



Security Council

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Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/667, submitted by Belgium and Germany, in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”. In accordance with the voting procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council dated 27 March 2020 (S/2020/253), a procedure agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the draft resolution received 13 votes in favour, 2 votes against (China and the Russian Federation), and no abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

Pursuant to that procedure, I enclose herewith copies of the following documents:

- My letter dated 9 July 2020, addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council, putting to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/667 (see enclosure to annex I);
- Letters received in reply from members of the Security Council indicating their national position on the draft resolution (see annexes II to XVI);
- Statements submitted subsequently by members of the Security Council providing their explanations of vote (see annexes XVII and XVIII).

The present letter and its annexes will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Christoph Heusgen
President of the Security Council



Annex I

Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

In accordance with the procedure agreed upon by the members of the Security Council in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, and as reflected in the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to all members of the Council (S/2020/253), I would like to draw your attention to the following:

The members of the Council have discussed a draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”. That draft resolution has been put into blue (S/2020/667, see enclosure).

With the understanding of the members of the Council, in my capacity as President of the Security Council, I hereby put the above-mentioned draft resolution to a vote. The non-extendable 24-hour voting period for that draft resolution will begin at 1 p.m. on Thursday, 9 July 2020 and expire at 1 p.m. on Friday, 10 July 2020.

Please submit your vote (in favour, against or abstain) on that draft resolution and possible explanation of vote by sending the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division of the Secretariat (egian@un.org) a letter signed by the Permanent Representative or Chargé d'affaires a.i. within the non-extendable 24-hour voting period set out above.

It is my intention to circulate a letter listing the outcome of the vote within three hours of the conclusion of the 24-hour voting period. I also intend to convene a video-teleconference of the Security Council to announce the outcome of the vote shortly after the conclusion of the voting period, on the afternoon of Friday, 10 July 2020.

(Signed) Christoph **Heusgen**
President of the Security Council

Enclosure

United Nations

S/2020/667

**Security Council**Provisional
8 July 2020

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Belgium and Germany: draft resolution*The Security Council,*

Recalling its resolutions 2042 (2012), 2043 (2012), 2118 (2013), 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2175 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2209 (2015), 2235 (2015), 2254 (2015), 2258 (2015), 2268 (2016), 2286 (2016), 2332 (2016), 2336 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), 2504 (2020) and its Presidential Statements of 3 August 2011 (S/PRST/2011/16), 21 March 2012 (S/PRST/2012/6), 5 April 2012 (S/PRST/2012/10), 2 October 2013 (S/PRST/2013/15), 24 April 2015 (S/PRST/2015/10), 17 August 2015 (S/PRST/2015/15), and 8 October 2019 (S/PRST/2019/12),

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Emphasizing that more than 11 million people in Syria require humanitarian assistance and that the cross-border mechanism remains an urgent and temporary solution to address the humanitarian needs of the population, which cannot be reached through existing operations within Syria,

Expressing grave concern at the humanitarian situation in Syria and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, recognising that the pandemic presents a profound challenge to Syria's health system, socio-economic and humanitarian situations, and calling for the provision of humanitarian assistance to all parts of Syria,

Recalling the guiding principles of Humanitarian Emergency assistance as set out in the GA resolution 46/182 and reiterating the need for all parties to respect and uphold the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance, emphasizing the importance of upholding the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, in the provision of humanitarian assistance and recalling also the importance of humanitarian deliveries reaching their intended beneficiaries,

Taking note of the Report of the Secretary-General on the review of alternative modalities for the border crossing of Al Yarubiyah (S/2020/139), and further taking note of the Review of United Nations crossline and cross-border operations (S/2020/401), and encouraging the United Nations and their implementing partners to continue to take steps to scale up humanitarian deliveries throughout the country.

Taking note of efforts to improve cross-line deliveries of UN humanitarian assistance and encouraging all relevant parties to further promote, on the basis

of United Nations assessments of need, immediate and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance, including cross-line.

