



Security Council

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Letter dated 11 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/2020/683, submitted by the Russian Federation, in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”. In accordance with the voting procedure as agreed by the members of the Security Council and set out in the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council (S/2020/253), a procedure agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, the draft resolution received four votes in favour (China, the Russian Federation, South Africa and Viet Nam) and seven against (Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America), with four abstentions (Indonesia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia). The draft resolution has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

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

- My letter dated 10 July 2020, addressed to the Permanent Representatives of Security Council members, putting to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/683 (see annex I and enclosure thereto);
- Letters received in reply from the members of the Security Council indicating their national positions on the draft resolution (see annexes II to XVI);
- Statements subsequently submitted by members of the Security Council providing explanations of their votes (see annexes XVII and XVIII).

The present letter and its enclosures will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Christoph Heusgen
President of the Security Council



Annex I

Letter dated 10 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 light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as set out 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 matter.

The members of the Council have discussed a draft resolution, submitted by the Russian Federation, in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”. That draft resolution, contained in document S/2020/683 and enclosed herewith, has been put in blue.

In my capacity as President of the Security Council, I hereby put the above-mentioned draft resolution to a vote. The non-extendable two-hour voting period for this draft resolution will begin at 4 p.m. on Friday, 10 July 2020, and expire at 6 p.m. on Friday, 10 July 2020.

Please submit your vote (in favour, against or abstaining) on the draft resolution, as well as your possible explanation of vote, by sending a letter signed by the Permanent Representative or Chargé d'affaires a.i. within the non-extendable two-hour voting period to the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division in the United Nations Secretariat (egian@un.org).

It is my intention to circulate a letter listing the outcome of the vote within three hours of the conclusion of the two-hour voting period. I also intend to convene a video-teleconference of the Security Council to announce the outcome of the voting shortly after the conclusion of the voting period, at 6.30 p.m. on Friday, 10 July 2020.

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

Enclosure

United Nations

S/2020/683

**Security Council**Provisional
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Russian Federation: 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,

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,

Welcoming improvement of cross-line deliveries of UN humanitarian assistance and encouraging all relevant parties to further increase cross-line humanitarian operations to all parts of Syria,

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

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

4. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian agencies to improve monitoring of the delivery and distribution of United Nations relief consignments and their delivery inside Syria;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide a report on direct and indirect impact of unilateral coercive measures imposed on Syria on its socio-economic situation and humanitarian deliveries from outside Syria, including through humanitarian agencies and on economic and humanitarian cooperation between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other Member States, not later than 31 August,

6. *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 the humanitarian impact of unilateral coercive measures, 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;

7. *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);

8. *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 10 July, relating to the draft resolution, submitted by the Russian Federation, in connection with the agenda item "The situation in the Middle East" (S/2020/683).

In accordance with the procedure set forth for the adoption of resolutions under the current extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, Belgium votes against the draft resolution. At this stage, my delegation does not intend to deliver an explanation of vote.

(Signed) Marc **Pecsteen de Buytswerve**
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

Thank you and your team for the continued strong support in facilitating the voting procedure.

Please kindly be informed that China votes in favour of the draft resolution (S/2020/683) submitted by the Russian Federation in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”.

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

Annex IV**Letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I refer to your letter dated July 10, 2020, regarding the draft Security Council resolution S/2020/683, under agenda item “The Situation in the Middle East”.

Upon instructions from my Government, the delegation of the Dominican Republic votes against 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, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, that my delegation votes against of the draft Security Council resolution S/2020/683, in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East” (Syria cross-border humanitarian aid), put to the vote on 10 July 2020.

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

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

[Original: French]

In reference to the letter dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council inviting all members of the Council to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation on Syria cross-border humanitarian aid in connection with agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document S/2020/683, France votes against.

(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 in response to the letter dated 10 July 2020 from the Presidency of the Security Council initiating a written voting procedure in line with the agreement reached between members of the Security Council.

The vote of the Federal Republic of Germany on the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation in connection with the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document S/2020/683 is as follows:

The Federal Republic of Germany votes against the above-mentioned draft resolution.

