



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

Provisional

9408th

meeting

Wednesday, 30 August 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Wood. (United States of America)

Members:

Albania	Ms. Dautllari
Brazil.	Mr. França Danese
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon	Mrs. Ngyema Ndong
Ghana	Mr. Boateng
Japan	Mr. Ishikane
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
Russian Federation.	Mr. Nebenzia
Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Nusseibeh
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Letter dated 3 August 2023 from the Panel of Experts on Mali established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/578)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor has for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Given the fact that we trust that we will be able to make significant progress on the matter we are here to discuss today, Mr. President, we would like to ask for consultations before we return to the meeting.

The President: We take note of Russia's position. Given the views of Council members and due to the fact that the text is substantively the same as the one that passed silence last week, we are proceeding with the vote as scheduled.

The representative of China has asked for the floor.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We note that, at the current stage, some Member States are still making diplomatic efforts. We hope that we can give those efforts a chance. The purpose of the Security Council is to resolve problems; and the purpose of adopting draft resolutions is to resolve them. We should not impose voting, as that by no means contributes to resolving problems. We hope that we can respect the fact that some Member States are still making diplomatic efforts.

The President: I also take note of China's position. But given what I just said about the views that Council members have expressed and about the text being substantively the same as the one that passed silence last week, we are proceeding with the voting as scheduled.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Have I correctly understood, Mr. President, that you are refusing the request of Member States to conduct consultations?

The President: We are not refusing the request of members. We have spoken with members, and members are prepared to proceed with the voting.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to ask you, Mr. President: Whom do you believe to be members of the Council, and whom do you not? Two members of the Council have requested consultations. You are referring to members of the

Council, but this is not a unanimous decision. There are members who want to have consultations now. Are you rejecting the request to hold consultations?

The President: We are indeed not objecting to consultations, but we will have consultations after the voting.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are not asking for consultations after the voting. We are asking for consultations before the voting so that we can try to ensure that the voting in the Council is unanimous. That is the first point.

Secondly — and perhaps this is rhetorical — why are you using rulings, Mr. President, during this American presidency, that are based on the opinion of some Member States of the Council — in particular one penholder — and correspondence between political coordinators? I would like to remind you that, first of all, there is not just one penholder. I would like to know the opinion of the other penholder. Also, there are other members who have asked to postpone the voting on this draft resolution. And that was also ignored. How are we to understand that?

The President: As I said, we are prepared to hold consultations. But as is my prerogative as President, and after listening to the various views that have been communicated to my delegation, I am taking the decision as President — in addition to the comments that I just made, basically two times — to proceed to the voting. We are happy to have consultations following the voting, but we are proceeding to the voting.

The representative of Mozambique has asked for to the floor.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): We wish to commend your dynamic leadership, Mr. President, of our proceedings in the Security Council. In fact, we wish to commend all the work you have done throughout the month of August.

I speak on behalf of the three African members of the Council (A3).

It is not our tradition to get involved in procedural issues. But our position in the A3 has always been that, whenever members of the Security Council wish for more time in order to engage in consultations, as far as possible that request should be granted. In the present

case, the A3 would strongly advise the presidency to allow for some more time for the requested consultations. We are prepared to take a position. We have a common position in the A3. But we can accept allowing for more time for an additional exchange of views on the matter.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I did not in fact ask for the floor. I actually wanted to hear your response, Mr. President, to the proposal by the representative of Mozambique.

The President: Again, as President, given the discussions that I had with a number of delegations and the remarks I made earlier about why we wanted to proceed to the voting, it is still my intention to proceed to the voting.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Now I am prepared to say a couple of things.

On behalf of our delegation, I would like a procedural vote on conducting consultations. I would ask that this matter be put to the vote.

The President: I shall now suspend the meeting for a few minutes so that we can make the necessary preparations.

The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 4 p.m.

The President: I now invite interested Council members to move to the Consultations Room for consultations.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Letter dated 3 August 2023 from the Panel of Experts on Mali established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/578)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them documents S/2023/638 and S/2023/639, each of which contains the text of a separate draft resolution.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/578, which contains the text of a letter dated 3 August 2023 from the Panel of Experts on Mali established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolutions before it. I shall now give the floor to those members who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): I would like to start by thanking all Council members for their flexibility and engagement throughout the negotiations on draft resolution S/2023/638 on the renewal of the Security Council sanctions regime concerning Mali. We also thank France for partnering with us as co-penholders and for the extensive work the country and its team have put into trying to find a compromise text.

