

UNITED NATIONS



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THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
LE PRÉSIDENT DU CONSEIL DE SÉCURITÉ

15 July 2022

Excellency,

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/262 of 26 April 2022 (A/76/262), I hereby submit a special report on the use of the veto at the 9087th meeting of the Security Council, held on 8 July 2022, under the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East.”

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronaldo Costa Filho', written in a cursive style.

Ronaldo Costa Filho
President of the Security Council

His Excellency
Mr. Abdulla Shaid
President of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York

Special Report of the United Nations Security Council

This Special Report of the United Nations Security Council is submitted upon the invitation of the United Nations General Assembly in operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly Resolution 76/262, and in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations.

On 8 July 2022, the Security Council held its 9087th meeting, to take action, inter alia, on a draft resolution contained in document S/2022/538, attached as Annex 1 to this Report. The draft resolution was proposed by Ireland and Norway. The meeting was held under the agenda item “The situation in the Middle East.”

At the meeting held on 8 July 2022, the result of the voting on the draft resolution contained in document S/2022/538 was as follows:

Thirteen votes in favor: Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America

One vote opposed: Russian Federation

One abstention: China

In accordance with Article 27, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations, the resolution obtained the required number of votes, but was not adopted due to a negative vote cast by a Permanent Member of the Security Council.

A verbatim transcript of the meeting will be issued as a document of the Security Council and will be available under the document symbol S/PV.9087 and is attached as Annex 2 to this Report.



Security Council

Provisional

8 July 2022

Original: English

Ireland and Norway: 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), 2533 (2020), 2585 (2021) 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,

Encouraging efforts to improve cross-line deliveries of humanitarian assistance and all relevant parties to further promote, consistent with United Nations assessments of need, unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance,

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

Recalling the need for all parties to respect the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance,

Expressing in this regard grave concern at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, *recognizing* that the pandemic presents a profound challenge to Syria's health system and humanitarian situation, and *recalling* the need for full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access, without delay, including for humanitarian personnel and medical personnel, their equipment, transport and supplies in order to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance and COVID-19 vaccinations to all parts of Syria without discrimination, as contained in resolution 2565 (2021) and the United Nations Secretary-General's appeal,

Recognizing that humanitarian activities are broader than solely addressing the immediate needs of the affected population and should include support to essential services through water, sanitation, health, education, electricity where essential to restore access to basic services, and shelter early recovery projects,

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. *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) 2504 (2020), 2533 (2020) and 2585 (2021);

2. *Decides* to extend the decisions in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), for a period of 6 months, that is, until 10 January 2023, only for the border crossing at Bab al-Hawa, with an extension of an additional six months, that is, until 10 July 2023, unless the Council decides otherwise, and subject to the issuance of the Secretary General's substantive report, with particular focus on transparency in operations, progress on cross-line access and early recovery projects in meeting humanitarian needs;

3. *Calls upon* all Member States to respond with practical steps to address the urgent needs of the Syrian people in light of the profound socio-economic and humanitarian impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Syria, as a country in situation of complex humanitarian emergency;

4. *Welcomes* all ongoing efforts and *urges* further initiatives to broaden the humanitarian activities in Syria, including water, sanitation, health, education, and shelter early recovery projects, undertaken by humanitarian organisations, and *calls upon* other international humanitarian agencies and relevant parties to support them;

5. *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), 2533 (2020), 2585 (2021) and this resolution and on compliance by all relevant parties in Syria and *further requests* the Secretary-General to include in his reports overall trends in United Nations cross-line operations, in particular on the implementation of the above mentioned activities on improving all modalities of humanitarian deliveries inside Syria and early recovery projects, and detailed information on the humanitarian assistance delivered through United Nations humanitarian cross-border operations, including their transparency, the distribution mechanism, the number of beneficiaries, operating partners, locations of aid deliveries at district-level and the volume and nature of items delivered;

6. *Encourages* the convening of a Security Council Informal Interactive Dialogue every six months with participation of donors, interested regional parties and representatives of the international humanitarian agencies operating in Syria in order to regularly review and follow-up on the implementation of this resolution, including progress in early-recovery projects;

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



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

9087th meeting

Friday, 8 July 2022, 12.45 p.m.
New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil)

Members:

Albania	Ms. Dautllari
China	Mr. Zhang Jun
France	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon	Ms. Bongo
Ghana	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
India	Mr. Raguttahalli
Ireland	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya	Mr. Kimani
Mexico	Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu
Norway	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Nusseibeh
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..	Dame Barbara Woodward
United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



The meeting was called to order at 12.55 p.m.

Expression of sympathy on the deaths of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan and former President of Angola José Eduardo dos Santos

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I should like to express our sadness and shock at the senseless assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan. Our sadness also extends to the passing of former President of Angola José Eduardo dos Santos. The members of the Security Council express their condolences and deepest sympathy to Mr. Abe's and Mr. Dos Santos's families and to the Governments and the peoples of Japan and Angola on those tragic losses.

