

Meetings: Central African region

<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.8787 7 June 2021	Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) (S/2021/517)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA	12 Council members, ^a invitee	
S/PV.8933 15 December 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of UNOCA (S/2021/975)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General	12 Council members, ^a invitee	

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

7. Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

During the period under review, the Council held 15 meetings and adopted seven resolutions and two statements by the President of the Council under the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan”. Eleven of the meetings took the form of briefings and four were convened for the adoption of a decision.¹⁸⁸ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. Council members also held nine open videoconferences in connection with the item, more details of which are given in table 2 below.¹⁸⁹ In addition to the meetings and open videoconferences, Council members held informal consultations of the whole, closed videoconferences and an informal interactive dialogue in connection with the item.¹⁹⁰ In 2021, the Secretary-General appointed a new Special Representative for

South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).¹⁹¹

Consistent with prior practice, the Council considered several distinct topics under the item, namely: (a) the situation in the Sudan, the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the drawdown and liquidation of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID); (b) relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, the situation in the Abyei Area and the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); and (c) the situation in South Sudan and the mandate of UNMISS.¹⁹² The Council also discussed the work of the Committees and Panels of Experts concerning the Sudan and South Sudan and the implementation of resolution [1593 \(2005\)](#), by which the Council referred the situation in Darfur to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

¹⁸⁹ 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.

¹⁹⁰ See [A/76/2](#), part II, chap. 26. See also [S/2021/1014](#), [S/2021/1084](#) and [S/2022/174](#). In 2021, some informal consultations of the Council and informal interactive dialogues were held in the form of closed videoconferences. An informal interactive dialogue related to the item was held on 14 April.

¹⁹¹ See [S/2021/49](#) and [S/2021/50](#).

¹⁹² For more information on the mandates of UNISFA, UNMISS and UNITAMS, see part X.

¹⁹³ For more information on the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan and the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan and their respective Panels of Experts, see part IX, sect. I.

In relation to the Sudan, the Council heard four briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of UNITAMS and two briefings by civil society representatives.¹⁹⁴ The Council also heard two briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support on the drawdown and liquidation of UNAMID.¹⁹⁵

In his briefings in 2021, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of UNITAMS reported on the progress and challenges in the political transition, including the military takeover on 25 October 2021, the security situation in Darfur and the activities of UNITAMS. At the open videoconference held on 9 March,¹⁹⁶ he noted that the transition had moved forward in February with the expansion of the Sovereign Council to include three armed group signatories to the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan of 2020 and the formation of a new cabinet with a broad coalition built on power-sharing among civilians, the military and armed movements. The new Government had agreed on five national priorities, namely, addressing socioeconomic conditions, implementing the peace agreement and resuming negotiations with the non-signatory armed groups, security sector reform and the protection of civilians, international relations, and advancing the democratic transition. At the same time, important milestones foreseen in the Constitutional Document of 2019 and the Juba Peace Agreement had yet to be reached, notably the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council with at least 40 per cent representation of women. The Special Representative also noted progress on the economic reform agenda with the Government's decision to float the Sudanese pound, which would unlock financial assistance, paving the way for debt relief and fostering private sector engagement. At the same videoconference, the Managing Partner of Insight Strategy Partners, a think tank in Khartoum, briefed the Council on the possible implications of the work of UNITAMS for civil society in the Sudan and the importance of the latter's buy-in during the transition period. She noted that the success of UNITAMS could not be directly tied to the Government's ability to implement the transition and that civil society could bolster support for the protection of civilians in Darfur and help to ensure the sustainability of crucial State-building exercises. She affirmed that the inclusion of civil society must be done in such a way that increased, not limited, civic

space and did not undermine the fragile and inchoate social contract between the civilian Government and the public.

At the open videoconference held on 20 May,¹⁹⁷ the Special Representative noted the adoption of legislation establishing the Peace Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Transitional Justice Commission and urged the Sudanese authorities to proceed rapidly in operationalizing those entities. He welcomed the organization of the Paris Conference by the Government of France on 17 May 2021, at which Member States had announced bilateral debt forgiveness, helping the Sudan to clear its arrears with the international financial institutions. Regarding the peace talks with non-signatory armed groups, on 28 March 2021 the Chair of the Sovereign Council, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Chair of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction, had signed a declaration of principles that would form the basis of peace talks in Juba, which, as the Special Representative subsequently reported at a meeting held on 14 September,¹⁹⁸ had taken place in June without reaching an agreement on a framework for the process. At the meeting, the Special Representative expressed concern about the impact of the conflict in Ethiopia on the Sudan, including the flow of refugees, and urged all stakeholders to avoid further unnecessary escalation in the context of the tensions over the Fashaqah border area and the stalemate over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Speaking after the Special Representative, the Regional Director of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa, a regional network of civil society organizations, stated that, as was the case before the revolution in the Sudan, women were disproportionately affected by violence, the deterioration of services and the slow pace of reform. She highlighted the need to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership throughout the transitional Government bodies and in the ongoing peace processes and called for accountability for all violations of human rights, including gender-based violence, that had occurred before, during and after the revolution.

