

Middle East

19. The situation in the Middle East

During the period under review, the Council held 23 meetings in relation to the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. Consistent with prior practice, most meetings held under the item took the form of a briefing.⁶⁸⁰ More information on the meetings, including on the participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the tables below. In addition, Council members held a total of 17 open videoconferences in connection with the item.⁶⁸¹ More information on the videoconferences is given in the tables below. Under the item, both at the meetings and the videoconferences, Council members considered a variety of topics, principally, the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the conflict in Yemen, the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). In 2021, the Council also held three private meetings with countries contributing troops and police to UNDOF and UNIFIL.⁶⁸² In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held informal consultations of the whole and closed videoconferences to discuss the item.⁶⁸³

In 2021, the Council adopted a total of six resolutions in connection with the item. On 14 July, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) for one year, until 15 July 2022.⁶⁸⁴ On 25 February, the Council renewed the sanctions measures in relation to the situation in Yemen until 28 February 2022 and extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen for 13 months, until 28 March 2022.⁶⁸⁵ The Council also renewed twice the

mandate of UNDOF for periods of six months each,⁶⁸⁶ and extended the mandate of UNIFIL for a period of 12 months, until 31 August 2022.⁶⁸⁷

During the period under review, the meetings and videoconferences in relation to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to be focused on three main aspects: the implementation of the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process to end the conflict; the humanitarian situation in the country, including issues related to the protection of civilians, the worsening economic crisis and humanitarian access; and the proliferation and use of chemical weapons. Briefings concerning the political process and the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic were often given during the same meeting or videoconference, whereas those on the proliferation and use of chemical weapons were given separately, in dedicated meetings and open videoconferences.⁶⁸⁸

Regarding the political process, Council members heard regular monthly briefings by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria on the efforts to reach a political solution to the conflict.⁶⁸⁹ In that connection, in 2021, the briefings and discussions were focused on the progress of the Constitutional Committee in drafting a constitutional text and on the elements necessary for the implementation of resolution 2254 (2015), such as a lasting nationwide ceasefire, the issue of detainees, abductees and missing persons, engagement with civil society representatives and women’s groups to ensure their meaningful participation in the political process and a constructive international diplomacy with key international stakeholders. In April and May, against the backdrop of the presidential election taking place in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Special Envoy said that the election was called under the auspices of the current Constitution and was not part of the political process established in resolution 2254 (2015), adding that the United Nations was not involved in the election and

⁶⁸⁰ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

⁶⁸¹ For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II, sect. I, and *Repertoire, Supplement 2020*, part II, sect. I.

⁶⁸² Held in connection with the item entitled “Meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B”. For UNDOF, see *S/PV.8793* (10 June) and *S/PV.8920* (7 December); for UNIFIL, see *S/PV.8832* (6 August). See also *A/76/2*, part II, chap. 20.

⁶⁸³ See *A/76/2*, part II, chap. 2.B. See also *S/2021/683*, *S/2021/938*, *S/2021/1014* and *S/2021/1032*. In 2021, some informal consultations of the Council were held in the form of closed videoconferences.

⁶⁸⁴ See resolution 2586 (2021), para. 1.

⁶⁸⁵ See resolution 2564 (2021), paras. 2 and 9.

⁶⁸⁶ See resolutions 2581 (2021) and 2613 (2021), para. 15.

⁶⁸⁷ See resolution 2591 (2021), para. 1.

⁶⁸⁸ For more information on the format of meetings in relation to the item, see *Repertoire, Supplements 2018* and *2019*.

⁶⁸⁹ See *S/2021/75*, *S/2021/265*, *S/2021/418*, *S/2021/506*, *S/PV.8805*, *S/PV.8841*, *S/PV.8866*, *S/PV.8888* and *S/PV.8937*.