I would ask all those present to stand and observe a minute of silence in the memory of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the memory of President José Eduardo dos Santos.

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic 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 documents S/2022/538 and S/2022/541, each of which contains the text of a separate draft resolution.

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

Ms. Juul (Norway): As co-penholders, Ireland and Norway engaged carefully and consistently with all Security Council members throughout the negotiations. The result of our effort is the amended draft resolution that members now have before them (S/2022/538). Throughout, we were guided solely by the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people. We started with 12 months in our first draft in blue. The vast majority of Council members support such a 12-month extension. Our amended text, which we will vote on

now, has a 6 + 6 month extension. This is our effort to reach a compromise.

The draft resolution would renew the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing. The draft resolution would ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all those in need, facilitate further early recovery and encourage regular follow-up meetings on its implementation. We believe this draft resolution is a fair compromise. It represents a balance between the different positions of Council members.

We are grateful to all Council members for their constructive engagement to that end. We now commend the draft resolution to the Council and ask all members to support it.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): Let me start by joining others in expressing my condolences on the passing of the former Prime Minister of Japan and the former President of Angola.

I would also like to thank the co-penholders, our colleagues from Norway and Ireland, for their work on the issue at hand for us today. Their leadership in drafting the compromise draft resolution S/2022/538 was very much appreciated. And that is what we are voting on today — a compromise. The United States and many others wanted a more expansive resolution that would open more border-crossings. That is what is required to actually meet the dire needs of the Syrian people, whose condition is worse than at any point since the war started. And we will need to do much more to help them after today. We have had a consistent position on that over the years. Humanitarian decisions must be driven by the needs on the ground, not by politics. But we are not letting the perfect be the enemy of the good. We want to build on the unity we saw last year in the Security Council and therefore today we will vote in favour of this draft resolution. But before we do, I want to explain the three main reasons we are strongly supporting the draft resolution and why we are urging every member of the Council to do the same.

First, the United Nations cross-border mechanism provides unparalleled transparency and stability. It ensures that aid that goes into north-west Syria is properly inspected, reviewed and tracked. It also gives non-governmental organizations the critical 12-month timeline they need to plan ahead and coordinate the incoming resources. Any renewal of less than 12 months would disrupt supply chains, resulting in less aid for the larger numbers of people who require it. I visited the Bab Al-Hawa crossing and transshipment hub last month,

where boxes are verified and sealed, and I can say that it is one of the most closely monitored and well-organized crossings in the world. I saw first-hand what is going across the border. I saw the medicine, food, diapers and blankets. If we do not renew that border-crossing, we will have no United Nations verification system in place and no regular timeline. Whatever emerges to take its place will provide less humanitarian assistance and lack any collective oversight or reliability, and that is a bad outcome for all of us.

Secondly, we have all made progress on everything we promised when we unanimously adopted resolution 2585 (2021) last year (see S/PV.8817). The United States in particular has demonstrated its sincere commitment to delivering on issues that are important to members of the Council. A vote against draft resolution S/2022/538 is in fact a vote against cross-line aid. While that component of the draft is insufficient on its own, the United States will continue to support it and hopes it will continue to expand. A vote against the draft resolution is a vote against early-recovery efforts, which we know are an important component of a sustainable humanitarian response. A vote against it is a vote against the transparency efforts undertaken by the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for Syria. A vote against it is a death sentence. Bab Al-Hawa is the single most effective corridor for delivering life-and-death assistance into north-west Syria, including medicines, vaccines, food, water, educational supplies and so much more. We cannot shut off all of that assistance at a time when prices for basic goods such as food and gas are spiking. We cannot cause a self-inflicted catastrophe while a humanitarian crisis is pushing more and more Syrians to the brink.

That leads me to our third and final reason — a simple reason — for supporting the draft resolution, which is that 4.1 million people are counting on us. That is how many people in north-west Syria need humanitarian assistance, the issue on which we must all vote to renew in just a few moments. There are 15 of us on the Council. That means that each one of us holds the fate of roughly 270,000 people in our hands. So as we are voting, I want Council members to think about the 270,000 people whom they are personally responsible for. I want them to think about the young boy who is wondering whether he will be able to continue his education, let alone survive the harsh winter to come. I want them to think about the pregnant woman who will not be able to deliver her baby safely if her hospital does not have the supplies she needs. I want

them to think about the family feeling hunger in the pit of their stomachs — unbearable hunger that no one should ever have to experience — if we do not renew the draft resolution.

Failure is not an option today. We must get this done. We must put politics aside and the needs of the Syrian people first. I urge everyone to vote yes on the draft resolution.

Mr. Kimani (Kenya): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor. I am explaining our vote on behalf of the current 10 elected members (E-10) of the Security Council in Kenya's capacity as coordinator for the month of July.