On 3 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2579 \(2021\)](#), by which it introduced several modifications to the mandate of UNITAMS and extended it for one year until 3 June 2022, outlined priorities for the Mission during the new mandate period,¹⁹⁹ welcomed the steps taken to implement the

¹⁹⁴ See [S/2021/246](#), [S/2021/495](#), [S/PV.8857](#) and [S/PV.8925](#).

¹⁹⁵ See [S/2021/246](#) and [S/PV.8825](#).

¹⁹⁶ See [S/2021/246](#).

¹⁹⁷ See [S/2021/495](#).

¹⁹⁸ See [S/PV.8857](#).

¹⁹⁹ Resolution [2579 \(2021\)](#), paras. 1 and 4 (i)–(vi).

Constitutional Document and called upon the Government of the Sudan to accelerate the establishment of the independent commissions and the swift formation of the Transitional Legislative Council.²⁰⁰ The Council welcomed the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement and urged the signatories, with the support of UNITAMS, to ensure its swift, full and inclusive implementation.²⁰¹

At the meeting held on 10 December,²⁰² the Special Representative reported that the political transition was undergoing its greatest crisis with the military takeover of 25 October 2021 and the arrests of the Prime Minister, Abdalla Hamdok, senior officials and political activists. The takeover had triggered widespread protests and condemnation, resulting in the death of at least 44 people and hundreds being injured as a result of the excessive use of force by security forces. Against this backdrop, the Special Representative had welcomed the 21 November 2021 political agreement between the Prime Minister and the Chair of the Sovereign Council, which could help to avoid further bloodshed and provide a positive step towards comprehensive dialogue and a return to constitutional order. He underlined the importance of reaching an inclusive political agreement on the way forward and the formation of a technocratic cabinet, as provided in the agreement of 21 November 2021. In the aftermath of those events, the Sudan's military and political leaders would have to take confidence-building measures to rebuild trust with their own domestic public, particularly the young generation, and to regain financial, economic and political support from the international community. In terms of the security situation, the Special Representative expressed deep concern at the resurgence of intercommunal conflicts and armed banditry in Darfur, Blue Nile and the Kordofans, with reports of a significant rise in the killing of civilians, destruction of property, displacements and sexual violence against women and girls. He added that the formation and deployment of the joint security-keeping force provided under the Juba Peace Agreement and the operationalization of the Government's National Plan for the Protection of Civilians should be undertaken without delay. Regarding the implementation of the UNITAMS mandate, in addition to redoubling its good offices, the Mission also continued its work on human rights and support for the protection of civilians and the permanent ceasefire mechanisms.

Regarding the drawdown and liquidation of UNAMID, at the videoconference held on 9 March²⁰³ the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support noted that, following the termination of its mandate on 31 December 2020, UNAMID was on track to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel other than those required for its liquidation by 30 June 2021, as provided in resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#). The Secretariat was preparing a detailed concept of operations and costing requirements for the deployment of two formed police units as guard units which, in accordance with the decision of the Council, would be responsible for the protection of UNAMID personnel, facilities and assets. At the meeting of the Council on 27 July,²⁰⁴ the Under-Secretary-General confirmed that the Secretariat had achieved the initial milestone set by the Council for the withdrawal of all UNAMID personnel and staff by 30 June 2021. The remaining liquidation process would consist of two phases, from 1 July to 30 September 2021 for the withdrawal, sale and destruction of the Mission's equipment, and from 1 October onward, the donation and associated distribution of remaining fixed and movable assets to Government institutions and non-governmental organizations. In the presidential statement adopted on 2 August marking the completion of the drawdown, the Council recognized the progress made since the Mission's deployment and expressed deep appreciation for its important contribution over a period of more than 13 years.²⁰⁵

In their discussions on the Sudan, Council members welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the Constitutional Document and the Juba Peace Agreement and encouraged further steps in that regard, particularly the establishment of the Transitional Legislative Council with at least 40 per cent women representatives and other transitional institutions. Multiple Council members also called on non-signatory armed groups to join the peace process.²⁰⁶ Council members noted their concern with the increase in intercommunal violence in Darfur, with most of them calling on the Government to swiftly

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, third preambular paragraph.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, fifth preambular paragraph.

²⁰² See [S/PV.8925](#).

²⁰³ See [S/2021/246](#).

²⁰⁴ See [S/PV.8825](#).

²⁰⁵ [S/PRST/2021/14](#), first and fourth paragraphs.