had no mandate to be involved.⁶⁹⁰ In that regard, he emphasized that, by the resolution, the United Nations was mandated to facilitate a political process that culminated in the holding of free and fair elections in accordance with a new Constitution, administered under United Nations supervision and held to the highest international standards of transparency and accountability, with all Syrians, including members of the diaspora, eligible to participate.⁶⁹¹ Furthermore, the Special Envoy repeatedly stressed the importance of working towards a nationwide ceasefire as a way to address the continuing challenge posed by the Security Council-listed terrorist groups in the Syrian Arab Republic, both in the situations of relative, yet fragile, calm⁶⁹² and of escalating violence.⁶⁹³ He also reported on the progress of his engagement with the Co-Chairs of the Constitutional Committee and the Syrian Women's Advisory Board and reiterated his appeal to unblock progress on the issue of detainees, abductees and missing persons. In that regard, he called on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and all other Syrian parties to carry out unilateral releases of detainees and abductees and to undertake meaningful actions on missing persons. On 27 October, after the sixth session of the Constitutional Committee in Geneva, the Special Envoy informed the Council that draft constitutional texts had been discussed but that the Co-Chairs had not been able to agree on the mechanism for progressing further on the discussion, which had led to the meeting being concluded without any points of consensus or provisional agreement by the Committee.⁶⁹⁴ On 20 December, he confirmed that he was seeking to reconvene the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned United Nations-facilitated seventh session of the Constitutional Committee as soon as understandings were in place. In that regard, he emphasized the need for a productive drafting process in accordance with the Committee's mandate.⁶⁹⁵ During his briefings, the Special Envoy highlighted a new form of constructive international diplomacy. He reported on his exploratory discussions with key States about a step-by-step approach as a way to narrow the differences among the various stakeholders and build trust to promote concrete progress.⁶⁹⁶ At the end of 2021, the Special Envoy ascertained that a great level of mistrust among the parties remained. He nonetheless

expressed hope that stakeholders would be able to define and agree on incremental, reciprocal, mutual, realistic, precise and verifiable steps that could be taken in parallel with building trust and confidence and helping to move the political process forward.⁶⁹⁷

In 2021, in addition to the briefings by the Special Envoy, four civil society representatives provided briefings to Council members concerning the political situation in the country, specifically on the topics of detainees, abductees and missing persons, the participation of women in the political process and the work of the Constitutional Committee on the implementation of resolution 2254 (2015).⁶⁹⁸

In relation to the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Council members heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and by the Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.⁶⁹⁹ The briefings were focused on the findings of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of relevant resolutions, including resolution 2585 (2021), by which the Council extended the authorization for cross-border humanitarian operations.⁷⁰⁰ The briefers provided regular updates on the humanitarian conditions in different parts of the country, in particular Idlib in north-western Syrian Arab Republic and the Rukban and Hawl refugee camps, on the efforts of the cross-border and cross-line humanitarian assistance and on the distribution of vaccines through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility across the country. During the year, the briefers also reported to the Council on the status of the cross-border and cross-line humanitarian deliveries in north-western Syrian Arab Republic and highlighted that cross-border assistance remained the central part of the humanitarian response.

⁶⁹⁷ See [S/PV.8937](#).

⁶⁹⁸ The Council heard briefings by a member and former Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on 15 March (see [S/2021/265](#)); a Syrian women's rights promoter and member of the Syrian Women's Political Movement, on 25 June (see [S/PV.8805](#)); the founder and Director of Sawa for Development and Aid, on 28 September (see [S/PV.8866](#)); and the General Coordinator of the Syrian National Conference, on 27 October (see [S/PV.8888](#)).

⁶⁹⁹ See [S/2021/75](#), [S/2021/418](#), [S/2021/506](#), [S/PV.8803](#), [S/PV.8841](#), [S/PV.8861](#), [S/PV.8888](#) and [S/PV.8937](#).

⁷⁰⁰ Resolution 2585 (2021), para. 2.

⁶⁹⁰ See [S/2021/418](#) and [S/2021/506](#).

⁶⁹¹ See [S/2021/418](#).

⁶⁹² See [S/2021/265](#), [S/2021/418](#) and [S/2021/506](#).

⁶⁹³ See [S/PV.8841](#) and [S/PV.8888](#).

⁶⁹⁴ See [S/PV.8888](#).

⁶⁹⁵ See [S/PV.8937](#).

⁶⁹⁶ See [S/2021/418](#), [S/2021/506](#), [S/PV.8805](#), [S/PV.8841](#), [S/PV.8866](#), [S/PV.8888](#) and [S/PV.8937](#).