The E-10 has been in consultations this morning. We appreciate the co-penholders' extensive efforts to achieve a compromise text that accommodates the legitimate concerns of all delegations while meeting the dire and urgent needs of the Syrian people. All of the E-10 members are in favour of a 12-month renewal of the cross-border humanitarian aid mechanism based on the co-penholders' draft resolution (S/2022/538), which would enable the humanitarian actors on the ground to operate effectively. As coordinator of the E-10, Kenya has also consulted with the United Arab Emirates. As an Arab representative on the Council, the United Arab Emirates has made it clear that the Arab countries want a renewal of the mechanism for providing urgent relief to the millions of Syrians in need. The E-10's pressing interest has been for a united Council on behalf of the Syrian people. Despite the imminent outcome of the voting on the two draft resolutions, we will continue to make every effort to unite the Council.

The President: The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolutions before it. I shall first put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2022/538, submitted by Ireland and Norway.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, France, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, 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.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): Ireland and Norway are extremely disappointed that the Security Council did not adopt draft resolution S/2022/538, on cross-border humanitarian aid into Syria, on which we just voted.

Having engaged carefully with all Council members, we put forward the draft resolution in good faith and as our best effort towards a compromise that could command the support of the Council. The draft resolution's text would have made it possible for life-saving humanitarian assistance to reach those in need in north-west Syria by all modalities — both cross-border and cross-line. It would have facilitated continued and enhanced early-recovery efforts. It would have renewed the cross-border mechanism for 12 months, unless the Council decided otherwise after six months. The cross-border operation is a lifeline for millions of Syrians who are dependent on humanitarian aid. The humanitarian situation is not getting any better; on the contrary, it has only worsened over the past year. People lack food and food prices are rising. We think that every member of the Council can agree on that.

We appreciate the engagement from all sides during the negotiations. We also appreciate the support that our text received from the large majority of Council members. However, we deeply regret that our compromise was rejected through the use of the veto. Ireland and Norway's views on the veto are well known. We regret the veto's existence and deeply regret its use today, but we are not daunted by it — this is not the end of the road.

What matters to us as co-penholders is getting humanitarian aid to those who need it. The Council has a responsibility in that regard, and we will continue to engage with all members to seek to ensure that it lives up to that responsibility. We need to reach a solution in the immediate term — a solution that renews the mandate for cross-border aid. There is simply no time to waste. The Syrian people are counting on us.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): Today is a dark day in the Security Council. As we sit in this ornate Chamber, it is easy to lose sight of the real-life consequences of our votes. But roughly 5,000 miles away, for 4.1 million people in north-west Syria, the impact of this vote will be swift and dire.

Owing to the vote of one Council member, hospitals will have to turn patients away because they will not have the necessary supplies and medicine. Schools will likely have to close their doors, denying children the promise of an education and a brighter future. The nutrition assistance that 85,000 people rely on to survive will be cut off, as will life-saving dignity kits for 250,000 women and girls. Shipments of vital therapeutics, such as Plumpy'nut, will stop. Hopes will be dashed.

This is not a moment to mince words. I have long said this is a life-and-death issue; and, tragically, people will die because of this vote and the country that shamelessly deployed the veto today.

Getting this done would have been the bare minimum. Draft resolution S/2022/538 was already an extreme compromise. It is unfathomable that one Security Council member — Russia — put its own political interests above the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people. This was a moment to save lives and lead responsibly. One country failed to do that. United Nations reports and non-governmental organizations on the ground have told us clearly that the United Nations cross-border mechanism was the single-most effective way to get aid into the country. Twice now I have seen the efficacy of the cross-border mechanism with my own eyes.

The Security Council has failed today, but I refuse to let this be the end of the story. Because of today's vote, the Syrian people are at risk of receiving less aid, resulting in yet more suffering. And there will be less of the transparency that one Council member claims to want. That will be solely the fault of that veto today. It is in the interest of no one — including Russia — to have resolution 2585 (2021) expire. The United States therefore stands ready to continue talks on the issue until we find a way to extend the cross-border mandate.

When I visited the region last month, I saw the desperation in the eyes of countless Syrians. I promised the aid workers and refugees I met with that I would convey their desperation and do everything in my power to renew the cross-border resolution and get them the

aid that they need. I will honour my promise — I will keep at this — and I pray that everyone here will do the same.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our delegation voted against draft resolution S/2022/538, which would have extended the cross-border mechanism in Syria for one year. We regret that the determination of the delegations of Ireland and Norway, co-penholders on the Syrian humanitarian file at the Security Council, failed to find the best way to resolve the issue.

Our position on the proposals for a one-year extension of the cross-border mechanism for humanitarian assistance to Syria has been well known from the very start. We did not mislead anyone in that regard, and we remained flexible on other issues. However, our Norwegian, Irish and other Western colleagues clearly lacked the diplomatic skills and commitment needed to reach an agreement.