In the past weeks, we have engaged with Mali, the wider region and Council members several times, and in submitting the draft resolution, we kept front of mind the united view of the Council. The Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali is central to achieving lasting peace in Mali.

The Security Council established the sanctions regime in 2017 (resolution 2374 (2017)) to help respond to challenges associated with the implementation of the peace agreement. Indeed, the signatories to the peace agreement invited the Security Council to fully support the agreement, to follow its implementation closely and to take any necessary measures against those who hinder its implementation.

As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali informed the Council just two days ago (see S/PV.9407), the implementation of the peace agreement is facing difficulty, and the United Nations continues to believe its implementation is essential. In addition, we are conscious that the drawdown and the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) are ongoing. The first phase of MINUSMA's drawdown has occurred successfully. However, we need to bear in mind that the second phase is still ongoing, and it will be important to maintain as stable an environment

as possible for the sake of achieving a safe and orderly drawdown.

In putting the draft resolution forward, we have paid careful attention to the views of Mali's transitional Government, in particular the request for the lifting of the sanctions regime, as contained in the letter of the Foreign Minister of Mali dated 15 August 2023 (S/2023/605, annex). We have also engaged with Mali at all levels to hear its concerns. We think this draft resolution acknowledges Mali's request and emphasizes the Council's readiness to review at any time the continuation of the sanctions measures contained in resolution 2374 (2017).

Today's draft resolution comes at a critical time for supporting the implementation of the peace agreement and supporting the peace and stability of Mali and the broader region.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's meeting was preceded by lengthy work on a draft resolution on the renewal of the sanctions regime concerning Mali that would be acceptable to members of the Security Council and regional actors. However, we must note that draft resolution S/2023/638 does not address those issues. We are convinced that the Council's adoption of the draft resolution in its current form, given the fact that Bamako submitted an official request for the lifting of the sanctions regime (S/2023/605, annex), would just undermine the sanctions regime and the Malian peace process. It would merely further antagonize the parties.

We all remember that the Security Council imposed a sanctions regime on Mali in response to an official request of the Malian authorities, the main goal of which was to help implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. There is no doubt that attempts to thrust Security Council's guardianship on Mali without its consent are futile.

Using the Council's authority of the Security Council to push through approaches that Malians find unacceptable may jeopardize further cooperation between Bamako and the United Nations, which is particularly worrisome given the current withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. We must not allow that to happen.

Based on those considerations, the Russian Federation cannot support the draft resolution. We urge

our colleagues in the Council to demonstrate wisdom and pragmatism by supporting our alternative draft resolution, which takes into consideration the position of African members on the Council that the sanctions regime needs to be maintained in order to uphold the peace agreement. However, it is fundamentally important that Council sanctions serve only to address this issue and not be used as a means of foreign influence in Mali, which the Panel of Experts on Mali established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) has become.

We disagree that the Panel of Experts is the only United Nations mechanism at the disposal of the Security Council for supporting these efforts. It is clear that for one of its parties, for a host of reasons, the Panel is no longer needed. Moreover, the Council must work in line with the parameters and resources available. However, that should be done only with the consent of the participants in the peace process.

In our alternative draft resolution (S/2023/639), we propose to disband the Panel of Experts and to make this the final extension of the sanctions regime.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2023/638, submitted by France and the United Arab Emirates.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Russian Federation

Abstaining:

China

The President: The draft resolution received 13 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor.

The political and security situation in Mali continues to be of great interest to the African members of the Security Council (A3) and the wider international

community. In support of that engagement, we voted in favour of the renewal of the mandate, extending the measures against those who take actions to obstruct or threaten the implementation of the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The implementation of that agreement remains critical for the long-term peace and stability of Mali.

The A3 has given due consideration to the request of the transition Government of Mali, but assesses that, at this stage, the measures should continue. We believe that the measures established in support of the effective implementation of the peace agreement would benefit Mali and the Malian people in their quest for peace, security and prosperity. With the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and its potential negative impact on the peace agreement, maintaining the measures would help mitigate any adverse impacts on the peace agreement.