²⁰⁶ See [S/2021/246](#) (France, India, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/2021/495](#) (China, Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and United States); [S/PV.8857](#) (France, China, Tunisia (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) and Russian Federation); and [S/PV.8925](#) (Tunisia (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Mexico, Ireland, Viet Nam and France).

implement the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians.²⁰⁷ A number of speakers also stressed the need for international debt relief and financial support²⁰⁸ and for the review of the sanctions measures imposed by the Council to alleviate the difficult socioeconomic conditions in the Sudan.²⁰⁹ Council members expressed concern regarding the tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia over the Fashaqah border area and called on both parties to work towards a peaceful solution.²¹⁰ At the meeting held on 10 December,²¹¹ several Council members²¹² noted that the military takeover of 25 October 2021 had the potential to jeopardize the progress made in the Sudan's political transition. The representative of the United Kingdom, among others, expressed concern at the deterioration of the human rights situation with the killing of at least 43 protesters, underscored the need for freedoms of expression and assembly to be protected and welcomed the commitment of the Sudanese authorities to investigate their deaths. Some Council members²¹³ expressed the view that the political agreement of 21 November 2021 was a step towards resolving the crisis and resuming the political transition. The representative of Tunisia, speaking also on behalf of Kenya, the Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, encouraged all transitional partners to swiftly implement the political agreement in a climate of peace and national reconciliation.

Council members also heard four briefings²¹⁴ by the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan on the work of the Committee and its Panel of Experts. The Chair informed Council members that the Panel had submitted its final report to the Committee in December 2020, after which the Committee had addressed some of the Panel's recommendations to the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations on 25 February 2021 and had held consultations with the Sudan and regional States on 23 February 2021.²¹⁵ By resolution 2562 (2021), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts for a period of 13 months until 12 March 2022.²¹⁶ The Council requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the Government, signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement, UNITAMS and the Panel of Experts, to conduct a review of the situation in Darfur, including threats to stability, implementation of the Peace Agreement and the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians, measures to tackle the proliferation of weapons, including progress on the weapons collection programme, and compliance with the measures on Darfur as recalled in paragraph 1 of the resolution.²¹⁷ The Council requested the Secretary-General to provide to the Council, by 31 July 2021, a report containing recommendations for clear and well-identified benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Council to review the measures on Darfur and expressed its intention to establish clear and well-identified key benchmarks no later than 15 September 2021, with readiness to consider adjusting the measures to respond to the situation in Darfur.²¹⁸

In addition to the above, pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005) Council members heard one briefing by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in 2021 in relation to Darfur, departing from the practice of providing two briefings per year since the adoption of the resolution.²¹⁹ On 9 June, in her final briefing to the Council,²²⁰ the Prosecutor updated the Council on her first, historic visit to Darfur, 15 years since the Council referred the Darfur situation to her Office. The Prosecutor reported that the Court and the Government

²⁰⁷ See [S/2021/246](#) (Estonia, France, Ireland, Mexico, United Kingdom and United States); [S/2021/495](#) (Estonia, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Mexico, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/PV.8857](#) (United Kingdom, France, United States, Estonia, Mexico, Viet Nam and Ireland); and [S/PV.8925](#) (United Kingdom, Estonia, Norway, Mexico, Ireland, Viet Nam and France).

²⁰⁸ See [S/2021/246](#) (India, Viet Nam and Sudan); [S/2021/495](#) (China, India, Ireland, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Viet Nam and Sudan); [S/PV.8857](#) (China, Tunisia (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), India, Viet Nam, Ireland and Sudan); and [S/PV.8925](#) (Russian Federation, China and Sudan).

²⁰⁹ See [S/2021/246](#) (Russian Federation); [S/PV.8857](#) (China and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8925](#) (Viet Nam, Russian Federation and China).

²¹⁰ See [S/2021/246](#) (Estonia, France, Mexico, United Kingdom and United States); [S/2021/495](#) (Ireland and Mexico); and [S/PV.8925](#) (Ireland).

²¹¹ See [S/PV.8925](#).

²¹² United Kingdom, Estonia, Ireland and France.

²¹³ Tunisia (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Mexico, Russian Federation and China).

²¹⁴ See [S/2021/308](#), [S/PV.8795](#), [S/PV.8856](#) and [S/PV.8924](#).

²¹⁵ See [S/2021/308](#).

²¹⁶ Resolution 2562 (2021), para. 2.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 5.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.* For the report of the Secretary-General, see [S/2021/696](#). The Council did not establish benchmarks to assess the measures on Darfur in 2021.

²¹⁹ For more information, see *Repertoire, Supplements 2004–2007 to 2020*.

²²⁰ See [S/PV.8791](#).

of the Sudan had turned a new page in their relationship and that, following the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding on 14 February 2021, her team of investigators had undertaken investigative activities in the Sudan and were preparing to go to Darfur. She informed Council members that the confirmation of charges hearing for Ali Muhammad Ali Abd al-Rahman was held from 24 to 26 May 2021 and that with almost all other suspects in the custody of the Government there was no legal impediment for their surrender to the Court.