Determining that the devastating humanitarian situation in Syria continues to constitute a threat to peace and security in the region,

Underscoring that Member States are obligated under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations to accept and carry out the Council's decisions,

1. *Calls upon* all parties to ensure principled, sustained and improved humanitarian assistance to Syria;

2. *Reiterates* its demand that all parties, in particular the Syrian authorities, immediately comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law as applicable and further demands the full and immediate implementation of all provisions of all relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017) 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), and 2504 (2020) and *recalls* that some of the violations and abuses committed in Syria may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity;

3. *Decides* to renew the decisions in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), for a period of six months, that is, until 10 January 2021, excluding the border crossings of Al-Ramtha, and Al Yarubiyah;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in view also of the grave risk posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, to report to the Security Council no later than by the end of August 2020 on the impact of the pandemic on the need for and the delivery of humanitarian assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, to people in need throughout Syria, including in areas currently not under the control of the Syrian government, in particular in the Northeast of the country, through the most direct routes, and in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence and on trends in cross-border and cross-line access;

5. *Further demands* that all parties allow safe, unimpeded and sustained access for United Nations' and their implementing partners' humanitarian convoys, including medical and surgical supplies, to all requested areas and populations according to United Nations' assessment of need in all parts of Syria;

6. *Reiterates* that the situation will continue to deteriorate further in the absence of a political solution to the Syrian conflict and recalls its demand for the full and immediate implementation of resolution 2254 (2015) to facilitate a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition, in accordance with the Geneva Communiqué as set forth in the ISSG Statements, in order to end the conflict in Syria and stresses again that the Syrian people will decide the future of Syria;

7. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian agencies to improve monitoring of the delivery and distribution of United Nations relief consignments and their delivery inside Syria and requests the Secretary-General to conduct, within six months of the adoption of this resolution, an independent written review of the United Nations humanitarian cross-line and cross-border operations, including recommendations on how to further strengthen the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism, in order to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches people in need through the most direct routes, taking into account the views of relevant parties including the Syrian authorities, the relevant neighbouring countries of Syria and the United Nations Humanitarian Agencies and their implementing partners;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to brief the Council monthly and to provide a report on a regular basis, at least every 60 days, on the implementation

of resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), 2504 (2020) and this resolution and on compliance by all relevant parties in Syria and further requests the Secretary-General to continue to include in his reports overall trends in United Nations cross-line and cross-border humanitarian access and detailed information on the humanitarian assistance delivered through United Nations humanitarian cross-border operations as authorized by resolution 2165 (2014) and this resolution, including on the number of beneficiaries, locations of aid deliveries at district-level and the volume and nature of items delivered;

9. *Reaffirms* that it will take further measures under the Charter of the United Nations in the event of non-compliance with this resolution or resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), and 2504 (2020);

10. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

Annex II

Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer to the President of the Security Council's letter of 9 July relating to the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item "The situation in the Middle East" (S/2020/667).

In accordance with the procedure set forth for the adoption of resolutions under the current extraordinary circumstance caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, I am pleased to indicate that Belgium votes in favour of the draft resolution. At this stage, my delegation does not intend to deliver an explanation of vote.

(Signed) Marc **Pecsteen de Buytsverve**

Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

Annex III**Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I would like to thank you and your team for the continued strong support in facilitating the voting procedure.

Please be kindly informed that China votes against the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East” (S/2020/667).

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

Annex IV

Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Mr. President, I refer to your letter dated 9 July 2020, regarding draft resolution S/2020/667 submitted under the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”.

Upon instructions from my Government, the delegation of the Dominican Republic votes in favour of the above-mentioned draft resolution.

(Signed) José **Singer Weisinger**

Ambassador

Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic

Annex V**Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to inform you, Sir, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, that my delegation votes in favour of the draft resolution on cross-border humanitarian assistance to Syria (S/2020/667), in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”.

(Signed) **Sven Jürgenson**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations

Annex VI

Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

I refer to the letter dated 9 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council, calling on the members of the Council to vote on the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany on cross-border humanitarian assistance to Syria, under the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, put in blue under the symbol S/2020/667. France votes in favour.

(Signed) **Nicolas de Rivière**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

Annex VII**Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

It is my honour to write to you, Sir, in response to your letter dated 9 July 2020, initiating a written voting procedure, in line with the agreement reached among members of the Security Council.

