

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 14 March 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission 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 the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of the United Kingdom in August 2018 (see annex).

The document was prepared by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, following consultations with other members of the Security Council, including the members during that month.

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

(Signed) Stephen Hickey



Annex to the letter dated 14 March 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission 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 (August 2018)

Introduction

During the month of August 2018, the Security Council held 23 public meetings and 11 consultations of the whole. It adopted four resolutions, four statements by the President and six press statements. Six representatives of civil society, including five women, briefed the Council. The signature events of the presidency of the United Kingdom included an open debate on mediation and a briefing on Myanmar.

In accordance with United Nations practice, the United Kingdom began its presidency with the presentation of the provisional programme of work of the Security Council for the month, which was adopted at the Council's consultations of the whole on 1 August.

Middle East

Syrian Arab Republic (chemical weapons)

The Security Council met for closed consultations on the Syrian Arab Republic (chemical weapons) on 2 August. Thomas Markram, Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, provided an update to the Council on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme and the recent reports of the fact-finding mission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Syrian Arab Republic (humanitarian)

The Security Council met for briefing and consultations on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic on 28 August. John Ging, Director of Operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, briefed the Council. Mr. Ging said that the humanitarian situation in the north-west of the country had deteriorated, with intense aerial bombardment and shelling reported in parts of Idlib, Aleppo, Hama and Ladhikiyah Governorates resulting in the death and injury of civilians and damage to and destruction of civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals. He added that the efforts by the Council to avoid any further escalation of violence and an ensuing humanitarian catastrophe are critical.

Mr. Ging added that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic had regained control over the vast majority of Dar'a, Qunaytirah and Suwayda' Governorates and noted that a large-scale return of internally displaced persons had already taken place there. However, massive humanitarian needs persisted and sustained and expanded access was critical. Mr. Ging highlighted the situation in Rukban on the border of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, where 45,000 people remained in a camp for internally displaced persons, in deteriorating living conditions. The need for the provision of humanitarian assistance in the camp was increasingly urgent. He emphasized that unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices, along with insecurity and resource shortfalls, continued to hinder the scaling-up of assistance to Raqqah city.

Mr. Ging informed the Security Council that the Emergency Relief Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was in Damascus to engage with the Syrian authorities on how to scale up further the collective humanitarian response throughout the Syrian Arab Republic.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

On 9 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Lebanon (SC/13451), in which it condemned an attack against UNIFIL near Majdal Zun in southern Lebanon. The statement underlined the need for a credible investigation and reiterated the Council's full support for UNIFIL.

The Security Council held closed consultations on UNIFIL on 15 August. This followed a meeting with troop-contributing countries on 9 August. Ms. Bintou Keita, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, briefed the Council on the security situation and provided an update on UNIFIL's activities and restructuring.

The Security Council adopted resolution [2433 \(2018\)](#) unanimously on 30 August. In the resolution, the Council renewed UNIFIL's mandate until 31 August 2019 and called on the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Council every four months on the implementation of resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). It also reaffirmed the necessity of an effective and durable deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon and the territorial waters of Lebanon and called on the Government of Lebanon to develop a plan to increase its naval capabilities.

Middle East

The Security Council held briefing and consultations on the situation in the Middle East on 22 August. The Under Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, briefed the Council. The Under Secretary-General said that the situation in Gaza had deteriorated since the Council met in July to discuss this issue. Violent exchanges had continued to escalate, as a result of which eight Palestinians had been killed and 56 Palestinians and 28 Israelis injured. The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, continued his efforts to prevent hostilities, respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs and support intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

Members of the Security Council expressed concern about the situation in Gaza. Many members of the Council expressed support for the role played by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and called for progress towards a long-term political solution to the conflict. Some Council members called for implementation of the arms embargo set out in Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#).

Middle East (Yemen)

On 2 August, Martin Griffiths, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and John Ging, Director of Operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, briefed the Security Council on developments in Yemen.