With regard to the Abyei Area and relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, during 2021 Council members heard two briefings each by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, and one by the Chairperson of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.²²¹ While the Under-Secretary-General focused on the situation in Abyei and the mandate of UNISFA, the Special Envoy and the Chairperson of the High-level Implementation Panel informed Council members about the relations between the Sudan and South Sudan and the progress on the implementation of the 2012 cooperation agreements.

At the videoconference held on 26 April,²²² the Under-Secretary-General stated that the continued rapprochement between the Sudan and South Sudan had not translated into significant improvements in the Abyei Area, where the situation remained tense, as did relations between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities. Political progress had also been negatively affected by the inability of the parties to convene the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee. There had been modest progress towards the seven benchmarks on the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism set out in resolution 2550 (2020), with the approval of all requested aerial and ground monitoring missions by the two Governments and their deployment of national monitors, except to team site 22 in Abu Qussa/Wunkur.²²³ Furthermore, 4 out of the 10 border crossing corridors were open and functioning. Regarding UNISFA, the Under-Secretary-General highlighted interruptions to the deployment of authorized formed police units due to non-issuance of visas by the Sudan.²²⁴

At the meeting of the Council on 27 October,²²⁵ the Under-Secretary-General presented the findings

²²¹ See S/2021/408 and S/PV.8887.

²²² See S/2021/408.

²²³ Resolution 2550 (2020), para. 3.

²²⁴ See S/2021/408.

²²⁵ See S/PV.8887.

and recommendations of the strategic review of UNISFA for a possible drawdown and exit strategy, as requested by the Council in resolutions 2550 (2020) and 2575 (2021).²²⁶ He noted that the review team had been guided by the improved relationship between the two Governments, but it had identified a significant trust deficit that remained between the communities in Abyei and had noted the existence of an important space for United Nations peacebuilding, humanitarian, recovery and development assistance.²²⁷ The review proposed two viable options regarding the future of the Mission's military component, namely, keeping the force numbers close to what they were, or a lightly reduced troop ceiling. The Under-Secretary-General stressed that the negotiations towards a political settlement concerning Abyei remained crucial building blocks towards an exit strategy for UNISFA. Furthermore, as part of defining a strategic vision for the Mission, it was important that a set of benchmarks be established in close coordination with the two Governments containing specific requirements for the inclusion of women and building upon the joint mechanisms that the parties had already established towards the settlement of the Abyei issue. The Under-Secretary-General further stated that the planning of the Secretariat towards a full replacement of the Ethiopian military contingent with a multinational one would continue at full speed.

At the videoconference held on 26 April,²²⁸ the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa stated that South Sudan and the Sudan were continuing to deepen their relationship and had agreed to form joint mechanisms for reactivating their border trade agreements. Noticeable differences remained, however, over the establishment of the joint mechanisms provided under the 20 June 2011 agreement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area and the resolution of the territory's final status. In terms of support for each other's peace processes, the Special Envoy highlighted the role of South Sudan in the signing of the declaration of principles between the Chair of the Sovereign Council of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction in Juba on 28 March 2021. Nonetheless,

²²⁶ See the letter dated 17 September 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/805), providing the findings and recommendations of the strategic review of UNISFA requested by the Council in resolution 2575 (2021). See also resolutions 2550 (2020), para. 32, and 2575 (2021), para. 7.

²²⁷ See S/PV.8887.

²²⁸ See S/2021/408.

on 27 October,²²⁹ the Special Envoy reported that the South Sudanese mediation committee had not succeeded in bringing the Al-Hilu faction back to the negotiating table following the suspension of the talks on 15 June 2021. Furthermore, Abdul Wahid al-Nur, the leader of the Darfur-based Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction, continued to reject peace talks with the Government of the Sudan. In addition, the Special Envoy noted the progress made by the Sudan and South Sudan on the implementation of the 2012 cooperation agreements, particularly with the definition of a road map for their review and follow-up and the decision to reopen border crossing points.

In his briefing on 27 October, the Chairperson of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel provided Council members with an overview of the Panel's engagement with the Sudan and South Sudan based on the 2012 proposal for the resolution of the Abyei issue, including the proposed referendum on the status of the territory. The Chairperson noted that the main obstacles in that regard were the lack of agreement on how the referendum would be conducted and who would be eligible to vote, as well as matters pertaining to revenue sharing and economic development. He expressed hope that consensus between the two Governments could be reached and that such consensus would be consonant with the views of the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities so that the agreement made would guarantee the stability of Abyei. In the meantime, he underscored the importance of the role of UNISFA in maintaining stability.