The vote of the Federal Republic of Germany on the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document S/2020/667, is as follows:

The Federal Republic of Germany votes in favour of the above-mentioned resolution.

(Signed) **Christoph Heusgen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

Annex VIII

Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing in reference to the letter by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, in his capacity as the President of the Security Council, dated 9 July 2020, regarding the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East” (S/2020/667).

I hereby indicate that Indonesia votes in favour of the said resolution.

(Signed) Dian Triansyah **Djani**

Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

Annex IX**Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I am writing in response to the letter of the President of the Security Council dated 9 July 2020, calling on the members of the Security Council to express their votes on the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany under the item “The situation in the Middle East” (S/2020/667).

In accordance with the agreed provisional procedures for the adoption of resolutions during the coronavirus disease pandemic restrictions, I have the honour to indicate that the Republic of the Niger decides to vote in favour of said draft resolution.

(Signed) Abdou **Abarry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations

Annex X

Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour, Sir, to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 9 July 2020, on the beginning of the voting procedure for the draft resolution in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East” (S/2020/667).

In accordance with the procedure for the adoption of resolutions of the Security Council being in place during the duration of the restrictions on movement in New York due to the coronavirus disease pandemic outlined in the letter dated 27 March 2020 (S/2020/253), I have the honour to inform you that the Russian Federation votes against the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/667.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

Annex XI**Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to the draft resolution (S/2020/667) submitted by Belgium and Germany on the extension of the Syria cross-border mechanism.

In that respect, I wish to inform you, Sir, that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines votes in favour of the above-mentioned draft resolution.

(Signed) Inga Rhonda **King**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations

Annex XII

Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer, Sir, to your letter dated 9 July 2020, regarding the draft Security Council resolution on “The situation in the Middle East”, contained in document S/2020/667.

The delegation of the Republic of South Africa votes in favour of the above-mentioned draft resolution.

(Signed) Jerry Matthews **Matjila**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations

Annex XIII**Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

With reference to the letter dated 9 July 2020 emanating from the Permanent Representative of Germany, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, regarding the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document (S/2020/667), I would like to inform you, Sir, that Tunisia votes in favour of that draft resolution.

(Signed) **Kais Kabtani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations

Annex XIV

Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

With reference to the letter from the President of the Security Council of 9 July, the United Kingdom votes in favour of the draft resolution (S/2020/667) in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”.

(Signed) James **Roscoe**
Ambassador

Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations

Annex XV**Letter dated 9 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

On the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East” (S/2020/667), the United States of America votes in favour.

(Signed) **Kelly Craft**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the United States of America
to the United Nations

Annex XVI

Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In reference to the letter of the President of the Security Council dated 9 July 2020 relating to the draft resolution submitted by Belgium and Germany in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document S/2020/667, I would like to hereby inform you, Sir, that Viet Nam votes in favour of the above-mentioned draft resolution.

(Signed) **Dang Dinh Quy**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations

Annex XVII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Zhang Jun**

[Original: English and Chinese]

China supports the international community in stepping up humanitarian relief efforts in Syria on the basis of respecting Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We encourage the relevant parties to push for progress in cross-line humanitarian operations. China does not object to retaining the cross-border mechanism at this stage. Cross-border operations should strictly follow the guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance set out in General Assembly resolution 46/182. Meanwhile, the cross-border mechanism should be adjusted accordingly in the light of the developments on the ground.

Years of illegal sanctions have wreaked havoc on Syria's economic and social development, exacerbated the humanitarian crisis and weakened Syria's capacity to respond to coronavirus disease. Secretary-General Guterres and Special Envoy Pedersen have repeatedly called on the relevant countries to lift unilateral coercive measures. Those appeals are supported by the vast majority of United Nations Member States.

China has repeatedly emphasized to the co-penholders that the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures must be taken into account in the Security Council's draft resolution on the mandate renewal of the cross-border mechanism in Syria and that necessary actions should be taken on the issue of unilateral coercive measures. However, the co-penholders ignored the appeals of Member States and refused to accept China's proposed amendments. Under such circumstances, China was left with no choice but to vote against draft resolution S/2020/667.