The Special Envoy expressed concern about the situation in Hodeidah and said that the time was long past for a resumption of the political process. He had invited the parties to the conflict to a first round of consultations in Geneva on 6 September. He called on the Security Council to support the Geneva consultations, his call for de-escalation in Hodeidah, and confidence-building measures between the parties. Mr. Ging said that after three years of conflict, 22 million Yemenis required international assistance and protection. The escalation of the conflict since June had

exacerbated the situation. He assessed that sustained hostilities in Hodeidah or interruptions to traffic through the port would be catastrophic.

Members of the Security Council expressed their support for the Special Envoy. Many welcomed the initiative to hold consultations in September, called on the parties to engage in good faith and stressed the need for a political solution of the conflict. There was wide concern among Council members at the humanitarian situation in the country. Some members expressed concern about civilian casualties resulting from an airstrike on 2 August. The Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations said that the Government would attend the consultations in Geneva.

The Security Council discussed the situation in Yemen again under “any other business” on 10 August. Following a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, the Council adopted press elements calling for a transparent and credible investigation into the 9 August air strike on a school bus in Sa’dah that resulted in large numbers of civilian casualties, including children.

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

The Security Council met for briefing and consultations on UNAMI on 8 August. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Philip Spoerri, Head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to the United Nations, and Suzan Araf Maroof, of the Women Empowerment Organization in Iraq, briefed the Council.

Mr. Kubiš briefed the Security Council on recent developments in Iraq. The manual recount of the elections was now complete: this had been an orderly, transparent and credible process. Political leaders should now accelerate the formation of an inclusive and non-sectarian government that was reform-minded and free from foreign interference. Confirmed results were likely at the end of August, with a new government in place by mid to late October. The United Nations country team was developing programmes to respond to underlying social, economic and developmental needs, following the recent protests across southern Iraq.

Mr. Spoerri highlighted the work of the Tripartite Commission on missing persons from the 1991 Gulf War. Despite the efforts of both parties, it was seven years since any remains had been found. The ICRC’s 2017 review project report should support progress. Ms. Araf Maroof briefed the Council on Iraq’s national action plan on women and peace and security. Sexual and gender-based violence in Iraq continued at an alarming rate and victims in liberated areas continued to suffer from social stigma.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the recent elections and highlighted the importance of international support for Iraq’s reconstruction and economic development. One Council member raised the issue of missing persons from the 1991 Gulf war, expressed support for the efforts of ICRC but called for more progress, including through the full implementation of the UNAMI mandate in this area. The Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations welcomed the adoption of resolution [2421 \(2018\)](#) which extended the mandate of UNAMI. He also welcomed the appointment of Mr. Karim Khan as Special Adviser to the Investigative Team to hold ISIL (Da’esh) accountable, which was established by resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#). He highlighted the importance of continuing counter-terrorism efforts, called for more international support for clearance of landmines and explosive remnants of war and set out the steps that the Government of Iraq had taken to promote reconstruction and economic development.

The Security Council continued its discussion of UNAMI in closed consultations. Following the meeting, the President briefed the press. On behalf of the Council, the President: reiterated the Council's support for UNAMI and the Special Representative; welcomed the completion of the elections and called on all Iraqi political entities to work together towards the formation of an inclusive, non-sectarian and pro-reform government; noted ongoing efforts to address water and electricity management in southern Iraq and the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service; expressed his appreciation of the role of UNAMI and ICRC in relation to missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals, and called on Iraq and Kuwait to intensify their efforts to reinvigorate the process; and expressed support for his Special Adviser Karim Khan and the establishment of his team.

Africa

Western Sahara

The Security Council met for closed consultations on Western Sahara on 8 August. Horst Kohler, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, briefed the Council on the latest developments in the political process.

Burundi

The Security Council held a briefing and consultations on Burundi on 9 August. Mr. Michel Kafando, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, briefed the Council. The Special Envoy welcomed President Nkurunziza's announcement that he would not run for re-election, the recent visits of high-level regional delegations to Burundi and the repatriation of some refugees. He supported the call of the mediator of the East African Community for a Community summit to provide support for the inter-Burundian dialogue and called on all parties to participate in the fifth session of the dialogue.