We take this opportunity to thank the co-penholders — France and the United Arab Emirates — for their continued efforts during the negotiations to garner consensus. We deeply regret that a compromise was not found. We further regret that, due to the use of the veto, draft resolution S/2023/368 could not be adopted. Now, more than ever, we should support and encourage an intensification of efforts behind the implementation of the 2015 peace agreement.

The international mediation team, led by Algeria, along with regional organizations, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the other United Nations agencies should be ready to support the mediation and the monitoring mechanisms with the concerned parties. The momentum of the implementation of the Algiers Accord should be urgently increased. The peace, stability and territorial integrity of Mali depends, to a large extent, on it.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom thanks France and the United Arab Emirates for all their efforts on draft resolution S/2023/368.

Despite having to make a number of difficult compromises, we voted in favour of it because of our strong support for the renewal of the Mali sanctions regime and Panel of Experts' mandate. These are important Security Council tools in support of peace and stability in Mali.

For that reason, the United Kingdom deeply regrets Russia's reckless use of the veto, which will reduce the Council's oversight and engagement on Mali's peace process at a critical juncture.

Against the backdrop of the withdrawal of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali from Mali, what we need now is renewed commitment to maintain the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in the face of violations of the ceasefire in Timbuktu and Kidal regions.

The United Kingdom cannot support Russia's proposal to dissolve the Panel of Experts on Mali, or its attempt to predetermine the termination of sanctions measures. We pay tribute to the dedication of the members of the Panel, whose rigorous work in challenging circumstances we firmly support.

We remain deeply concerned about the worsening political, humanitarian and security situation in Mali. Despite the outcome of today's vote, the United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Mali's peace agreement and pursuing accountability for human rights violations and abuses.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the co-penholders for their facilitation and consensus-building efforts. We also acknowledge the commitment of the members of the Security Council.

Switzerland voted in favour of the draft resolution (S/2023/638) because, like the vast majority of other members, we believe that it represents an acceptable compromise. Switzerland regrets that the use of the veto by one member of the Security Council calls into question the renewal of sanctions measures, which are aimed at supporting Mali in the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, especially against the backdrop of growing insecurity, which is leading to the displacement of the population, and the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) under tense circumstances.

The purpose of adopting today's draft resolution was to maintain sanctions measures aimed at fostering the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. Upholding and implementing the agreement by all parties is key to achieving long-term stability and security in Mali and the region. That is also the conviction of Switzerland, which has

been present in Mali for more than 40 years. We will therefore continue to work with the Malian authorities and all stakeholders to that end.

The progress that Mali has made, together with the international community, must not be jeopardized. In the interests of the protection of the civilian population and peace and security in Mali, Switzerland will constructively pursue its commitment to finding a compromise text. It calls on all other members to do likewise. In particular, we underscore that, when the Council adapts sanctions measures, its decisions should take into due account the information provided by the Group of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), which assesses their implementation, including the humanitarian, political and security situation.

In view of the withdrawal of MINUSMA, we call on the Malian authorities and all stakeholders to harness their political capital to enable a peaceful transition and work towards achieving stability in the region.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia voted against the draft resolution (S/2023/638) on extending the sanctions regime on Mali. Unfortunately, despite the fact that we have repeatedly called for a constructive approach and a reasonable compromise, the text submitted completely fails to take into account the concerns of the Malian side or the position of the Russian Federation. Before the voting, we reiterated in detail the reasons and considerations underlying our decision to vote against it. And neither did we hide those reasons during the negotiation process. We worked in complete transparency, on the basis of concrete proposals aimed at reaching an acceptable compromise. Until the very last minute, we had every opportunity to make it work.

However, it is regrettable that the position of the Russian Federation was not taken into account, or was any substantive step taken towards Mali's official request. Our vote against the draft resolution today hardly comes as a surprise to anyone. We hope that, in the future, the penholders on draft resolutions will prioritize basing their efforts on pragmatism and the interests of the host country in order to avoid unnecessary confrontations in the Security Council, especially in a situation in which a compromise agreement could have been reached if a number of delegations had demonstrated the political will necessary.

Ms. Dautllari (Albania): Albania would like to thank France and the United Arab Emirates for their leadership during the challenging negotiations on the renewal of the sanction regime in Mali. We voted in favour of the draft resolution (S/2023/638), as we see value in maintaining the targeted sanctions and the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017). While the current text does not address many of our concerns, we made concessions in the spirit of compromise.