In 2021, Council members welcomed the improvement in relations between the Sudan and South Sudan and highlighted the importance of further progress on the implementation of the 20 June 2011 agreement, the resolution of the status of Abyei and dialogue between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities. Council members discussed the various operational impediments to the mandate of UNISFA, including the delays in the deployment of authorized police personnel due to the non-issuance of visas by the Sudan, the lack of agreement by the parties on the appointment of a civilian deputy Head of Mission and the safety and security of the Mission's personnel. In their statements on 27 October,²³⁰ Council members widely welcomed the findings and recommendations of the strategic review of UNISFA. Some Council members emphasized specific aspects of the process. While the representative of Ireland noted the need for careful planning and sequencing to ensure a smooth rotation towards a multinational force, the

representative of the Russian Federation observed that it was important to consider the Secretariat's proposals on the configuration of the Mission, including its national composition, in a manner that took into account the views of Khartoum and Juba. Similarly, the representative of the United Kingdom expressed the hope that the interests of the people of Abyei remained at the forefront of decision-making on the future configuration of UNISFA.

By resolutions [2575 \(2021\)](#) and [2609 \(2021\)](#), both adopted unanimously, the Council twice extended the mandate of UNISFA for periods of six months to support the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, extended the Mission's mandate in the Abyei Area, the second time until 15 May 2022.²³¹ In between the adoption of those two resolutions, on 15 November the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2606 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNISFA for one month pending discussions among Council members on the findings and recommendations of the strategic review of the Mission.²³² By resolution [2609 \(2021\)](#), noting the recommendations of the strategic review, the Council reduced the authorized troop ceiling of UNISFA from 3,550 to 3,250, while maintaining the police ceiling at 640 police personnel, including 148 individual police officers and three formed police units.²³³ The Council expressed grave concern over developments in Gok Machar, South Sudan, including threats to the safety and security of peacekeepers, which had resulted in the death of a peacekeeper on 14 September, and urged the Government of South Sudan to intensify its outreach to the local community to facilitate the redeployment of UNISFA personnel to their previous locations.²³⁴ The Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan were called upon to provide support to UNISFA in the implementation of its mandate and the deployment of its personnel.²³⁵

In connection with the situation in South Sudan, Council members heard four briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS, two briefings by representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and three briefings by members of civil society.²³⁶ In his briefing on 3 March,²³⁷ the outgoing Special

²²⁹ See [S/PV.8887](#).

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Resolutions [2575 \(2021\)](#) and [2609 \(2021\)](#), paras. 1–2.

²³² Resolution [2606 \(2021\)](#), para. 1.

²³³ Resolution [2609 \(2021\)](#), paras. 4–5.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, seventh preambular paragraph.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 7.

²³⁶ See [S/2021/219](#), [S/PV.8801](#), [S/PV.8859](#) and [S/PV.8931](#).

²³⁷ See [S/2021/219](#).

Representative stated that at the first anniversary of the formation of South Sudan's Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity there had been some positive steps in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 2018 with the formation of the South Sudan presidency and Council of Ministers and the delegation of power to state governors. In subsequent meetings in 2021,²³⁸ the newly appointed Special Representative highlighted additional progress, such as the inauguration of the reconstituted Parliament on 30 August, the historic appointment of women as the Speaker of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly and the Deputy Speaker of the Council of States, the reconstitution and appointment of members to nine state assemblies and the adoption of a bill on the constitution-making process, as well as progress on transitional justice and addressing conflict-related sexual violence.

According to the Special Representative, however, those steps were not sufficient to sustain the momentum to realize peace. In that regard, in his briefing to the Council on 15 December²³⁹ he noted that the parties had failed to reach an agreement on command ratios for the future unified security forces, which in turn had resulted in the fracturing of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition. The Government bore a special responsibility to facilitate the establishment of the unified forces, including through the provision of resources. While noting the announcement by the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, that elections would take place in 2023, the Special Representative urged the Government to promote the fundamental human rights of all South Sudanese, including freedom of expression, so as to create a platform for democratic dialogue in a free and fair electoral process. He also called for further progress in the operationalization of the Parliament, in particular the establishment of the standing committees necessary to consider critical bills during the transition period.

In addition to the political process, the Special Representative also focused in his briefings on progress in the implementation of the mandate of UNMISS. Following the extension of UNMISS in March 2021, at the meeting held on 21 June²⁴⁰ he noted that UNMISS would advance a three-year strategic vision with a focus on making irreversible gains in implementing the agreed transitional benchmarks, making optimal use of uniformed personnel to enhance general security and political engagement at the grass-

roots level, and promoting greater coherence among international partners such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, the European Union, the Troika (Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States), neighbouring States and the diplomatic community in general. On 15 December,²⁴¹ he stated that, partly because of UNMISS, the number of civilian casualties attributed to localized violence in 2021 had roughly halved compared with the same period in 2020. UNMISS had continued to adapt its strategy to respond to conflict hotspots in an integrated manner, including through the flexible deployment of temporary operating bases, while also overseeing and supporting planning for the eventual redesignation of the remaining site for the protection of civilians in Malakal to a camp for internally displaced persons. He underlined that, with the broader Horn of Africa region facing complex political, security and humanitarian challenges, it remained more than ever essential to ensure that South Sudan remained stable.

