



## *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

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Department of Political Affairs - Security Council Affairs Division  
Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch

### **38. Threats to international peace and security**

#### **Overview**

During the period under review, the Security Council held one meeting on 25 April 2012 in connection with threats to international peace and security and adopted a presidential statement. At the meeting, the Council explored a comprehensive, coordinated and effective response to counter the threats to international peace and security posed by illicit flows of materials and goods, as well as people, across borders.

The table at the end of the section lists the meeting at which this item was considered, and gives information on, inter alia, invitees, speakers and decision adopted.

#### **Presidential statement on securing borders against illicit flows**

On 25 April 2012, the Council had before it a concept paper, prepared by the President (United States), to guide its deliberations.<sup>1</sup> In the opening statement, the Secretary-General stressed that insufficiently protected borders enabled the trafficking of drugs, weapons, contraband, terrorist funding, materials related to weapons of mass destruction, conflict minerals, wildlife and people. Since such illicit flows undermined national sovereignty, destroyed communities and lives, fuelled terrorism, and threatened peace and security, they were rightly the focus of the Council's close attention. He added that countering those illicit flows required strengthening border security, regional cooperation,

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<sup>1</sup> [S/2012/195, annex.](#)

ratification and implementation of legal instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and capacity building support to Member States to overcome conditions that allowed such criminal activity to flourish. In this context, the Secretary General committed to submitting a report to the Council within six months providing a comprehensive assessment of the United Nations work to help Member States counter illicit flows.<sup>2</sup>

In the subsequent discussion, members expressed deep concern over the ever more sophisticated, interconnected and evolving threats to international peace and security that cross-border trafficking and movement of materials, funds and goods, as well as human beings represented, particularly to fragile states. They noted that organized criminal networks took advantage of the opportunities presented by globalization and advances in technology and emphasized the need for concerted action at national, regional and global levels. Several members, however, underscored the importance of striking a balance between global action and the sovereign right of States to manage borders, as well as between effective border control and facilitation of legitimate movement of persons, funds and goods. Recognizing the legal instruments developed and wide range of activities carried out by various United Nations organs and bodies to support States that requested assistance, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, members welcomed the forthcoming report by the Secretary-General as opening the way for holistic, better coordinated, streamlined and more effective assistance strategies and plans of actions. A few members underscored that the Council should respect the mandates of other organs and specialized bodies and avoid duplication. It should intervene only in conflict and post-conflict situations that threatened international peace and security and under restrictive

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<sup>2</sup> [S/PV.6760](#), pp. 2-3. The subsequent report of the Secretary-General ([S/2012/777](#)), prepared on the basis of contributions from 20 United Nations agencies and three international organizations, was considered by the Council on 8 November 2012 in informal consultations of the whole.

measures imposed by it to restrict illicit flows across borders, including sanctions regimes established pursuant to resolutions [1540 \(2004\)](#), [1373 \(2001\)](#) and [1267 \(1999\)](#).<sup>3</sup>

Recalling that the Council had often addressed illicit transfers individually and in specific regional contexts, the representative of the United States noted that prior consideration of each ‘trafficked’ item took place in isolation of the common feature that they shared – poorly secured borders that were too easily exploited by criminal networks. Similarly, the various United Nations bodies involved in assisting States in border protection and in implementing their international obligations were too narrowly focused on specific threats, unaware of overlapping efforts and missed opportunities to pool knowledge or expertise. There was scope to streamline and strengthen the United Nations capacity in this respect and for the Security Council to make an important contribution together with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.<sup>4</sup>

During the course of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which it acknowledged the evolving challenges and threats to international peace and security, expressed concern that illicit cross-border trafficking and movement contributed to those threats and recognized that they involved cross-cutting issues many of which were considered by the General Assembly and other United Nations organs and bodies. The Council called upon all Member States to improve border management to effectively constrain the spread of transnational threats. The Council also encouraged Member States as well as international, regional and sub-regional organizations to enhance efforts to assist Member States to build the capacity to secure their borders, upon request and by mutual agreement. Acknowledging the importance of coherent and system-wide United Nations action, it invited the Secretary-General to submit in six months an assessment of the work of the United Nations to assist Member States.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [S/PV.6760](#), p. 8 (India), p. 9 (Russian Federation), p. 11 (China), p. 17 (Pakistan), p. 27 (Argentina), and p. 29 (Cuba); [S/PV.6760 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 2 (Iran), and p. 8 (Venezuela),

<sup>4</sup> [S/PV.6760](#), pp. 18-19.

<sup>5</sup> [S/PRST/2012/16](#).

**Meeting: threats to international peace and security**

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.6760</a> and <a href="#">S/PV.6760</a> <a href="#">(Resumption 1)</a> 25 April 2012	Securing borders against illicit cross-border trafficking and movement; Letter dated 5 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General <a href="#">(S/2012/195)</a>		19 Member States <sup>a</sup>	Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations	Secretary-General, all Council members and all invitees	<a href="#">S/PRST/2012/16</a>

<sup>a</sup>Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Botswana, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Jamaica (on behalf of the Caribbean Community), Japan, Libya, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).