Discussions within this Chamber earlier this week (see S/PV.9407) highlighted the fragility of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and the ceasefire violations following hostile activities between the Malian transitional Government and signatory armed groups. As the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali departs, it is imperative that the Security Council maintain its focus on the situation and the implementation of the agreement, which remains a crucial instrument for securing long-term peace and security in Mali. The sanctions regime and the Panel of Experts have a crucial role to play in assisting Mali in implementing the peace agreement. Therefore, we regret that one member used its veto power today, preventing the Security Council from achieving unity on this matter.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): The 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali is the only existing and viable framework to achieve durable peace and reconciliation in Mali. Now that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali must withdraw from Mali, it is imperative to safeguard and promote the implementation of the agreement. Furthermore, any action that jeopardizes Mali's security and stability is a concern of the Security Council, as they are inextricably linked to those of the Sahel and West Africa. Such actions include transnational organized crime, the obstruction of humanitarian assistance and abuse and violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The Mali sanctions regime plays a vital role in both regards. Therefore, Japan deeply regrets that the Security Council failed to adopt the draft resolution (S/2023/638), owing to the veto cast by one Council member. I would like to recall that the members of the Council have a solemn duty to maintain international peace and security. Despite the regrettable outcome, we need to keep working for the sake of the peace and security of Africa, and Japan is ready to do so with other Council members.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China's position on the issue of Security Council sanctions has been consistent and clear. China continues to believe that sanctions are a means to an end, not an end in and of themselves. Sanctions imposed by the Security Council should not be indefinite but should be reviewed periodically and adjusted or lifted in time, while taking into account the situation of the countries concerned. The Council established the sanctions measures in 2017 at the request of the Government of Mali. The relevant measures played an important role, given the circumstances at that time, in monitoring the ceasefire and supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. In recent years, the situation in Mali has continued to evolve. The Minister for Foreign affairs of Mali, Mr. Diop, recently wrote to the President of the Security Council, expressing the view that the sanction measures were no longer needed in view of the situation and the dissatisfaction with the work of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017).

I would like to underscore that, on this occasion, the Security Council had the chance to conduct in-depth discussions and make reasonable adjustments to the relevant sanctions measures. China also actively interacted with the parties concerned and suggested constructive proposals and called for giving diplomatic consultation a chance and more time. It is, however, regrettable that some members pushed a draft resolution (S/2023/638) through the Council that disregarded the wishes and efforts of other members to continue mediation efforts on the process, which is an outcome that neither contributes to the resolution of the Malian issue nor helps the Council play a positive and constructive role.

Lastly, I would like to reaffirm once again that maintaining peace and stability in Mali, and in the region as a whole, is in the shared interests of the international community. The international community and the United Nations should continue to provide assistance and support, based on respect for the sovereignty and leadership of Mali. China will continue to support Mali in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, national security and stability and will continue to make further contributions to the peaceful development of Mali through bilateral and multilateral channels.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

The United States is disappointed by the outcome of today's voting. Once again, Russia has imposed its will on the Security Council in the face of opposition by countries from the region. The Council's failure to agree on the urgent and necessary renewal of Mali's sanctions regime due to Russia's actions threatens peace and security not just in Mali, but in the entire region.

We voted in favour of the text (S/2023/638) because the Panel of Experts' reporting is a central source of information on the situation in Mali. The travel ban and assets freeze remain necessary to stem the illicit financial transfers and ill-gotten gains both from Mali and into a region in which numerous malign actors operate and, sadly, have proliferated. Too many people continue to suffer from the ongoing violence and, due to Russia's actions, the Council has failed to renew some of the most important international initiatives for addressing the crisis.

The provisions of the draft resolution remain critical to peace and security in Mali. The United States is committed to working constructively with its Security Council colleagues in the coming days to achieve a mandate renewal that accurately reflects the dire situation on the ground and the Council's primary role to maintain international peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the next draft resolution before it.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

We find the Russian draft resolution for the sanctions regime (S/2023/639) disingenuous and lamentable.

First, Russia's draft resolution was introduced with no opportunity for discussion or negotiation. Although the text calls for maintaining the travel ban and assets freezes, the draft resolution ends the Panel of Experts' reporting mandate. One must also question why Russia seeks to renew the sanctions for only six months and then add a sunset clause. The situation in Mali requires our sustained support. The text Russia put forward falls lamentably short in that objective.