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

Annex VIII**Letter dated 10 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 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, in his capacity as the President of the Security Council, dated 10 July 2020, regarding the draft resolution under the agenda item, "The Situation in the Middle East" (S/2020/683).

I hereby indicate that Indonesia abstains in the voting on the draft resolution.

(Signed) Dian Triansyah **Djani**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

Annex IX

Letter dated 10 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 dated 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council calling on the members of the Security Council to express their votes on the draft resolution (S/2020/683), submitted by the Russian Federation under the item “The situation in the Middle East”.

In accordance with the agreed temporary procedures for the adoption of resolutions during the coronavirus disease pandemic restrictions, I have the honour to indicate that the Republic of the Niger has decided to abstain in the voting on the 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 to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 10 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/2020/683).

In accordance with the procedure for the adoption of resolutions of the Security Council in place during the restrictions on movement in New York due to the coronavirus disease pandemic, outlined in the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council (S/2020/253), I have the honour to inform you that the Russian Federation votes in favour of the draft resolution S/2020/683.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

Annex XI

Letter dated 10 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/2020/683) submitted by the Russian Federation for the extension of the Syria cross-border mechanism.

In that respect, I wish to inform you that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines abstains in the voting on 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 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I refer to your letter dated 10 July 2020 regarding the draft Security Council resolution concerning “The situation in the Middle East”, contained in document S/2020/683.

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 10 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to the letter dated 10 July 2020 emanating from the Permanent Representative of Germany, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, regarding the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation in connection with the agenda item “ The situation in the Middle East”, as contained in document (S/2020/683), I would like to inform you that Tunisia abstains in the voting on 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 10 July, the United Kingdom votes against draft resolution contained in document S/2020/683 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 10 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 the Russian Federation regarding the agenda item “The situation in Middle East” (S/2020/683), the United States of America votes against.

(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 date 10 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council relating to the draft resolution submitted under the agenda item entitled “The situation in the Middle East” as contained in document S/2020/683, I would like to hereby inform you that Viet Nam votes in favour of the said draft resolution.

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

Annex XVII

Statement by the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, James Roscoe

The United Kingdom expresses its continued thanks to the German and Belgian delegations for their determined and principled efforts to ensure that the United Nations and humanitarian partners are able to meet the needs of millions of people in Syria.

The United Kingdom voted against the Russian draft resolution (S/2020/683) that would close the Bab Al-Salam border crossing into north-western Syria, depriving 1.3 million people of the cross-border aid they rely on. We regret that Russia also insisted on including language on sanctions. Members of the Council have repeatedly made clear that sanctions do not apply to food or medicine. There are also exemptions for humanitarian activity in place for United Kingdom-European Union sanctions. The actions of the Syrian regime are the main driver of the dire humanitarian situation in Syria.

We remain deeply disappointed by Russian and Chinese politicization of this humanitarian issue. The outcome of this vote makes clear that a majority of Council members share our concerns. Russia and China have now twice vetoed texts that would have met the humanitarian needs of those in north-western Syria and which had the support of all other Security Council members.

We urge Russia and China to reconsider their approach and support a compromise solution, coming together with the rest of the Council in the name of humanity.

Annex XVIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

After a month of negotiations, we have reached the expiration of the mandate that provides cross-border humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people. And on this solemn day, right on cue, Russia presented a draft resolution (S/2020/683) that makes a mockery of the Council's responsibilities, defies explicit requests from the United Nations and humanitarian groups on the ground, and turns a blind eye to millions of Syrians in dire need.

The text that Russia presented today was entirely predictable; it follows their now-established pattern to obstruct, lie, deny and distract. The Russian draft does not come close to meeting the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people. It is riddled with false and misleading language related to sanctions targeted at the Al-Assad regime, clearly designed to obfuscate blame for the humanitarian catastrophe caused by Al-Assad in Syria. Moreover, it attempts to propagate the well-established lie that cross-line assistance is improving despite multiple reports from the Secretary-General stating the opposite, and it removes any mention of the Security Council-supported political process.

None of this gets us any closer to helping Syrians in need. The Russian Federation's games are getting old, but there is still a chance to correct this grave mistake. We look forward to continue supporting the penholders in their efforts to preserve humanitarian access for the Syrian people.