China once again calls upon the Security Council to address this critical issue and urges the relevant countries to immediately lift the unilateral coercive measures imposed on Syria. We also request an objective assessment by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the humanitarian situation in Syria, to be presented in a comprehensive report to the Security Council.

The United States claims that it cares about the suffering of Syrian civilians, but it has imposed additional illegal sanctions on Syria through the law known as the Caesar Act, stifling the livelihoods of the Syrian people. The United States claims that there are so-called humanitarian exemptions from the unilateral coercive measures. However, years of illegal sanctions have severely undermined Syria's ability to mobilize resources, develop the economy and improve people's well-being. That can by no means be resolved by the so-called humanitarian exemptions. The United States claims to uphold the spirit of humanitarianism, but it has politicized humanitarian issues and ruthlessly bashed the Government and the people of Syria, devastating livelihoods of the Syrian people. The role the United States has played in the Syrian issue and the crime it has committed in Syria are clear to the people of the world.

China emphasizes once again that we should take a holistic and comprehensive approach to the Syrian issue, considering the political, counter-terrorism, security and humanitarian aspects together. We urge all parties to strengthen dialogue and negotiation, actively promote a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned political process and work together to achieve a peaceful, just and proper settlement of the Syrian issue at an early date.

Annex XVIII**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations**

The Russian Federation was once again compelled to vote against the draft resolution (S/2020/667) on the extension of the cross-border mechanism for the delivery of humanitarian aid to Syria, submitted by Belgium and Germany.

The new draft by the co-penholders is like the old one, with the same one-sided approach and disconnection from the reality on the ground.

None of us should forget that the mechanism was established in 2014 as an urgent, temporary and exceptional measure. There is no doubt that it contradicts international humanitarian law and undermines Syrian sovereignty. For the war-torn country, the proposal was a difficult but necessary compromise to provide relief to people in need. We have repeatedly pointed out the problems in the functioning of the cross-border mechanism monitoring system, including its accountability. Those problems remain unresolved. Bearing that in mind, our position on the mechanism has always been clear — the crossing points should be gradually closed and the whole mechanism should be phased out based on the assessment of the situation in the country.

The closure of Al-Yarubiyah last January stimulated cooperation between the United Nations and the Government of Syria. It allowed the dispatch of four World Health Organization convoys to the north-east. The most recent one, as of 4 July, had delivered 85 tons of medical supplies from Damascus to Al-Hasakah province. The amount of essential medical material that has delivered to the north-east through those four convoys alone exceeds the amount of aid that was previously delivered to that area by all routes, including through Al-Yarubiyah when it was open. Such modalities are what should be fully supported and promoted instead of continuously relying on temporary and extraordinary mechanisms.

We definitely cannot ignore the negative impact of sanction regimes, which recently became even more severe for the Syrian people and territories under Government control. They are in a total disregard for the Secretary-General's call for the lifting of unilateral coercive measures in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic. An increased shortage of food, medicines and basic commodities, as well as rising inflation are their direct consequences. However, what is more important is that, in reality, they de facto void exemptions to sanctions. Humanitarian workers in Syria privately admit those facts but are obviously scared to speak up about it in fear of retaliations.

At the same time, areas beyond the control of the legitimate Syrian authorities fully enjoy a sanctions-free regime. Such an approach leads to further isolation of those areas from Damascus, including economic distancing; for instance, in Idlib and to the east of the Euphrates River, local authorities have started using currencies other than the Syrian pound. It inevitably results in the rupture of internal connections and the disruption of supply chains.

Unilateral sanctions must be lifted and international humanitarian assistance for Syria should be governed by a universally agreed framework in line with the United Nations guiding principles on such assistance, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 46/182.

If what matters to us all is to keep humanitarian aid flowing to Idlib through the cross-border mechanism for another year, then the new draft resolution presented by Russia should be supported. One year of uninterrupted functioning of the

cross-border mechanism, taking into account the current epidemiological situation, would guarantee the necessary assistance for the inhabitants of north-western Syria.