Most members of the Security Council welcomed President Nkurunziza's announcement, expressed support for maintaining the principles of the Arusha agreement and highlighted the importance of the dialogue led by the East African Community. Some members expressed concern about the lack of progress in the dialogue and the human rights situation and called for full cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Others noted that the situation in Burundi remained relatively calm. The Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations said that the situation in Burundi remained calm and stable and set out the steps the Government had taken to make progress on the political process. The Permanent Representative called for economic measures against Burundi to be lifted.

On 22 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Burundi (SC/13461), in which it acknowledged that the security situation in the country remained calm but reiterated the Council's concern over the political situation and the slow progress of the inter-Burundian dialogue. It welcomed the decision of President Nkurunziza not to seek another term in 2020 but noted that additional progress will be necessary for credible elections. The statement underlined the need to respect the spirit and letter of the Arusha agreement, raised concerns about the human rights situation and expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in Burundi and in Burundian refugee communities in neighbouring countries.

Peace consolidation in West Africa

On 10 August, the Security Council adopted a statement by the President of the Council ([S/PRST/2018/16](#)) on peace consolidation in West Africa. In the statement,

the Council took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel ([S/2018/649](#)) and the briefing on 17 July by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas. The Council also reiterated its full support for the Special Representative and the activities undertaken by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), noting the challenging security situation in the region and encouraging the consolidation of political reforms in the region to prevent violence and instability. The Council welcomed the efforts by countries in the region to address these security challenges, including through the Economic Community of West African States, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. The Council also welcomed United Nations efforts to recalibrate the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and called for greater coherence and coordination within the United Nations system, as well as with partners in the region.

Central African region

On 10 August, the Security Council adopted a statement by the President of the Council ([S/PRST/2018/17](#)) on the Central African region. In the statement, the Council expressed its deep concern about the security situation in the region, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa ([S/2018/521](#)), including its recommendation that the mandate of the Regional Office be extended to 31 August 2021. The Council also requested a strategic review regarding the scope of the mandate and activities of the Regional Office by 1 August 2019 and a written report on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the Regional Office by 30 November 2018 and every six months thereafter.

On 24 August, the Secretary-General, in a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2018/789](#)), submitted the draft mandate of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa for the period 2018–2021 and recommended that the mandate be extended to 31 August 2021. On 28 August the President of the Council wrote to the Secretary-General ([S/2018/790](#)), taking note of this recommendation and the information contained in the letter.

Central African Republic

On 24 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on an attack against the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (SC/13465). In the statement, the Council condemned, in the strongest terms, the attack by armed elements against a MINUSCA convoy in Pavika, Basse-Kotto prefecture, which killed one Burundian peacekeeper.

South Sudan

The Security Council met in closed consultations to discuss South Sudan on 10 August. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, briefed the Council on the increasing risk of famine as a result of ongoing conflict in South Sudan. Mr. Nicholas Haysom, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, briefed the Council on political developments.

Following the closed consultations, the President of the Security Council briefed the media. Speaking on behalf of the Council, the President expressed grave concern about the clear link between conflict and hunger, demanded safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need and welcomed the region's role in reaching a peace agreement. The President called for an inclusive political process and the immediate implementation of the Khartoum agreement and the ceasefire.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 13 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SC/13455), in which it welcomed the steps taken in the electoral process, including the registration of the candidates for the presidential and legislative elections, as well as the commitment of President Joseph Kabila to abide by the Congolese Constitution and the provisions of the political agreement of 31 December 2016. The Council highlighted the importance of establishing an environment conducive to the peaceful and inclusive conduct of political activities to ensure that the elections take place with the requisite conditions of transparency, credibility and inclusivity; reaffirmed its support for the implementation of the agreement of 31 December 2016 and its respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and called on the Government to ensure that any request to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for logistical and technical support during the elections was made on time.

The Security Council held a briefing on the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 27 August. Ms. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO, Monsignor Marcel Utembi, President of the Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ms. Solange Lwashiga Furaha, spokesperson for the non-governmental organization Rien Sans Les Femmes, briefed the Council.