Ahead of the expiration of the humanitarian aid delivery mechanism on 10 July 2021,⁷⁰¹ the Secretary-General strongly appealed to the members of the Council to reach consensus on allowing cross-border operations as a vital channel of support for another year, underlining that a failure to extend the Council's authorization would have devastating consequences.⁷⁰² In addition to the briefings by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Council members heard briefings in connection with the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)⁷⁰³ and by six civil society representatives in meetings and videoconferences.⁷⁰⁴

With respect to the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, Council members heard regular briefings by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and her Deputy on progress in the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. Except during the months of July and November, the Council heard monthly briefings by the High Representative in open videoconferences or public meetings,⁷⁰⁵ consistent with the practice followed in 2020.⁷⁰⁶ In her briefings, the High Representative reported on the activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and informed the Council about the work undertaken by the Declaration Assessment Team, the fact-finding mission and the Investigation and Identification Team, as well as the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of OPCW. She reiterated the importance of resolving the remaining outstanding issues of the initial declaration of the

Syrian Arab Republic. On 6 May,⁷⁰⁷ the High Representative took note of the decision adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, by which the rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic under the Convention were suspended, and urged the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with OPCW. Furthermore, in the last briefing for the year, on 8 December,⁷⁰⁸ she informed the Council that, in accordance with the decision adopted in April, the rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic would be reinstated only once the Director-General of OPCW reported to the Executive Council that the Syrian Arab Republic had completed all of the measures contained in paragraph 5 of Executive Council decision EC94/DEC.2, which the Syrian Arab Republic had yet to complete. In June,⁷⁰⁹ in addition to the briefing by the High Representative, Council members heard a briefing by the Director-General of OPCW, who reported on the progress of the Syrian chemical weapons dossier following the issuance of the second report of the Investigation and Identification Team in April 2021, concerning the use of chemical weapons in Saraqib in 2018.

In 2021, the Council continued to focus in its meetings on three distinct areas in relation to the conflict in Yemen, namely, the political process to find a solution to the conflict, the humanitarian situation in the country and the sanctions measures in place against individuals and entities designated as engaging in or providing support for acts that threatened the peace, security and stability in Yemen.

Regarding the political process, Council members heard regular briefings by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen.⁷¹⁰ It also heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations.⁷¹¹ The briefings were focused on updating the Council on the status of the Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the Ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ra's Isa towards an inclusive political settlement and the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement, including the outcomes of consultations between the parties. Against the

⁷⁰¹ See resolution 2533 (2020).

⁷⁰² See S/PV.8803.

⁷⁰³ See S/2021/315.

⁷⁰⁴ The Council heard briefings by the Syria Response Director of Save the Children on 25 February (see S/2021/206); the founder of Al Amal Fund on 29 March (see S/2021/315); the Country Director of CARE, Turkey, on 23 June (see S/PV.8803); the Secretary-General of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent on 24 August (see S/PV.8841); the Regional Director of Syria Relief and Development on 15 September (see S/PV.8861); and a paediatrician and advocate for women's and children's rights on 20 December (see S/PV.8937).

⁷⁰⁵ See S/2021/22, S/2021/109, S/2021/226, S/2021/337, S/2021/446, S/PV.8785, S/PV.8830, S/PV.8849, S/PV.8872 and S/PV.8921.

⁷⁰⁶ For more information about the practice followed in 2020, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2020*, part I, sect. 20.

⁷⁰⁷ See S/2021/446.

⁷⁰⁸ See S/PV.8921.

⁷⁰⁹ See S/PV.8785.

⁷¹⁰ See S/2021/56, S/2021/167, S/2021/266, S/2021/372, S/2021/465, S/PV.8797, S/PV.8854, S/PV.8878 and S/PV.8929.

⁷¹¹ See S/PV.8840.

backdrop of the decision of the United States to designate Ansar Allah as a foreign terrorist organization in January 2021, the Special Envoy said that he was extremely concerned about its impact on the ongoing efforts in bringing the parties together and by the humanitarian consequences. In that regard, he called for the decision to be revoked on humanitarian grounds at the earliest opportunity.⁷¹² He reiterated the call for a nationwide ceasefire, the lifting of the restrictions on the imports through the port of Hudaydah and the opening of the Sana'a International Airport. He also urged the parties to agree on the immediate and unconditional release of prisoners and detainees and to make progress on that file.⁷¹³ In December, the newly appointed Special Envoy expressed deep concern about the considerable military escalation and continued violence in Yemen, which could risk opening a new “chapter of war”, underlined the importance of granting unconditional and regular access to the Special Envoy for a more comprehensive process and stated that all communication channels should be kept open in order to find a durable solution to the conflict without preconditions as a matter of priority.⁷¹⁴ Throughout the year, the briefings by both Special Envoys also highlighted the importance of the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of the inclusive peace process and integrating a gender perspective across all issues.⁷¹⁵ In 2021, the Council also heard briefings by three civil society representatives on the participation of women in the peace process, the humanitarian response plan for the country and the political and economic developments in Yemen.⁷¹⁶ Affirming that women had been excluded from formal and meaningful roles in the United Nations-led peace process and the new Government of Yemen, the founding member and Programme Manager of SOS Center for Youth Capabilities Development called for the direct participation of women as stipulated in resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).⁷¹⁷