Following the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the Panel of Experts is the only United Nations mechanism left to monitor and report on human rights

abuses, as well as to facilitate efforts to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The Panel's elimination — as called for by Russia — would render the regime ineffective and not useful for Mali. Russia seeks to eliminate the Panel of Expert's mandate to stifle publication of uncomfortable truths about the Wagner Group's actions in Mali, which require attention.

Russia is putting its own interests above those of the region. Russia's repeated refusals to engage in negotiations followed by its submission of an alternative text at the eleventh hour are egregious breaks in procedure that fail to respect the integrity and transparency essential to Council deliberations.

It is for those reasons that the United States must oppose the Russian-drafted draft resolution. We urge others to do so as well for the sake of the Malian people.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I did not intend to take the floor, but there is one clarification that I must make following the statement you made, Mr. President, in your national capacity.

As we have already said, we urge Security Council colleagues to demonstrate wisdom and pragmatism by supporting our alternative draft resolution (S/2023/639), which takes into account the position of African States and the African members of the Council that the sanctions regime be maintained for a certain period of time. The United States delegation said that it was a six-month period, but is in fact for approximately one year.

I want to make it clear for the members of the Council: the sanctions regime would be maintained in order to try to harness it to help implement the Algiers accords. But it is of fundamental importance that the sanctions be aimed specifically at resolving the issue, and not turned into an instrument for placing external pressures on Mali's internal political problems. The potential of the Panel of Experts has long been exhausted, and it should therefore be closed. We closed the Panel of Experts on Guinea-Bissau, for example, and nothing dramatic happened after that.

We once again call on the members of the Council to heed our words and vote in favour of our draft resolution. I would also like to say once again to the

representative United States, into the microphone this time, that if our draft resolution is not adopted, then there will be no opportunity for further discussions on the matter.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2023/639, submitted by the Russian Federation.

In favour:

Russian Federation

Against:

Japan

Abstaining:

Albania, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Ghana, Malta, Mozambique, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 1 vote in favour, 1 against and 13 abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): France deeply regrets Russia's veto of the draft resolution renewing the sanctions regime in Mali (S/2023/638). Together with the United Arab Emirates, France worked tirelessly in recent weeks to present a balanced text at the end of a process of in-depth consultations, while listening to the views of each of the members of the Security Council. We welcome the unanimous support expressed today by the African members of the Council in particular.

While Russia regularly stresses the importance of cooperation between States on an equal footing, we regret that it submitted a draft text (S/2023/639) that has not been discussed by the members of the Security Council on such an essential subject and at such a critical time for Mali, for the region and for the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali.

Russia's choice cannot fail to raise questions, moreover, just a few days after the participation of Wagner Group mercenaries in the fighting in Ber and the air strikes in Anefis, which are jeopardizing the ceasefire and the peace agreement. I would remind members that the Panel of Experts' mandate included

investigating human rights violations committed throughout Mali by all those guilty of such crimes.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to emphasize that China voted to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation (S/2023/639) only for technical reasons, because we have not received instruction from our capital.

I must underscore that China certainly understands and supports some of the content and elements contained in the Russian draft resolution.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): Malta delivers this explanation of vote in the light of the two draft resolutions presented to the Security Council (S/2023/638 and S/2023/639).

Malta thanks France and United Arab Emirates for their tireless efforts and extensive consultations on the first text towards an outcome that continues to support Mali's security and stability. We believed that the draft prepared by the co-penholders reflected that, hence why we voted in favour of it. Our position also reflects our steadfast support for retaining the sanctions regime and the mandate of the Panel of Experts at a time when it is needed the most.

We deeply regret that the co-penholders' text was vetoed by the Russian Federation and that an alternative text was put forward by the Russian Federation. We abstained in the voting on the second draft resolution, as it seeks to eliminate the same measures that would have assisted Mali on its path towards genuine security and stability. In the light of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali's departure from the country, the sanctions regime plays a critical role as the sole source of the United Nations for monitoring the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. That approach also aligns with the Security Council's duty to uphold peace and security in Mali by enforcing measures against any actor hindering the agreement's implementation.

As the situation in Mali remains deeply concerning, we urge the Malian authorities and all parties to the agreement to respect it. We condemn all violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as well as violence against women and children. Given the outcome during this meeting, we resolve to continue engaging in discussions to find the way forward.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.