First and foremost, draft resolution S/2022/538, which was just put to the vote, ignored the interests of Damascus, which is supposed to be its main beneficiary. It also ignores the fact that, over the past year, in our estimation the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole have not been able to fulfil the objectives that we had unanimously agreed to work on, including establishing deliveries through north-west Syria via domestic routes, increasing the transparency of reporting on United Nations project activities in Syria and providing a significant increase in donor assistance for early-recovery projects.

We tried to correct those shortcomings in draft resolution S/2022/541, which we submitted to the Council today and on which members will have the opportunity to vote. It provides for a six-month extension; in addition, once the required parameters of the work we agreed on last year have finally been achieved, it provides for a further six-month extension.

My American colleague's statement was particularly deceptive, sly and hypocritical in that regard and could give the impression that the draft resolution proposed by Russia does not envisage an extension of the cross-border mechanism at all. However, everything that the Permanent Representative of the United States just outlined in her statement is included in the draft resolution we proposed. Everyone can see that for themselves. Her words are a blatant expression of

political cynicism and an attempt to mislead world public opinion.

We will now have another vote. I hope that everyone will vote in favour of the draft resolution we submitted, because the alternative is the final and irrevocable closure of the cross-border mechanism. We therefore encourage everyone who cares about the fate of the cross-border mechanism to support draft resolution S/2022/541, instead of playing suspect geopolitical games.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I would like to start by expressing the United Kingdom's deep condolences following the deaths of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and former President José Eduardo dos Santos.

Moving to today's topic, I would like to start by thanking Ireland and Norway for their sterling efforts and masterful diplomacy as co-penholders to find a reasonable compromise on draft resolution S/2022/538. It is deeply regrettable that Russia has yet again vetoed a humanitarian resolution on Syria. That deeply irresponsible veto will have a tragic impact. The United Nations and humanitarian organizations have repeatedly described a 12-month renewal as essential, not least to provide operational hope for the 4.1 million Syrians who desperately rely on the support provided by the cross-border mechanism. The co-penholders consulted Council members extensively and their balanced text also provided important support for planning for early recovery, resilience and livelihoods, which was reflected in the widespread support it received.

A renewal of the mechanism for six months only would create significant operational challenges for front-line non-governmental organizations in their planning, procurement, hiring of staff and ultimately their sustainability. We will not support draft resolution S/2022/541, submitted by the Russian Federation, which simply serves to slice in half the fragile certainty that we are giving to humanitarian operations and to bolster the Al-Assad regime. We need to find a way forward to preserve this vital humanitarian lifeline, and the co-penholders have our full support as they seek to do that.

Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We regret that today the Security Council, owing to the veto of one of its permanent members, was not able to adopt draft resolution S/2022/538, aimed at renewing the cross-border humanitarian assistance

mechanism in Syria, which is simply essential to the lives of millions of people caught up in the conflict. We reiterate that humanitarian assistance cannot and should not be held hostage to political considerations, and that is even more damaging when the draft resolution in question is strictly humanitarian, designed to guarantee the planning and delivery of assistance schemes by the various actors operating in Syria, and has the necessary support of the Council's membership. The veto of the draft will only have negative repercussions for the people of Syria, who continue to suffer the devastating effects of 11 years of war.

We hope that the Council will act with the necessary urgency to renew this mandate in order to address the humanitarian needs in Syria, thereby assuming the responsibility entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations. Meanwhile, the General Assembly can now turn to discussing that use of the veto pursuant to resolution 76/262, for which we ask the presidency to prepare a corresponding special report.

Ms. Dautllari (Albania): We too would like to thank Norway and Ireland, the co-penholders of draft resolution S/2022/538, for the intense work that they have done. Albania supported a 12-month renewal of the cross-border mechanism, a must for us and among other things for the planning of resources. But the vote we just cast makes today a sad one for the Security Council and the United Nations, as we have failed to find agreement on a basic matter such as humanitarian aid, which should not even be a point of discussion.

It is also a tragic day for the more than 4 million Syrians who have lost access to life-saving aid. More than 1 million children will be exposed to hunger. We have let the Syrian people down once again. We have once again witnessed the devastating effects of the arbitrary use of the veto by a permanent member. That is not the way forward. We want a united Council that also acts on behalf of the Syrian people, and we should make every effort to achieve that. Millions depend on it. What is the purpose of the Council if it cannot come to the rescue of millions of Syrians in dire need of help? Until we find a political solution, we have to deliver humanitarian aid. We will support the co-penholders' efforts to find a solution, and we must go back to consultations with renewed resolve to find a solution as soon as possible.