Regarding the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the Council heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency

Relief Coordinator or his Deputy and by the Director or Deputy Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, often in conjunction with the Special Envoy. The briefers focused on the deteriorating security situation, which had deepened the humanitarian crisis in the country. They noted that the humanitarian crisis had been exacerbated by the economic collapse and the protection risks in the country, disproportionately affecting civilians, in particular children and internally displaced persons. They also emphasized the need for safe, timely and sustained humanitarian access and a renewed effort to end the conflict. Council members also heard briefings by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme on the humanitarian impact of the designation by the United States of Ansar Allah as a terrorist organization on 14 January 2021 (later reversed on 18 February),⁷¹⁸ the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on the serious implications of the oil leakage of the floating storage and offloading unit, FSO *Safer*, for the region in the event of a significant oil spill,⁷¹⁹ and the Executive Director of UNICEF on the public health and socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in Yemen, in particular on the lives of children and their families.⁷²⁰ The Council also heard a briefing from a civil society representative on the humanitarian situation on the ground in Yemen.⁷²¹

Council members also heard a briefing in connection with the sanctions in Yemen by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2140 \(2014\)](#).⁷²²

In its decisions in 2021, the Council also addressed the issues outlined above concerning the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and the mandates of UNDOF and UNIFIL.

In connection with the Syrian Arab Republic and against the backdrop of the expiration of the authorization for the cross-border operations mechanism, which had been last renewed on 11 July

⁷¹² See [S/2021/56](#).

⁷¹³ See [S/2021/56](#), [S/2021/167](#) and [S/2021/372](#).

⁷¹⁴ See [S/PV.8929](#).

⁷¹⁵ See [S/2021/372](#), [S/PV.8797](#), [S/PV.8854](#) and [S/PV.8878](#).

⁷¹⁶ The Council heard briefings by a founding member and the Programme Manager of SOS Center for Youth Capabilities Development on 15 June (see [S/PV.8797](#)); the Executive Director of the Ma'rib Girls Foundation for Development on 10 September (see [S/PV.8854](#)); and a Fellow at the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies on 14 October (see [S/PV.8878](#)).

⁷¹⁷ See [S/PV.8797](#).

⁷¹⁸ See [S/2021/56](#).

⁷¹⁹ See [S/PV.8786](#).

⁷²⁰ See [S/PV.8840](#).

⁷²¹ The CARE Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa gave a briefing to the Council on 16 March (see [S/2021/266](#)).

⁷²² See [S/2021/167](#). See also [S/2021/79](#). The same Chair also gave a briefing to the Council in the context of the end-of-year briefing by the outgoing Chairs of the various subsidiary bodies under the item “Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council” on 13 December (see [S/PV.8928](#)). For more information, see sect. 29 below.

2020 by resolution [2533 \(2020\)](#),⁷²³ the Council held a meeting on 9 July 2021 to consider a draft resolution submitted by Ireland, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States to extend the mechanism.⁷²⁴ The Council unanimously adopted resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the decisions in paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#), for a period of six months, until 10 January 2022, only for the border crossing at Bab al-Hawa, with an extension of an additional six months, until 10 July 2022, subject to the issuance of the Secretary General's substantive report, with a particular focus on transparency in operations, and progress on cross-line access in meeting humanitarian needs.⁷²⁵ The Council also requested 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 the Syrian Arab Republic and early recovery projects.⁷²⁶ After the adoption of the resolution, several Council members took the floor, welcoming the unanimous adoption of resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#).⁷²⁷ The representative of the United States underlined that it was important that the Russian Federation and the United States had been able to come together on a humanitarian initiative that served the interest of the Syrian people. The representative of the Russian Federation noted that the resolution was a major milestone in resolving the Syrian crisis, pointing to how, for the first time, the need to improve supplies across the contact lines had been emphasized and that the Council members had given the green light for the cross-border mechanism to be gradually supplemented and then replaced by supplies across the contact lines. While welcoming the unanimous adoption of the resolution, the representative of China said that it was of critical importance to enhance the monitoring of cross-border delivery to help prevent crossing points from being used in a manner that went beyond the Council's mandate. He added that there was much to improve in the draft regarding the lifting of unilateral sanctions and that his delegation expected the Council members to continue to take effective measures to eliminate the negative impact of unilateral sanctions. The representative of Mexico, while noting that her delegation would have preferred a more ambitious text to address the complex humanitarian situation in the

