of young people in political and peace processes. Going forward, special political missions will redouble efforts to harness innovation and technologies for outreach to women's groups and youth groups and give visibility and voice to women leaders, including in contexts of shrinking civic space.

68. As highlighted in my Call to Action for Human Rights, the promotion and protection of human rights remain indispensable in our efforts to build a more peaceful, just and equitable world. Special political missions will keep playing an important role in that regard. I remain committed to advancing the human rights agenda through the work of special political missions.

69. Special political missions are adapting to respond to the convergence of traditional and newer threats with the potential to affect international peace and security, such as climate change, and are integrating those risks into their political analysis as well as their conflict prevention and peacebuilding work.

70. My report on Our Common Agenda lays out a proposal for the development of a new Agenda for Peace designed to promote more effective collective security responses and a meaningful set of steps towards managing emerging risks. Prevention, the pacific settlement of disputes and peacebuilding – central aspects of the work of special political missions – are essential elements of a new Agenda for Peace. I look forward to engaging closely with Member States in this process.

71. Given the breadth and complexity of what special political missions are being asked to deliver, strong Member State support remains a critical ingredient for their effectiveness. I note, in this respect, the outstanding question of funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions.

72. In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to my special advisers, coordinators, envoys and representatives and to the dedicated and courageous United Nations staff and affiliated personnel serving in special political missions deployed across the world. They work, under often challenging circumstances which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, to put into practice the promise of the Charter of the United Nations. I deeply value and appreciate their work and commitment.

Annex**United Nations special political missions (as of 14 July 2022)****Special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General**

1. Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus
2. Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide
3. Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara
4. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1559 \(2004\)](#)
5. United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions
6. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria
7. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region
8. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
9. United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement
10. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar
11. Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa

Sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels, and other entities and mechanisms

12. Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo
13. Panel of Experts on the Sudan
14. Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
15. Panel of Experts on Libya
16. Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic
17. Panel of Experts on Yemen
18. Panel of Experts on South Sudan
19. Panel of Experts on Mali
20. Panel of Experts on Somalia
21. Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions [1526 \(2004\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities
22. Implementation of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)
23. Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction
24. Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
25. United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant

26. Office of the Ombudsperson to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

Regional offices, offices in support of political processes and other missions

27. Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
28. Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process¹
29. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
30. United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
31. United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
32. United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa
33. United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
34. United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
35. United Nations Office to the African Union²
36. United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission
37. United Nations Support Mission in Libya
38. United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia
39. United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti
40. United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan

¹ Funded from the regular budget but technically not part of the special political mission budgetary category.

² Funded partially from the regular budget but technically not part of the special political mission budgetary category.