October 2021 at a Glance

In October, under the Presidency of Kenya, the Security Council held three signature events:

- A briefing on Small arms specifically focused on the biennial report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/839) (6 October).

- An open debate on Peacebuilding and sustaining peace, focused on diversity, state-building and the search for peace (12 October). The President of Kenya presided over the meeting.

- An open videoconference in connection with Cooperation between the UN and regional and subregional organizations, focused on the African Union (28 October). The President of Kenya presided over the meeting.

Key Topics

The Middle East was the most frequently considered country- or region-specific item in open and closed discussions (4, 14 and 27 October) together with Western Sahara (11, 13 and 29 October) including a private meeting with troop-contributing countries to MINURSO. Haiti and Colombia were also discussed more than once during the month.

Other country or region-specific discussions considered by the Council in October included: the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Great Lakes region, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mali, the Middle East including the Palestinian Question, Peace and Security in Africa, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan and UNDOF. Council members discussed under other matters (AOB) the following topics: the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, and UNISFA.
Other thematic items discussed in the Council included: Children and armed conflict (29 October). A briefing was held on the Security Council mission to Mali and Niger (29 October).

Procedural notes

At the annual open debate on Women and peace and security focused on investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding (21 October), the Council invited 36 non-Council members to deliver statements in-person in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, the highest number since the resumption of in-person meetings on 25 May 2021. 24 Member States and other delegations also submitted written statements. The annual open debate was presided by the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Kenya.


The Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions held its fifth meeting of the year (8 October).

Decisions and press statements

In October 2021, the Council adopted 4 resolutions (3 of which were adopted unanimously) and issued 3 presidential statements.

The Council unanimously adopted resolution 2600 (2021) on 15 October extending the mandate of BINUH until 15 July 2022 and requesting an assessment of its mandate; resolution 2603 (2021) on 29 October extending the mandate of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia until 31 October 2022; and resolution 2601 (2021) also on 29 October on the protection of education in conflict, co-sponsored by 99 Member States. The Council also adopted, with two abstentions (Russian Federation and Tunisia), resolution 2602 (2021) on 29 October, extending the mandate of MINURSO until 31 October 2022.

The Council issued 3 presidential statement on the situation in the Great Lakes region (S/PRST/2021/19 of 20 October); on the elections in South Sudan (S/PRST/2021/20 of 27 October); and on Cooperation between the UN and the African Union (S/PRST/2021/21 of 28 October).

The Council issued 7 press statements on the following topics: attack against MINUSMA (SC/14654), terrorist attacks in Kunduz (SC/14658) and Kandahar (SC/14665) in Afghanistan, the deterioration of the situation regarding UNISFA (SC/14666), the situation in Yemen (SC/14671), the elections in Iraq (SC/14673) and the military takeover in Sudan (SC/14678).

Other activities

During the month of October, Council members held 4 Arria-formula meetings: three were held virtually on the situation in Belarus (8 October), on the situation in Haiti (15 October) and on the topic of “Addressing and Countering Hate Speech and Preventing Incitement to Discrimination, Hostility, and Violence on social media” (28 October) whereas one was held in-person on the Sea-level rise and implications for international peace and security (18 October).

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For more information about the Council’s working methods during the COVID-19 pandemic, please consult the newly launched 23rd Supplement (2020) Part II on procedural developments.