Syrian Arab Republic, stated that the renewal of the Bab al-Hawa crossing for 12 months would enable the continuation of humanitarian operations by adding certainty to the planning of activities and the budget. The representative of France said that the renewed mechanism was not sufficient to meet the humanitarian needs and expressed regret that the Bab al-Salam and Ya'rubiyah crossings had not reopened. Nonetheless, he added that resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#) could not be interpreted as indicating a change in the well-known position of France and reiterated that France would not fund reconstruction nor lift sanctions until a credible political process was firmly in place, in accordance with resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#). He also clarified that the resolution did not imply the transmission of data on aid recipients and humanitarian partners that were not intended to be made public.

With regard to the conflict in Yemen, on 14 July, the Council adopted resolution [2586 \(2021\)](#) concerning UNMHA, by which the Council extended the mandate of the Mission for a period of 12 months, until 15 July 2022.⁷²⁸ By the resolution, the Council reiterated the existing mandate of the Mission, which included leading and supporting the functioning of the Redeployment Coordination Committee to oversee the governorate-wide ceasefire, the redeployment of forces and the mine action operations; monitoring the compliance of the parties with the ceasefire and the mutual redeployment of forces from the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa; working with the parties so that the security of the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa was assured by local security forces in accordance with Yemeni law; and facilitating and coordinating United Nations support to assist the parties in fully implementing the Hudaydah Agreement.⁷²⁹ The Council also requested the Secretary-General to fully deploy UNMHA expeditiously, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and called on the parties to the Hudaydah Agreement to support the United Nations, including by ensuring the safety, security, and health of UNMHA personnel and the unhindered and expeditious movement into and within Yemen of UNMHA personnel and equipment, provisions and essential supplies.⁷³⁰

Regarding the sanctions measures imposed in connection with the conflict in Yemen, on 25 February, the Council adopted resolution [2564 \(2021\)](#) under

⁷²³ Resolution [2533 \(2020\)](#), para. 2.

⁷²⁴ See [S/PV.8817](#). For the draft resolution, see [S/2021/636](#).

⁷²⁵ Resolution [2585 \(2021\)](#), para. 2.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 5.

⁷²⁷ See [S/PV.8817](#) (United States, Russian Federation, Norway, India, China, Estonia, United Kingdom, Kenya, Tunisia, Mexico and France).

⁷²⁸ Resolution [2586 \(2021\)](#), para. 1.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 2 (a)–(d). For more information on the mandate of UNMHA, see part X, sect. II.

⁷³⁰ Resolution [2586 \(2021\)](#), para. 5.

Chapter VII of the Charter, with the abstention of the Russian Federation. By the resolution, the Council renewed the sanctions measures in place until 28 February 2022 and extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen for 13 months, until 28 March 2022.⁷³¹ The Council also decided that an individual listed in the annex to the resolution would be subject to the measures imposed by paragraphs 11 and 15 of resolution 2140 (2014) and paragraph 14 of resolution 2216 (2015) and, in that regard, affirmed that sexual violence in armed conflict, or the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law, could constitute an act as specified in paragraph 18 (c) of resolution 2140 (2014), and therefore a sanctionable act of engaging in or providing support for acts that threatened the peace, security or stability of Yemen.⁷³² In that connection, in their explanations of votes, the delegations of Estonia, Ireland, Mexico and the United States welcomed the designation of an individual engaged in violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses in Yemen, including intimidation and the use of systematic arrest, detention, torture, sexual violence and rape against politically active women.⁷³³ The delegations of Ireland and Mexico, in their joint explanation of their votes, also welcomed the inclusion of language on accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, as well as language on the participation of women in the political process. Nonetheless, they expressed regret that reference to “the equality of the sexes” was included in the resolution and emphasized that “gender equality” must form the basis of any future discussions since it was the long-established agreed language of the Council on matters of women and peace and security. Abstaining in the vote, the delegation of the Russian Federation stated in its explanation of vote that not all of its concerns had been met and that there were doubts that the resolution would be of any help in the United Nations efforts to facilitate political dialogue and promote peace in Yemen. It added that, during the consultation, the delegation of the Russian Federation had clearly pointed out several newly introduced elements that it could not agree to and had presented proposals aimed at amending the text and that some of the provisions included in the draft resolution had not

been properly discussed within the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). Noting that any sanctions regime should not become a goal in itself but rather serve the task of ending conflicts, the delegation affirmed that the body should envisage the strategic goal of reaching a comprehensive settlement in Yemen.

