



# Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

*Provisional*

**9512<sup>th</sup>** meeting

Tuesday, 19 December 2023, 10 a.m.

New York

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*President:* Mr. De La Gasca . . . . . (Ecuador)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. França Danese
China . . . . .	Mr. Sun Zhiqiang
France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon . . . . .	Mrs. Ngyema Ndong
Ghana . . . . .	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
Japan . . . . .	Mrs. Shino
Malta . . . . .	Mrs. Frazier
Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Nebenzia
Switzerland . . . . .	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mrs. Nusseibeh
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Wood

## Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization  
Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2023/932)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Expression of sympathy on the passing away of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset of the meeting, I should like, at the request of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates and on behalf of the members of the Security Council, to ask that all those present now stand and join in observing a minute of silence to express the Council's condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Kuwait on the occasion of the passing away of Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the late Amir of the State of Kuwait.

*The members of the Security Council observed a minute of silence.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2023/932)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to participate in this meeting.

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2023/1000, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2023/932, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

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

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2717 (2023).

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

**Ms. Oppong-Ntiri** (Ghana): Let me begin by welcoming the presence of the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo at this meeting.

The three African members of the Security Council (A3) commend the delegation of France for its tireless efforts in achieving the unanimous adoption of resolution 2717 (2023), which renews the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). We also acknowledge the positive contributions made by other delegations in support of the African cause during the negotiations on the resolution. We particularly express our gratitude to the Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for its support and effective cooperation.

The A3 voted in favour of the resolution because we believe that it signifies an effort on the part of the penholder to bridge widely divergent views expressed during the negotiations on a plethora of issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that have a direct bearing on MONUSCO's mandate, such as on human rights, armed groups and regional support, among others.

While we appreciate the commitment of the Council to ensuring the timely renewal of MONUSCO's mandate, we also know that language in certain crucial aspects of the resolution just adopted — especially pertaining to the level and amount of logistical and operational support MONUSCO should be allowed to provide to regional forces — was placed under overwhelming scrutiny during the negotiations and was severely weakened as a result. In the context of the impending withdrawal of MONUSCO and associated transitional activities, the A3 wishes to stress that regional forces, including the

incoming mission of the Southern African Development Community, represent an effective tool for peace enforcement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially as armed and terrorist groups continue to unleash an unending cycle of terror on the Congolese population. We believe that limitations on support to regional forces by MONUSCO are inimical to the regional efforts towards the consolidation of peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The A3 nevertheless reaffirms its firm belief in the primacy of a political solution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, we note that the reversal of the dire security and humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo requires an integrated regional approach and strong political engagement by relevant stakeholders, including the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community.

Permit me to draw the Council's attention to another issue of considerable importance. In the face of significant economic, infrastructure and security challenges, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is demonstrating commitment to protecting civilians from violations. Although we believe that violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by all perpetrators in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are inexcusable and should be punished, we hold the view that the attribution of certain categories of violations to the entirety of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) should be avoided. On that note, during the negotiations on the resolution just adopted, the A3 insisted that certain violations by some non-conforming members of the FARDC should not be generalized as violations by the entire FARDC. We believe that the Congolese Government, through its armed forces, remains committed to the protection of civilians.

Let me conclude by reiterating the A3's strong support for the brotherly country of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as for the stabilizing activities of MONUSCO. We also reiterate the A3's strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and recall the importance of the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Let me also welcome the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to this meeting.

The United States is proud to have voted in favour of resolution 2717 (2023), which clearly responds to the Democratic Republic of Congo's request to change the status quo while maintaining the Mission's core responsibility to protect civilians amid its gradual, responsible and sustainable withdrawal. The United States also appreciates that the Council responded quickly and favourably to the formal request by the Government for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to provide logistical support to national elections in North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and other provinces. We now look to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure that all Congolese are able to safely and meaningfully participate in the elections, regardless of political affiliation and without fear of violence or reprisal. It is incumbent upon Congolese institutions to fulfil their constitutional mandates with the independence and integrity that the Congolese people expect and deserve.

But we know that democracy does not end at the ballot box; in fact, it is what comes next that truly matters. While we supported the Council's efforts to extend the electoral assistance of the United Nations to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we also underscore our call on all political actors and segments of society to respect the will of the people and engage actively, constructively and peacefully, regardless of the elections result.

The coming days and months will mark a pivotal moment for the country and for MONUSCO. Members of the Council will be watching very closely as the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo looks to assume full responsibility for the protection of its civilians as MONUSCO draws down. By working together, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO can bring more than two decades of peacekeeping to a dignified and sustainable close, ushering in a new chapter of peace and prosperity for the country and its people. The United States commends Special Representative of the Secretary-General Keita and her team for continuing to implement MONUSCO's mandate in the face of great challenges. We look forward to continuing our strong support to the Mission over the coming year.

**Mr. França Danese** (Brazil): I welcome the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to this meeting.

As this is the last opportunity that my delegation will have to address the Security Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), I would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the efforts carried out by the penholder in driving the negotiations process forward in close consultation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also extend our appreciation to all Council members for their constructive engagement in achieving this outcome.

Resolution 2717 (2023) takes into account our main concerns on the transition process, which will be a very challenging task. MONUSCO's departure should be done responsibly, while avoiding potential risks of more violence against the population. We emphasize the need to guarantee the safety and security of MONUSCO's personnel during the entire withdrawal process. We reiterate the need for the transition and the withdrawal to be well coordinated with neighbouring countries and relevant regional actors. We welcome the fact that the text that was adopted takes those factors into consideration. Brazil reaffirms its commitment to peace, stability and development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and assures all stakeholders of our continuing support.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Mr. Mukongo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the Congolese people, I sincerely thank the Security Council for having so swiftly agreed to our request to expand the logistical support of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to provinces not initially covered by the current mandate, so as to effectively carry out the electoral process under way, which today has reached the stage of the end of campaigning and the beginning of the actual process itself, which will make it possible for the Congolese to go to the polls tomorrow.

We also thank the members of the Security Council for the efforts made, and in particular France, the African members of the Council and all partner countries, with whom we worked in close cooperation to make possible today's adoption of resolution 2717 (2023), which enshrines the approach jointly agreed between the United Nations and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a view to MONUSCO's withdrawal.

*The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.*