The President: The Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution contained

in document S/2022/541, submitted by the Russian Federation. I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): The United States will vote against draft resolution S/2022/541 because by renewing the cross-border mechanism for six months only, Russia's draft fails to give aid workers the assurances required to enable them to sufficiently meet needs on the ground, and that would result in needless suffering. I want to make it clear that this draft resolution has a mandate of six months only and benefits the Syrian regime more than the people of Syria. When I went to the region, aid workers specifically cautioned me that a six-month renewal of the mechanism would be a disaster for their supply lines. They would not be able to arrange steady supplies of life-saving goods at a volume necessary to reach all the people who currently depend on cross-border operations. On top of that, the draft resolution's six-month timeline would mean that life-saving assistance would be shut off in the dead of winter when needs are at their highest, which would be a nightmare scenario for a region in which millions of people are still displaced.

Last year, the Council — including Russia — voted to support cross-border aid for a year (see S/PV.8817), specifically through a six-month authorization followed by a six-month extension subject to the issuance of the Secretary-General's report. The humanitarian needs have only increased since then. The negotiation process for Russia's draft resolution was also problematic, given its process. As presented, it circumvented the normal negotiation process that allows the full Council to weigh in and it completely disregarded draft resolution S/2022/538, which the co-penholders put forward in good faith, a draft that sought to address the concerns that Russia has claimed to have about the mandate.

The draft resolution before us, submitted by Russia, simply does not do right by the Syrian people or by aid organizations. And it is not the right way to conduct business in the Council. Russia has greedily and disrespectfully hijacked the negotiations from the co-penholders, who led a consultative and inclusive process. For those reasons, we cannot support draft resolution S/2022/541 and call on others to join us in voting against it.

The President: The Security Council is ready to proceed to a vote on the draft resolution contained in document S/2022/541, submitted by the Russian Federation.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

China, Russian Federation

Against:

France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, United Arab Emirates

The President: The draft resolution received 2 votes in favour, 3 against and 10 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.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will not speak at length, because the vote we just cast on draft resolution S/2022/541 was more eloquent than any words — especially the empty, deceptive words we heard from our Western colleagues today. Those who did not support the draft resolution demonstrated their real attitude towards the needs and aspirations of ordinary Syrians. They had the opportunity to extend Syria's cross-border mechanism for one year, in two stages, on the condition that the assistance mechanism for the entire country would improve.

The words frequently spoken by certain colleagues in support of improving the cross-border mechanism turned out to be false and hypocritical — they clearly proved that today by killing the cross-border mechanism for good. I do not think anyone in Syria will suffer from that, whatever they may be saying. As for the terrorists entrenched in Idlib, those Security Council members already have their own opportunities to provide for them.

Everyone had a choice, and everyone made their choice, and now this page of history has been turned once and for all. For our part, we will keep providing assistance to the brotherly people of Syria, with full respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Ms. Juul (Norway): As co-penholders of the Syrian humanitarian file, Ireland and Norway abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2022/541, which was submitted by Russia. We believe it is essential to renew the mandate for cross-border aid. Draft resolution S/2022/538, which was submitted by Ireland and Norway and which we consider a fair and careful compromise among the views expressed during the negotiations, was unfortunately vetoed.

Draft resolution S/2022/538 included a 6 + 6 extension of the mandate. That is a practical issue, not a political one. For the humanitarian organizations operating on the ground, a predictable mandate is necessary to be able to plan and implement humanitarian responses. It is critical for cross-border and cross-line operations and for the implementation of early-recovery projects.

The draft resolution submitted by Russia amounts to a six-month extension. That is simply not enough in our view, which is why Ireland and Norway chose to abstain.

The Security Council has a responsibility to secure continued humanitarian aid to north-west Syria. Ireland and Norway will continue to engage all Council members to seek to ensure that it lives up to that responsibility. That means we need to reach a solution in the immediate term. There is simply no time to waste. The Syrian people are counting on us. It is essential that those who depend on humanitarian aid can continue to receive the support they need.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): France regrets that draft resolution S/2022/538, which was submitted by Ireland and Norway with the support of virtually all the members of the Security Council, was not adopted owing to the veto exercised by the Russian Federation alone. That jeopardizes international humanitarian support to Syria and the survival of millions of people.

France commends Ireland and Norway for their tireless efforts to reach a compromise. Cross-border humanitarian aid remains vital for hundreds of thousands of Syrians. No other alternative exists today for providing assistance to more than 2.4 million people; meanwhile, the Syrian regime continues to instrumentalize aid for political purposes.

Draft resolution S/2022/541, which was submitted by the Russian Federation, does not take into account

the humanitarian needs in Syria, which have never been greater in 11 years of conflict. The humanitarian community is united on the point that a renewal for only six months would be insufficient. It would not permit the proper planning of operations, which need predictability and stability. A six-month renewal would be all the more difficult as it would plunge Syrians into uncertainty in the middle of winter, when aid is most needed. That is why France voted against the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation and why that resolution failed overwhelmingly to convince the members of the Council.