In 2021, the mandate of UNDOF was renewed by resolution 2581 (2021) and resolution 2613 (2021) for periods of six months each, until 31 December 2021 and 30 June 2022, respectively.⁷³⁴ In the resolutions, the Council requested UNDOF to take all appropriate steps to protect the safety, security and health of all UNDOF personnel, in line with resolution 2518 (2020), taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷³⁵ The Council also requested the Secretary-General and countries contributing troops and police to seek to increase the number of women in UNDOF and to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women at all levels and in all positions, including senior leadership positions, and to implement other relevant provisions of resolution 2538 (2020).⁷³⁶

In connection with Lebanon, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2591 (2021), extending the mandate of UNIFIL for one year, until 31 August 2022.⁷³⁷ The Council requested UNIFIL, in line with resolution 1701 (2006), to take temporary and special measures to support and assist the Lebanese Armed Forces with the provision of relevant additional non-lethal material (fuel, food and medicine) and logistical support for a limited period of six months, within the existing resources and without implications to the increase of the budget level. The Council added that the measures should not be considered as a precedent in the future and should be undertaken in the framework of the joint activities of the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces and without prejudice to the mandate and its implementation, the concept of operations and the rules of engagement of UNIFIL, while fully respecting Lebanese sovereignty and at the request of the Lebanese authorities.⁷³⁸ The Council also requested

⁷³¹ Resolution 2564 (2021), paras. 2 and 9. For more information on the sanctions measures, see part VII, sect. III, and for more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) and the Panel of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

⁷³² Resolution 2564 (2021), paras. 3 and 8.

⁷³³ See S/2021/194.

⁷³⁴ Resolutions 2581 (2021) and 2613 (2021), para. 15. For more information on the mandate of UNDOF, see part X, sect. I.

⁷³⁵ Resolutions 2581 (2021) and 2613 (2021), para. 8.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 13.

⁷³⁷ Resolution 2591 (2021), para. 1. See also sect. 22 below. For more information on the mandate of UNIFIL, see part X, sect. I.

⁷³⁸ Resolution 2591 (2021), para. 11.

UNIFIL to take fully into account gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to assist the Lebanese authorities in ensuring the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in the security sector, and to support the implementation of the action plan on women and peace and security.

The Council further requested enhanced reporting by UNIFIL to the Council on that issue.⁷³⁹

For the purposes of facilitating the coverage of this item, information on meetings and videoconferences is set out below in six tables and under four headings, namely: (a) Syrian Arab Republic; (b) Yemen; (c) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; and (d) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

⁷³⁹ Ibid., para. 26.

Table 1
Meetings: the situation in the Middle East – Syrian Arab Republic

<i>Meeting record 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>
S/PV.8785 3 June 2021	Letter dated 27 May 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/514)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)	All Council members, all invitees ^a	
S/PV.8803 23 June 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) , 2165 (2014) , 2191 (2014) , 2258 (2015) , 2332 (2016) , 2393 (2017) , 2401 (2018) , 2449 (2018) , 2504 (2020) and 2533 (2020) (S/2021/583)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Country Director of CARE, Turkey	Secretary-General, 14 Council members, ^b all invitees	
S/PV.8805 25 June 2021			Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Syrian women's rights promoter and member of the Syrian Women's Political Movement	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8817 9 July 2021		Draft resolution submitted by Ireland,	Syrian Arab Republic		11 Council members, ^c invitee	Resolution 2585 (2021) 15-0-0

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<i>Meeting record 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>
		Norway, Russian Federation, United States (S/2021/636)				
S/PV.8830 4 August 2021	Letter dated 29 July 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/692)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic	Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8841 24 August 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), 2504 (2020), 2533 (2020) and 2585 (2021) (S/2021/735)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Secretary-General of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent	All Council members, ^d all invitees	
S/PV.8849 2 September 2021	Letter dated 30 August 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/764)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	High Representative for Disarmament Affairs	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8861 15 September 2021			Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Regional Director of Syria Relief and Development	14 Council members, ^e all invitees	
S/PV.8866 28 September 2021			Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, founder and Director of Sawa for Development and Aid	All Council members, all invitees	

