30. Briefings

As with previous Supplements, briefings by different speakers not explicitly connected to a specific item under the Council’s agenda are featured in this section. In 2020, the Security Council held one such meeting in the form of a briefing. More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held three open videoconferences to hear briefings that were not explicitly connected to any specific item on the agenda of the Council. More information on the videoconferences is provided in the tables 2 and 3 below.

Consistent with prior practice, the Council held one meeting under the item “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe”. On 6 February 2020, during the 8714th meeting, the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) briefed the Council on contemporary security challenges explaining that Albania’s strategic goal at the helm of the OSCE would be to defend multilateralism at a time where it was felt under attack. He further elaborated on the three main priorities of the OSCE under the chairmanship of Albania. With regard to the first priority, namely, making a difference on the ground, he said that Albania would be promoting the work of the OSCE where it was closest to the people and in that connection, conflict resolution efforts would be at the top of the agenda. He also addressed specifically the situation in Ukraine,832 the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the situation in Georgia, as well as the Transnistrian settlement process in Moldova.833 The Chairperson-in-Office noted that women continued to be disproportionately affected by conflicts in the OSCE area and were being unjustly excluded from peace efforts. Inspired by the 20th anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), he said that Albania would inject a new momentum into promoting the role of women in peace processes. He noted that Albania’s second priority was to implement its commitments. In that regard, he mentioned immediate and urgent priorities such as promoting the freedom of expression and the freedom of the media, safeguarding the rights of national minorities and

832 For further details on discussions relating to Ukraine, see part I sect. 19.
833 See S/PV.8714.

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combating violence against women. He further explained that the third priority of Albania’s chairmanship was dialogue. In that connection, the Chairperson-in-Office announced that he would make it his personal commitment to advance dialogue among OSCE States and among and within OSCE States’ societies, also noting that risk reduction, incident prevention and environmental protection would feature in debates among OSCE States, international organizations and civil society. He signalled, however, that a major obstacle to dialogue was the rise of intolerance, hate crimes and hate speech, and expressed the intention to redouble efforts to promote tolerance and non-discrimination.

Following the briefing, members of the Council noted the importance of cooperation with regional arrangements, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and welcomed the continued cooperation between the Council and the OSCE in the maintenance of international peace and security.834 Several Council members also expressed support for the efforts of the Chairperson-in-Office to feature women and peace and security as one of the top priorities during Albania’s chairmanship of the OSCE.835

On 18 June 2020, Council members held a videoconference to hear a briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In his intervention, the High Commissioner highlighted three areas of concern. First, he addressed the rising number of displaced persons and focused on the Sahel region of West Africa and Libya. His second point concerned protection. He agreed with others’ reference to COVID-19 as a protection crisis and mentioned that despite the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire, conflicts had continued to grow.836 He made reference to the situation of refugees and displaced persons, focusing on Yemen, Venezuela, the Syrian Arab Republic and the broader region around it. Finally, he referred to the need not to give up on solutions. In that regard, he focused specifically on those countries of origin of two thirds of the refugees and people crossing borders, namely, the Syrian Arab

834 Ibid., Viet Nam, Tunisia, France, Estonia, Niger, China, Indonesia, South Africa, Russian Federation and Belgium. For more information about the role of regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security, see part VIII.
835 Ibid., Germany, Viet Nam, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom, South Africa and Belgium.
836 In his statement, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees referred to a separate meeting under the item “Protection of civilians in armed conflict” at which COVID-19 was referred to as a protection crisis. See for further details, part I, sect. 26.
Republic, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar. On those specific countries, he offered his views to focus on solutions with respect to the situations in South Sudan and Myanmar. In closing, he called on Council members to echo and follow up on the ceasefire call of the Secretary-General, and to use their leadership and influence to seek out and to expand space for solutions. He expressed concern regarding the Council’s divisions and his expectation that the Council would send decisive, clear and unanimous messages to end conflicts and pursue avenues for peace.837

In line with the previously established practice, the Council heard one briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice, held in the format of a closed videoconference.838 In 2020, Council members held two videoconferences in connection with the item “Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council”. On 23 November 2020, Council members held a videoconference to hear a joint briefing by the Chairs of the three committees related to counterterrorism and non-proliferation, namely, the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).839 During their briefings, the Chairs provided an overview of the work of the three committees, including their ongoing cooperation and that of their groups of experts in assisting Member States to counter the financing of terrorism and proliferation. In their deliberations, Council members discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on exacerbating conditions conducive to terrorism, expressing concern that terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh) and Al-Qaeda, might take advantage of the disruption and increased use of information technology.840 In addition, while briefers and some Council members noted the importance of ensuring respect for human rights and international human rights and humanitarian law when countering terrorism,841 the representative of the Russian Federation expressed concern about the high level of politicization of issues related to

838 See A/75/2, part II, chap. 19.
840 Ibid., China, Dominican Republic, France, South Africa and Viet Nam.
841 Ibid., Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.
the protection of human rights and the fight against violent extremism and extremist ideology. The forthcoming comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was also raised and several Council members noted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the initial timeline for that process.\footnote{842} In addition, in a videoconference held on 16 December 2020, Council members heard the end-of-year briefing by the outgoing Chairs of the various subsidiary bodies, namely the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia; the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006); the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali; the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.\footnote{843} In their briefings, several Chairs raised the issue of a more equitable distribution of chairmanships of subsidiary organs among the elected and permanent members of the Council.\footnote{844} Furthermore, Chairs discussed the importance of transparency and respect for the procedural aspects of the work of the respective committees and working groups.\footnote{845} Other topics discussed during the briefing included the working conditions of the members of the Panels of Experts, the implementation of sanctions measures, as well as the institutional setup for the way in which the United Nations dealt with sanctions regimes.

\begin{table}
\caption{Meetings: briefings by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe}
\end{table}

\footnote{842}{Ibid., Germany, Russian Federation and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.}
\footnote{843}{See S/2020/1258.}
\footnote{844}{Ibid., Belgium, Indonesia, and Germany.}
\footnote{845}{Ibid., Belgium, Indonesia and Dominican Republic.}

Meeting record and date | Sub-item | Other documents | Rule 37 invitations | Rule 39 and other invitations | Speakers | Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)
---|---|---|---|---|---|---
S/PV 8714 6 February 2020 | | | | | Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Prime Minister and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania | All Council members, invitee

Table 2
Videoconferences: briefings by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Videoconference date</th>
<th>Videoconference record</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</th>
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<tr>
<td>18 June 2020</td>
<td>S/2020/560</td>
<td>Letter dated 22 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council</td>
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Table 3
Videoconferences: briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

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<th>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</th>
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<td>23 November 2020</td>
<td>S/2020/1143</td>
<td>Letter dated 25 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 December 2020</td>
<td>S/2020/1258</td>
<td>Letter dated 18 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council</td>
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