France now calls on all members of the Council to show unity and responsibility and to continue the dialogue to renew this indispensable mechanism, at the request of the Secretary-General himself as well as humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. Council members can rest assured that France is committed and mobilized to achieving that end.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): With regard to the two draft resolutions that were just put to the vote, China abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2022/538 and voted in favour of draft resolution S/2022/541. We regret that no consensus was reached in the Security Council on extending the authorization of cross-border humanitarian assistance in Syria. I would like to make the following points.

First, the humanitarian situation in Syria continues to face great challenges. China has continuously supported the United Nations and the international community in providing humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. China also actively provides various types of assistance to Syria through a number of different channels, plays a constructive role in improving the local humanitarian situation and helps people overcome the difficulties impacting the economy and their livelihoods.

Secondly, China has reiterated many times that, in order to resolve the humanitarian issue in Syria, we must fully respect Syria's sovereignty and the leadership of the Syrian Government. Cross-line relief should become the main channel for humanitarian assistance in Syria. The Security Council must put forward specific requirements on improving the efficiency and scale of cross-line relief and push all parties to strengthen relevant capacity-building, effectively ensure the safety

of relief channels and support the work of international humanitarian agencies.

Thirdly, the cross-border humanitarian assistance mechanism is a temporary arrangement based on the particular situation in Syria. In the light of developments on the ground, the Security Council should assess the effectiveness and applicability of the mechanism in a timely manner and make corresponding adjustments. The Security Council must come up with a clear timetable for the termination as soon as possible of cross-border delivery and advance the gradual transition from cross-border relief to a cross-line approach. The specific duration of the Council's extension of the mandate should give the Council the room and the necessary flexibility to make timely assessment and adjustments.

Fourthly, early-recovery projects can bring self-generated impetus to the recovery and development of the Syrian economy. Under the current situation, it is necessary to increase input in a targeted manner, and relevant donors should give priority to providing unconditional and sufficient financial support for this, so that more projects can be implemented as soon as possible. The Council must make tangible efforts to this end.

Fifthly, unilateral sanctions have greatly weakened the Syrian Government's ability to raise resources and carry out reconstruction, which is the most important obstacle to improving the humanitarian situation in Syria. China once again urges relevant countries to immediately and comprehensively lift unilateral sanctions against Syria so as to provide maximum convenience for humanitarian activities in the country. The Security Council should make a clear request in that regard.

The mandate set forth in resolution 2585 (2021) expires on 10 July. We still have some time, and we also have many bases for consensus. We have also heard a lot about addressing the humanitarian situation in Syria and the suffering of the Syrian people. We call on all parties not to give up, but to continue the consultations and increase mutual trust, demonstrate greater flexibility and find practical solutions for arrangements after the mandate expires.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): Before I begin, I would like to join others in first expressing the United Arab Emirates sincere condolences to the people and the Governments of Japan and Angola on

the passing of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and former President José Eduardo Dos Santos, respectively.

Today we deeply regret that, despite the immense efforts made over the past few weeks, the Security Council has failed to adopt a resolution to extend the cross-border aid mechanism in Syria. We had hoped that the Council would be able to send a positive message today to the Syrian people, particularly over Eid Al-Adha, a sacred occasion that should remind all of us of the importance of giving and of compromise. We extend our thanks to Norway and Ireland, the co-penholders of the Syrian humanitarian file, for their tireless work towards reaching a compromise.

The 10 elected members of the Security Council spoke with one voice on its commitment to deliver on the Council's mandate, and we hope that this unity can encourage all Council members to redouble their efforts in the coming hours and days to reach an agreement and extend the cross-border mechanism to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to millions of Syrians in need. We support a 12-month renewal of the cross-border humanitarian aid mechanism because of the clarity it provides to humanitarian actors and projects. However, given today's result, the dire needs on the ground and taking everyone's concerns into account, we are ready to work with all parties on other options, including a nine-month extension to ensure that the needs of millions of Syrians will be served through the winter and that the mechanism does not expire in the winter months when the needs of ordinary Syrian people will be at their greatest.

Ultimately, Syrian lives today are at stake. The Council's credibility is also at stake. Failure is simply not an option. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the Syrian people are not left without access to the most basic assistance, and it is our solemn duty to rise above political spectacle. I would urge all of us as diplomats to do our jobs, find the compromises needed and empower the co-penholders to fulfil their objective. We are close, and we believe it can and should be done.

Mr. Kimani (Kenya): Today is a costly day for the Security Council and even more so for the people of Syria. Our lack of unity will have real-life dire humanitarian consequences.

We commend and thank the co-penholders, Ireland and Norway, for their immense efforts to have the cross-border humanitarian aid mechanism renewed for another year. We voted in favour of the text presented

by the co-penholders (S/2022/538) in solidarity with the millions of Syrian people requiring the humanitarian assistance that is largely accessible through the cross-border mechanism. It is unfortunate that this text, which had the support of all 10 elected members of the Council, has failed to be adopted. It was our hope that a compromise text would have been presented so that the Security Council would once again act in unity, as it did with resolution 2585 (2021).