Concerning the humanitarian situation in South Sudan, the representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs updated the Council on the most recent trends, in particular rising levels of food insecurity, further displacement and flooding. On 15 September,²⁴² the Director of the Operations and Advocacy Division informed Council members that the people of South Sudan faced the highest levels of food insecurity since independence in 2011, with over 60 per cent of the population being severely food insecure and 8.3 million in need of humanitarian assistance, including 1.4 million children. Some 108,000 people faced catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity at the height of the lean season, with conflict as the major driver fuelling displacement and leading to the loss of lives, assets and livelihoods and disproportionately affecting women and girls. The challenging situation had been further compounded by new emerging needs because of the subnational violence such as in Central and Western Equatoria. Meanwhile, there had been limited change in the behaviour of non-State armed groups and certain youth groups that continued to hamper humanitarian access. In her briefing on 15 December,²⁴³ the Director of the Coordination Division noted that around 300,000 people were newly displaced between March and October 2021, bringing the number of internally displaced to 2 million. The effects of climate change were also being felt, with catastrophic flooding for the third consecutive year, affecting some 835,000 people in Jonglei, Unity and Upper

²³⁸ See [S/PV.8859](#) and [S/PV.8931](#).

²³⁹ See [S/PV.8931](#).

²⁴⁰ See [S/PV.8801](#).

²⁴¹ See [S/PV.8931](#).

²⁴² See [S/PV.8859](#).

²⁴³ See [S/PV.8931](#).

Nile States. Conflict, violence directed at aid workers and their assets, operational interference, bureaucratic impediments and physical access challenges continued to affect the humanitarian response. The Director stressed the need for adequate and early funding for the humanitarian response plan, in particular to avert catastrophic food insecurity levels, for the Government and non-State actors to abide by their obligation to facilitate safe and unhindered humanitarian access and for all actors with influence to ensure the protection of civilians across the country.

Civil society briefers focused in their statements on the human rights and political situations in South Sudan. In her briefing at the open videoconference held on 3 March,²⁴⁴ the founder and National Director of the Centre for Inclusive Governance, a local non-governmental organization working on human rights, justice, peacebuilding and women's rights in South Sudan, underlined that the country's leaders must be held accountable for implementing key aspects of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in the remainder of the transitional period. As key pending tasks, she highlighted the need to reconstitute state and national legislatures and establish transitional mechanisms, constitutional and security sector reform, disarmament and demobilization, and the upholding of human rights. She called on the Council to pressure the parties to take concrete steps to ensure that the 35 per cent quota for the representation of women at all levels of governance was met and on UNMISS to join civil society in advocating the respect of fundamental rights and to support human rights defenders and civil society organizations facing intimidation in carrying out their essential work.

On 21 June,²⁴⁵ the Executive Director and co-founder of the Organization for Responsive Governance, a civil society organization based in South Sudan, stated that ineffective political leadership and a neglect of the principles that had guided the country's struggle for independence had resulted in a meltdown in all sectors, including politics, governance, security and the economy. He stressed the need for the unity Government to effectively discharge its mandate, for governance based on the principles of the struggle and for the Council to support those efforts, working jointly with IGAD, the African Union and other actors to raise the cost of wilful sabotage of peace implementation.

On 15 September,²⁴⁶ Merekaje Lorna Nanjia, a South Sudanese civil society activist, stated that the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement had been

minimal, inconsistent, intermittent and slow. Human rights violations occurred in different forms, while the provision of services and addressing youth unemployment and the exclusion of women from national processes did not seem to be national priorities. She recommended that the Council mandate UNMISS to support the implementation of key legislative reforms and an inclusive and participatory constitution-making process, facilitate the conduct of free, fair and peaceful elections, provide capacity-building and facilitation in the rule of law, justice, governance and accountability sectors, and facilitate periodic engagement between the Government and civil society or citizens groups to build confidence and support the implementation of the Agreement.

During their discussions on South Sudan, Council members welcomed the establishment of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly and the Council of States, state-level appointments and the Government's approval for the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan. Nevertheless, they also noted the significant delays in security sector reform, the full operationalization of the Assembly and the constitution-making process, the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms, women's participation in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and the initial preparations and planning for elections. Some speakers underscored the need for the international community's political, financial and technical assistance to the Revitalized Agreement.²⁴⁷ Council members discussed the ongoing review of the sanctions measures concerning South Sudan against the benchmarks, with some emphasizing the negative impact of the measures on the implementation of the security provisions of the Revitalized Agreement.²⁴⁸ Other speakers rejected the notion that the delays in security sector reform, notably the graduation of the necessary unified forces, were linked to the arms embargo,²⁴⁹ with some of them inviting the Transitional Government to utilize the existing exemption procedures.²⁵⁰

In the context of rising food insecurity and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country, speakers called on the international community to

²⁴⁷ See [S/2021/219](#) (Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); [S/PV.8801](#) (Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); [S/PV.8859](#) (Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia)); and [S/PV.8931](#) (South Sudan).