Ms. Zerrougui briefed the Security Council on the electoral process, including President Kabila's decision not to put himself forward for re-election and the disqualification of several other candidates. She set out the progress that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had made in preparing for the election while highlighting a number of risks to the process, including the use of voting machines for the first time and the failure to publish the electoral register. She stressed that MONUSCO remained ready to provide logistical support, if requested to do so.

Monsignor Utembi welcomed the successful completion of candidate registration but expressed concerns about transparency and inclusivity. He called for swift publication of the register of voters, efforts to reach consensus on the issue of voting machines, complete implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016 and facilitation of the work of electoral observers. Ms. Furaha regretted the drop in registration of women candidates in 2018 and called for the implementation of Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), support for civil society and training for electoral observers.

Many members of the Security Council welcomed President Kabila's decision not to stand again but expressed concerns about progress in the election preparations, especially the use of voting machines and restrictions on political activity. Several members emphasized the importance of sticking to the electoral timetable and ensuring that a climate of trust, calm and inclusivity prevailed, highlighting the importance of implementing the agreement of 31 December 2016. A number of members noted the decision of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to manage its own logistics for the elections, but highlighted MONUSCO's ability to provide support in this area. The Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations reiterated the Government's commitment to the electoral timetable and informed the Council that the Government was planning an awareness campaign on voting machines and was working on the issue of the electoral register.

On 28 August, the Security Council, under “Other matters”, held closed consultations on the issue of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), briefed the Council on the latest outbreak, the risks of the spread of the disease and the United Nations response.

Following the closed consultations, the President of the Security Council briefed the press. On behalf of the Council, the President expressed concern regarding the latest outbreak and the risk of it spreading further, commended the efforts of the Government, WHO, MONUSCO and the international community to contain the outbreak, urged all parties to ensure secure access to the affected area for humanitarian and medical personnel and called for continued reporting on the issue.

Mali

On 24 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Mali (SC/13464), in which it welcomed the publication of the final results of the presidential elections in Mali and congratulated the people and Government of Mali for the generally peaceful conduct of the elections. The statement commended the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for his good offices throughout the electoral process. It called on all parties to deliver on their remaining obligations in the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and recalled the provisions of Council resolution [2423 \(2018\)](#), in which the Council encouraged the swift conclusion of a “Pact for Peace” between the Government of Mali and the United Nations.

The Security Council adopted resolution [2432 \(2018\)](#) unanimously on 30 August. The resolution renewed the Mali sanction measures set out in resolution [2374 \(2017\)](#) until 31 August 2019 and renewed the mandate of the Panel of experts. It requests the Panel of Experts to provide a midterm report to the Council no later than 28 February 2019 and a final report no later than 15 August 2019.

United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)

The Security Council met on 30 August for a briefing and consultations on Guinea-Bissau and UNIOGBIS. Mr. José Viegas Filho, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS, Anatolio Ndong Mba, Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#), Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, and Elisa Maria Tavares Pinto, spokesperson for the Women, Peace and Security Network of the Economic Community of West African States, briefed the Council.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the political and security situation had remained calm since his arrival in Guinea-Bissau. The key political challenge was preparing for the legislative elections due on 18 November. The Special Representative outlined his engagement with national stakeholders and regional actors in support of his mandate and called for the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement, including the establishment of a stability pact. Anatolio Ndong Mba briefed the Council on his visit to Guinea-Bissau from 25 to 29 June 2018 and informed the Council that he had recommended that the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2048 \(2012\)](#) should consider a timely revision of the sanctions list, taking into account the current circumstances in Guinea-Bissau.

Mauro Vieira briefed the Security Council on his visit to Guinea-Bissau from 24 to 27 July. He said that there had been tangible progress in the implementation of the Conakry Agreement and underlined the importance of holding the forthcoming elections on time. He called for closer cooperation between the Government of Guinea-Bissau and international partners to ensure that preparations for the elections are completed. Ms. Pinto, speaking on behalf of the Women, Peace and Security Network of the Economic Community of West African States, highlighted the role of women in promoting peace in Guinea-Bissau, including through the establishment of the National Women's Council in 2017 and their work to support the development of a stability pact. She also highlighted the contribution of women to the November elections and noted that the legislature had recently passed a gender parity bill to ensure a 36 per cent quota of women on the ballot.