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<i>Meeting record 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>
S/PV.8872 4 October 2021	Letter dated 30 September 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/842)		Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	High Representative for Disarmament Affairs	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8888 27 October 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), 2504 (2020), 2533 (2020) and 2585 (2021) (S/2021/890)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, General Coordinator of the Syrian National Conference	All Council members, ^d all invitees	
S/PV.8921 8 December 2021	Letter dated 30 November 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/989)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	High Representative for Disarmament Affairs	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8937 20 December 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018), 2449 (2018), 2504 (2020), 2533 (2020) and 2585 (2021) (S/2021/1029)		Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Syrian-born paediatrician and advocate for women's and children's rights	All Council members, ^d all invitees	

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<i>Meeting record 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>
	Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations humanitarian operations in the Syrian Arab Republic (S/2021/1030)					

^a The Director-General of OPCW participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^b China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland (also on behalf of Norway, its co-penholder on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic), Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

^c China, Estonia, France, India, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

^d The representative of Ireland spoke also on behalf of its co-penholder, Norway.

^e China, Estonia, France, India, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway (also on behalf of its co-penholder, Ireland), Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

Table 2

Videokonferences: the situation in the Middle East – Syrian Arab Republic

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
5 January 2021	S/2021/22	Letter dated 7 January 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
20 January 2021	S/2021/75	Letter dated 22 January 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
3 February 2021	S/2021/109	Letter dated 5 February 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
25 February 2021	S/2021/206	Letter dated 1 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
4 March 2021	S/2021/226	Letter dated 8 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
15 March 2021	S/2021/265	Letter dated 17 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 March 2021	S/2021/315	Letter dated 31 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
6 April 2021	S/2021/337	Letter dated 8 April 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

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<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
28 April 2021	S/2021/418	Letter dated 30 April 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
6 May 2021	S/2021/446	Letter dated 10 May 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
26 May 2021	S/2021/506	Letter dated 28 May 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

Table 3
Meetings: the situation in the Middle East – Yemen

<i>Meeting record 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>
S/PV.8786 3 June 2021			Yemen	Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	All invitees	
S/PV.8797 15 June 2021			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Programme Manager of SOS Center for Youth Capabilities Development	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8819 14 July 2021	Letter dated 3 June 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/528)	Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom (S/2021/640)				Resolution 2586 (2021) 15-0-0
S/PV.8840 23 August 2021			Yemen	Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations,	All Council members, all invitees ^a	

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<i>Meeting record 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>
				Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund		
S/PV.8854 10 September 2021			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Deputy Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Executive Director of the Ma'rib Girls Foundation for Development	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8878 14 October 2021			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Fellow at the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8929 14 December 2021			Yemen	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs	All Council members, all invitees	

^a The Director of the Coordination Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs participated in the meeting by videoconference.

Table 4

Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East – Yemen

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
14 January 2021	S/2021/56	Letter dated 18 January 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 February 2021	S/2021/167	Letter dated 22 February 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
25 February 2021	S/2021/189	Letter dated 25 February 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution 2564 (2021) 14-0-1 ^a (adopted under Chapter VII) S/2021/194

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<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
16 March 2021	S/2021/266	Letter dated 18 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
15 April 2021	S/2021/372	Letter dated 19 April 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
12 May 2021	S/2021/465	Letter dated 17 May 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

^a *For:* China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam; *against:* none; *abstaining:* Russian Federation.

**Table 5
Meetings: the situation in the Middle East – United Nations Disengagement Observer Force**

<i>Meeting record 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>
S/PV.8806 29 June 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2021/516)	Draft resolution submitted by Russian Federation, United States (S/2021/599)				Resolution 2581 (2021) 15-0-0
S/PV.8938 21 December 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2021/994)	Draft resolution submitted by Russian Federation, United States (S/2021/1077)				Resolution 2613 (2021) 15-0-0

**Table 6
Meeting: the situation in the Middle East – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

<i>Meeting record 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>
S/PV.8845 30 August 2021	Letter dated 4 August 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/707)	Draft resolution submitted by France (S/2021/757)				Resolution 2591 (2021) 15-0-0