²⁴⁸ See [S/PV.8859](#) (Russian Federation and Viet Nam); and [S/PV.8931](#) (Russian Federation, Viet Nam and China).

²⁴⁹ See [S/PV.8801](#) (United States); and [S/PV.8931](#) (United States, Mexico, Estonia, United Kingdom and France).

²⁵⁰ See [S/PV.8801](#) (United States); and [S/PV.8931](#) (United States, Estonia and United Kingdom).

²⁴⁴ See [S/2021/219](#).

²⁴⁵ See [S/PV.8801](#).

²⁴⁶ See [S/PV.8859](#).

increase humanitarian assistance for South Sudan.²⁵¹ Council members widely expressed concern regarding subnational violence in South Sudan and its impact on civilians, including violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and conflict-related sexual violence. Noting the increasing restrictions on civil space, some speakers called on the Government to ensure respect for human rights and the freedom of expression.²⁵² Council members further called on South Sudan to abide by the status of forces agreement signed with the United Nations²⁵³ and on all parties to facilitate the safe and unhindered provision of humanitarian assistance.²⁵⁴

By resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council extended the mandate of UNMISS for one year until 15 March 2022,²⁵⁵ introducing some modifications to the Mission's tasks while maintaining its composition. UNMISS was requested to advance a three-year strategic vision to prevent a return to civil war, build a durable peace and support inclusive and accountable governance and free, fair and peaceful elections in accordance with the Revitalized Agreement.²⁵⁶ In a presidential statement adopted by the Council on 27 October, the Council took note of the conclusions of an elections needs assessment mission conducted pursuant to resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#) and requested the Secretary-General to establish an integrated electoral assistance team led by UNMISS to implement the electoral assistance activities as defined in the Revitalized Agreement.²⁵⁷ In the presidential statement, the Council recognized that

conducting free and fair elections, reflecting the will of all South Sudanese and with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, youth, people with disabilities, displaced persons, refugees and members of all political groups, would be critical for a transition towards a stable, inclusive, democratic and self-reliant State.²⁵⁸ The Council further underscored that elections would need to be preceded by an inclusive and transparent constitution-drafting process.²⁵⁹

In addition to the regular briefings relating to South Sudan and UNMISS, on 15 December²⁶⁰ Council members heard a briefing by the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of Viet Nam on behalf of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#), in which he provided a summary of the work of the Committee in 2021, including its discussions on the final report of the Panel of Experts of 14 April and the visit of the Chair to South Sudan from 16 to 20 November. By resolution [2577 \(2021\)](#), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Council extended the arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze on South Sudan until 31 May 2022 and the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 1 July 2022.²⁶¹ The Council expressed its readiness to review the arms embargo, through, inter alia, the suspension or progressive lifting of the measures, in the light of progress on key benchmarks outlined in the resolution.²⁶²

Resolution [2577 \(2021\)](#) was adopted with 13 votes in favour and two abstentions, cast by India and Kenya. In statements submitted further to the vote,²⁶³ the delegation of India stated that the resolution had imposed certain benchmarks for the lifting or easing of the arms embargo that did not consider the positive developments in South Sudan and that some of the benchmarks were administrative in nature and disregarded the genuine challenges that the country was facing. Recalling the calls by IGAD and the African Union for the lifting of all sanctions, the delegation of Kenya affirmed that the arms embargo and targeted sanctions had not been effective tools in support of the South Sudan peace process but rather, in certain cases, counterproductive. While the resolution was an improvement on the preceding one, the

²⁵¹ See [S/2021/219](#) (China, India, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); [S/PV.8801](#) (India, Viet Nam, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia) and China); [S/PV.8859](#) (India, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Viet Nam and China); and [S/PV.8931](#) (United States, India, Viet Nam and China).

²⁵² See [S/PV.8859](#) (France, Estonia and Ireland); and [S/PV.8931](#) (United States, Estonia, United Kingdom and France).

²⁵³ See [S/2021/219](#) (Ireland, Mexico, United Kingdom and United States); [S/PV.8801](#) (United States and Ireland); [S/PV.8859](#) (India); and [S/PV.8931](#) (United States and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Tunisia)).

²⁵⁴ See [S/2021/219](#) (France and Mexico); [S/PV.8801](#) (France); [S/PV.8859](#) (United States, Mexico, Kenya (also on behalf of Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia), Viet Nam and Norway); and [S/PV.8931](#) (Mexico, Estonia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam).