Most members of the Security Council welcomed the positive recent political developments in Guinea-Bissau, underlined the importance of full implementation of the Conakry Agreement and stressed the significance of the November elections. Several members expressed their support for the role of the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, the European Union and the United Nations in Guinea-Bissau. A number of Council Members looked forward to receiving the strategic review of UNIOGBIS.

The Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, Aristides Gomes, briefed the Security Council on the political developments in his country. He expressed his gratitude for the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States to support the search for a consensual and lasting solution to the political crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The Prime Minister expressed his Government's commitment to dialogue and underlined the importance of inclusive elections and the development of a stability pact. He referred to the challenges that the collapse of State institutions presented in Guinea-Bissau and highlighted the need to reconsider the shape of the international presence in Guinea-Bissau after the elections. He called on international partners to fulfil their pledges of support for election preparations.

The Security Council continued discussion of these issues in closed consultations.

Europe

The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, briefed the Security Council on the situation in Georgia under "Other matters" on 8 August.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 3 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Afghanistan (SC/13444), in which it condemned, in the strongest terms, the terrorist attacks that targeted a medical centre for midwives and a Government building in Jalalabad as well as the Khawaja Hassan mosque in Gardez city, which resulted in at least 48 people killed and numerous wounded.

On 15 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Afghanistan (SC/13457), in which it condemned, in the strongest terms, the terrorist attack that took place in Kabul on 15 August targeting an education centre, which resulted in at least 48 people killed and numerous people wounded.

The Security Council held closed consultations on Afghanistan under “Other matters” on 22 August. The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Miroslav Jenča, briefed the Council on latest developments, focusing on the security situation and election preparations.

On 27 August, the Security Council issued a press statement on Afghanistan (SC/13467), in which the Council welcomed the announcement by the Government of Afghanistan of a second conditional ceasefire with the Taliban and urged the Taliban to reciprocate without delay. In the statement, the Council emphasized the importance of holding peaceful, inclusive, credible and transparent parliamentary elections on 20 October 2018 and the presidential election on 20 April 2019.

Myanmar

On 28 August, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations of the Government of the United Kingdom, chaired a Security Council briefing on Myanmar. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Tegegnetwork Gettu, Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Cate Blanchett, Goodwill Ambassador of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), briefed the Council.

The Secretary-General briefed the Council on the United Nations response to the crisis, including the appointment of a Special Envoy, and the work of UNDP and UNHCR to address the refugee crisis and prepare for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of the refugees to Myanmar. He urged the Myanmar authorities to cooperate with the United Nations and to ensure immediate, unimpeded and effective access for its agencies and partners. He commended the generosity of the Bangladeshi authorities and host communities and called on the international community to support the international humanitarian appeal. He noted the report issued by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar and called for accountability.

The Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of UNDP said that creating sustainable conditions for voluntary returns required comprehensive and durable solutions, including addressing the significant development challenges of all communities in Rakhine State. The United Nations had not yet been granted effective access to Rakhine State, which was an essential first step for the implementation of the memorandum of understanding between UNHCR, UNDP, the Government of Myanmar and the Government of Bangladesh. He highlighted the need for the Government of Myanmar to grant returnees freedom of movement and a pathway to citizenship. Ms. Blanchett drew attention to the fate of children born to Rohingya women who had been raped, and the stigma that these children faced. She called for more support for the humanitarian effort.

Most members of the Security Council called for implementation of the memorandum of understanding and the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and expressed concern at the slow pace of the response to the crisis by the Government of Myanmar. Many members referred to the report of the Fact-Finding Mission and several members argued for greater accountability. Other members emphasized the progress that had been made, including the signature of a bilateral repatriation agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar, the provision of humanitarian assistance and the establishment of domestic accountability mechanisms.

The Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations highlighted the terrorist threat posed by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. He called for repatriation to start quickly and said that Myanmar was working with the United

Nations and Bangladesh in good faith. The Permanent Representative of Bangladesh underlined his country's commitment to humanitarian relief and repatriation but said that displaced people would not return voluntarily until root causes were addressed.

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006)

The Security Council met in closed consultations on 30 August to receive an update on the work of the Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). The Chair of the Committee, Karel van Oosterom, briefed the Council.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes

On 29 August, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon chaired a Security Council open debate on mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust and member of the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network, briefed the Council. The PAIMAN Alumni Trust works to address extremism in Pakistan. During the open debate, 64 Member States delivered statements.

The Secretary-General set out the steps the United Nations had taken to strengthen its mediation capabilities and support his surge in diplomacy for peace, including the establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. He emphasized the need for a coherent United Nations approach to mediation tailored to each situation, but highlighted the importance of inclusive processes and engagement with regional and subregional organizations. He welcomed the development of women's mediation networks and called for more involvement of young people in mediation. He asked the Security Council to speak with one voice and to work closely with regional organizations.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said that mediation needed to take place within a framework of reconciliation, which can transform conflict into co-existence and allow communities to "disagree well". He called for a cross-agency and cross-departmental reconciliation strategy. He also highlighted the importance of engagement with religious organizations, which are often the only institution functioning in fragile or conflict-affected communities.

Ms Qadeem stressed the importance of involving women in mediation and peace processes. She argued that the exclusion of women from these processes was a function of power rather than culture, and highlighted examples of women playing leading mediation roles in difficult circumstances, including in Yemen, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. She called for more support for women mediators and welcomed the establishment of the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the opportunity to consider the issue of mediation. Most set out their support for the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen United Nations mediation capabilities and emphasized the importance of mediation in preventing and resolving conflicts. Several members emphasized the importance of securing the consent of the country concerned. A number of members argued that mediation processes needed to be inclusive, as the increased involvement of women was vital. Other members highlighted the importance of close engagement with regional and subregional organisations.

Many other participating States Members of the United Nations reiterated the importance of inclusive mediation processes and, in particular, the need to increase the number of women involved in mediation. Many Member States emphasized the

need for host-country consent, raised the importance of adhering to the Charter of the United Nations and international law and noted the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States when considering how to respond to a conflict, including through the use of mediation. Another key theme was the importance of a coordinated approach to mediation that involved the United Nations, regional organizations and civil society.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 23 August, Jeremy Hunt, Member of Parliament and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, chaired a Security Council briefing on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. At the start of the meeting, members of the Council held a minute of silence in honour of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Michèle Coninsx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and Dr. Joana Cook, Senior Research Fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization at Kings College London, briefed the Council.

The Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism introduced the seventh report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat ([S/2018/770](#)) and described the threat posed by Da'esh and the United Nations response. Da'esh had transformed from a proto-state to a covert network, making it difficult to track the movement of resources and fighters. The Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate focused on the challenges posed by returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters and Dr. Cook briefed the Council on research on women and minors affiliated with Da'esh.

In their interventions, many members of the Security Council focused on the evolving threat posed by Da'esh after their loss of control of territory in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Several members raised concerns about foreign terrorist fighters and highlighted the importance of international cooperation to tackle this threat, including through measures such as passenger name records and watchlists, and urged full implementation of Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#). Some members raised the issue of terrorist financing and the importance of addressing the challenges faced by women and children in areas that were formerly under the control of Da'esh. A number of members welcomed the contribution of the civil society briefer.

Annual report

On 30 August, the Security Council considered its draft annual report to the General Assembly for the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017. The President of the Council expressed his gratitude to the delegation of China for preparing the introduction to the draft report and to the Secretariat for preparing the body of the report. The representative of China outlined the process by which the draft report had been prepared, in line with the note by the President of the Council of 30 August 2017 ([S/2017/507](#)). The Council adopted the report without a vote. That decision was confirmed in a note by the President of the Council dated 31 August ([S/2018/797](#)).

Informal wrap-up

The President of the Security Council held a “Toledo style” informal wrap-up meeting on 31 August.