Unfortunately, that was not to be. In our view, the co-penholders went to great lengths to accommodate the legitimate concerns of all delegations. We are persuaded by the Secretary-General's assessment that renewing the cross-border mechanism for 12 months is critical for the continuation of logistical support, especially during the winter months in Syria.

Going forward, Kenya is ready to work with the co-penholders to explore further options, including a nine-month renewal of the cross-border mechanism. It is our hope that the Security Council can demonstrate unity by manifesting a spirit of compromise for the sake of the people of Syria. As we have stated before, Kenya stands in solidarity with the Syrian people in their quest for peace, stability and prosperity.

We think there will be serious consequences from both votes taken today. Among them will be a clear signal to the world that the Security Council is struggling to respond to the challenges it is mandated to solve. In the remaining months on our membership in the Council, Kenya will undertake every effort to rally a more united approach to the dire needs to which we are being asked to respond.

Ms. Opong-Ntiri (Ghana): Let me begin by thanking the co-penholders of the draft Syrian humanitarian resolution contained in document S/2022/538, Ireland and Norway, for the valiant efforts they have made to accommodate the interests of all delegations on this important resolution, which provides a lifeline of support to over 4.1 million Syrians.

The need for the Security Council to act in a manner that preserves the lives of every Syrian is a responsibility that must be upheld at every moment. We therefore welcome the constructive approach that the co-penholders embraced so as to receive the inputs of all delegations and enhance the nature of the humanitarian assistance required to alleviate the suffering of millions of Syrians who, through no fault of their own, have been stripped of their right to decent and dignified living

by the ongoing conflict and regrettably now have to depend on the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations for their basic needs.

Ghana's support for the co-penholders' text, which includes the renewal of the resolution for 12 months, was premised on the fact that it is more practical and will afford their humanitarian agencies involved enough time to plan and satisfactorily execute the mandate of the Security Council. However, we welcome further constructive engagement by the co-penholders with all delegations to reach a consensus text that may include exploring a compromise duration of nine months. We do so conscious of the need for the predictability of a mandate for the humanitarian agencies in their ever-challenging tasks of mobilizing funding for the increasing humanitarian needs in Syria. For the people of Syria, their needs are to have access to the required assistance, and both the cross-line and the cross-border mechanisms are required to achieve that.

We conclude by reiterating our position that humanitarian needs have become acute because the international community has not worked hard enough to achieve a truly nationwide ceasefire and a political solution that would enable the Syrian people to determine their future direction. That must be our priority.

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

First, I thank the co-penholders, Ireland and Norway, for sparing no effort to achieve the extension of Security Council authorization for cross-border operations through compromise language for a consensual text (S/2022/538).

The fact is that in the north of Syria the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate, affecting in particular those living in camps and informal settlements, who are mostly women and children. It has certainly not improved since last July, when resolution 2585 (2021) was adopted; it has in fact gotten worse, and we are all aware of that.

As the cross-line modality cannot yet match the scale and scope of the cross-border modality, which provides food, vaccines and other vital aid to 2.4 million people each month, the renewal of the authorization of closely monitored cross-border operations seems indispensable. An unplanned failure to renew that

authorization would mean suddenly cutting off vital, life-saving aid at a time when needs are at their highest.

The adoption of a consensual draft resolution on this divisive but crucial issue would show the unity and the commitment of the Security Council with respect to the plight of all those in Syria who did not choose to be part of a conflict but are now trapped in a situation in which they depend on international aid to meet their most basic needs. That is our responsibility, and we need to show the world that the Council is still capable of responding to those in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

Last year the Council added very important elements to the cross-border resolution: the need to increase both cross-line deliveries and early-recovery and resilience initiatives aimed at restoring the provision of essential services. The requirement to keep cross-border humanitarian operations under close scrutiny and monitoring by the United Nations is another consensual point.

As was said here on Wednesday (see S/PV.9083), with those elements we have 99 per cent of an agreement. We now need to agree on the timeline for the extension of the authorization for operations.

As stated by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council, we support the renewal of the cross-border mechanism for 12 months. That would allow for better fiscal and operational planning on the part of United Nations and other humanitarian agencies. But, as we also said yesterday, we are prepared to explore any compromise, including the option of a nine-month extension, that would achieve the humanitarian objectives that we are seeking.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Sabbagh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, since this is the first time I take the floor under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on presiding over the Security Council for July. We are confident that you will lead it to a successful outcome.

The Syrian Arab Republic attaches great importance to the humanitarian situation. We

have been making considerable efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people and alleviate their suffering. For that reason, at all previous meetings of the Security Council on the humanitarian situation, we have pointed out relevant weaknesses and flaws as well as the impediments imposed by some Western countries, including by deliberately politicizing humanitarian work.

Since the beginning of the negotiations on the extension of resolution 2585 (2021), my delegation has taken a clear and constructive approach, pointing out the flaws and risks represented by the cross-border mechanism, exposing the double standards related to the promotion of access from within and showing how the early-recovery projects were not seriously implemented.

We have always stressed that the reason for the humanitarian crisis in Syria is the adoption of wrong policies by the United States of America, France and Britain which continue to practice deception and fraud. We saw that very clearly in their statements today. They have falsely pretended that they are keen to provide humanitarian support to the Syrian people.

My country's delegation has been frank in expressing its fundamental concerns. We have also been open to all genuine initiatives and efforts aimed at meeting the humanitarian needs of all Syrians across Syria without politicization, discrimination or exclusion. In that regard, we have detailed the flaws in the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on the humanitarian situation that we have identified in the past years and months. We have exposed the manipulation and misleading tactics carried out by some States, in addition to the catastrophic repercussions of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States and the European Union. We have called for an end to those measures and all hostile and inhumane practices. We have called also for the provision of genuine guarantees so as to ensure the effective and transparent implementation of resolution 2585 (2021).

My delegation stresses the need to implement early-recovery projects that include vital sectors such as electricity, which is essential to all humanitarian activities related to providing basic services, including health care, education, water and others.

The Syrian people have been suffering from a lack of electricity for long hours in most Syrian regions as a result of the unilateral inhumane coercive measures imposed by Western states. Imagine living

without electricity for just one hour to see really how Syrians suffer.

My delegation also called for the inclusion of a clear reference in the draft resolution on support for demining operations and the removal of explosive devices planted by terrorist groups. Such operations are extremely important to save the lives of Syrians and facilitate the safe return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes and land.

Among the important issues that the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic have stressed is the need for a monitoring, review and follow-up mechanism for implementation. That will ensure tangible results in the implementation of early-recovery projects and non-delivery of cross-border humanitarian assistance to terrorist groups. That can be assured by enabling the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross to oversee the distribution of humanitarian assistance across the country. In order to ensure the efficient implementation of all the provisions of resolution 2585 (2021) and that such implementation be measured, we also called for the resolution to be extended for no more than six months, thereby allowing for a review and follow-up process.

My delegation commends the sincere efforts of the Russian Federation's delegation to ensure that the humanitarian needs of Syrians are met in an effective, balanced, transparent and measurable manner. Together with our friends, we have exercised maximum flexibility to ensure that the humanitarian needs of all the Syrian people are met.

My delegation believes that the United States of America, Britain and France bear full responsibility for thwarting the implementation of key provisions of resolution 2585 (2021) and for hiding behind the wording of draft resolution S/2022/538, put forward by the humanitarian co-penholders. They pushed for a vote on it, even though it does not achieve a real response to the humanitarian needs and does not include any substantive amendments or improvements that meet the concerns that we have repeatedly expressed and made it impossible to accept such discriminatory and unbalanced version.

For years, those three countries have chosen to follow an approach that violates Syria's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity and to besiege and suffocate its people economically, plundering their resources and depriving them of the most basic

necessities of life. Those countries must realize that they cannot turn back the clock and that the wrong approach that they adopted must stop, that those hostile policies must be changed and that starving the Syrian people is not in anyone's interest.

My delegation fully agrees with the compelling reasons that prompted the delegation of the Russian Federation to veto the draft resolution introduced by the humanitarian co-penholders. We commend its commitment to achieving a response to the humanitarian needs of Syrians and alleviating their suffering.

My delegation would like to thank the Russian Federation's delegation for taking the initiative and putting forward draft resolution S/2022/541, which was just voted on and which supports the implementation of key provisions of resolution 2585 (2021) to improve the humanitarian situation in Syria by promoting early-recovery projects and increasing their number and quality by ensuring that assistance is delivered to all those in need from within the country. That will have a positive impact on the humanitarian situation in Syria.

My delegation regrets that the balanced draft resolution put forward by the Russian Federation's delegation was not adopted. We deplore the fact that the three Western countries — the United States of

America, Britain and France — have been so insistent on misleading facts and disregarding the genuine and objective concerns expressed by my delegation and that of the Russian Federation. Those countries continue to politicize humanitarian work, obstruct every genuine effort to alleviate the suffering of the people and use that as a tool for political blackmail and pressure against my country.

The draft resolution put forward by the delegation of the Russian Federation is a sincere attempt to allow the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities. It exposes the real parties that are fully responsible for the failure to implement the provisions of resolution 2585 (2021).

My delegation reaffirms that it stands ready to engage in any positive and constructive effort to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of the Syrian people while fully respecting the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I will now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its deliberations in closed consultations.

The meeting rose at 2.05 p.m.