²⁵⁵ Resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#), para. 1. For more information on the mandate of UNMISS, see part X, sect. I.

²⁵⁶ Resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#), para. 2.

²⁵⁷ [S/PRST/2021/20](#), third paragraph. See also resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#), para. 27.

²⁵⁸ [S/PRST/2021/20](#), fourth paragraph.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ See [S/PV.8931](#). See also the letter dated 14 April 2021 from the Panel of Experts on South Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2021/365](#)).

²⁶¹ Resolution [2577 \(2021\)](#), paras. 1, 11 and 17.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, paras. 2 (a)–(e). See also the report of the Secretary-General dated 31 March 2021 providing benchmarks to assess the arms embargo on South Sudan ([S/2021/321](#)).

²⁶³ See [S/2021/518](#).

delegation of Kenya posited that more flexibility could have been extended to make the eventual lifting of the sanctions realistic and certain. Voting in favour of the resolution, the delegations of China, Saint Vincent and

the Grenadines and Viet Nam underscored the importance of reviewing the sanctions measures with a view to their future adjustment and eventual lifting.

Table 1

Meetings: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan

<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.8784 3 June 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) (S/2021/470)	Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom (S/2021/521)			Two Council members (Russian Federation, United States)	Resolution 2579 (2021) 15-0-0
S/PV.8791 9 June 2021			Sudan	Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court	All Council members, all invitees ^a	
S/PV.8795 14 June 2021			Sudan		One Council member (Estonia), ^b Sudan	
S/PV.8825 27 July 2021			Sudan	Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support	12 Council members, ^c all invitees	
S/PV.8829 2 August 2021						S/PRST/2021/14
S/PV.8856 14 September 2021			Sudan		One Council member (Estonia), ^b invitee	
S/PV.8857 14 September 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of UNITAMS (S/2021/766)		Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of UNITAMS, Regional Director of the Strategic	12 Council members, ^c all invitees ^d	

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of
the Security Council for the maintenance of
international peace and security**

<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>
				Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa		
S/PV.8924 10 December 2021			Sudan		One Council member (Estonia), ^b invitee	
S/PV.8925 10 December 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of UNITAMS (S/2021/1008)		Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General	12 Council members, ^c all invitees	

^a The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^b The representative of Estonia spoke in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan.

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

^d The Special Representative and the Regional Director of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa participated in the meeting by videoconference.

Table 2

Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
11 February 2021	S/2021/136	Letter dated 11 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 2562 (2021) 15-0-0 (Chapter VII) S/2021/131
9 March 2021	S/2021/246	Letter dated 11 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	
25 March 2021	S/2021/308	Letter dated 29 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	
20 May 2021	S/2021/495	Letter dated 24 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: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan and South Sudan and Abyei

<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.8887 27 October 2021	Letter dated 17 September 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/805) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2021/881)		South Sudan, Sudan	Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, Chairperson of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel	12 Council members, ^a all invitees	S/PRST/2021/20
S/PV.8904 15 November 2021		Draft resolution submitted by United States (S/2021/948)				Resolution 2606 (2021) 15-0-0
S/PV.8932 15 December 2021		Draft resolution submitted by United States (S/2021/1034)	South Sudan		One Council member (Russian Federation), invitee	Resolution 2609 (2021) 15-0-0 (Chapter VII)

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

Table 4

Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – the Sudan and South Sudan and Abyei

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
26 April 2021	S/2021/408	Letter dated 28 April 2021 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
11 May 2021	S/2021/458	Letter dated 11 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	Resolution 2575 (2021) 15-0-0 (Chapter VII) S/2021/450

Table 5
Meetings: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – South Sudan

<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.8801 21 June 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2021/566)		South Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Executive Director and co-founder of the Organization for Responsive Governance	12 Council members, ^a all invitees ^b	
S/PV.8859 15 September 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2021/784)		South Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Director, Operations and Advocacy Division in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, civil society activist (Merekaje Lorna Nanjia)	12 Council members, ^a all invitees ^c	
S/PV.8931 15 December 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2021/1015)		South Sudan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Director, Coordination Division in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	12 Council members, ^d all invitees ^e	

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

^b The Special Representative and the Executive Director and co-founder of the Organization for Responsive Governance participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^c The Special Representative and Ms. Lorna Nanjia participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^d China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (also on behalf of Kenya, Niger and Tunisia), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam. The representative of Viet Nam spoke twice, once in his national capacity and once on behalf of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan.

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

Table 6
Videoconferences: reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan – South Sudan

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
3 March 2021	S/2021/219	Letter dated 5 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	
12 March 2021	S/2021/259	Letter dated 12 March 2021 from the President of the Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution 2567 (2021) 15-0-0 (Chapter VII) S/2021/254
28 May 2021	S/2021/518	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	Resolution 2577 (2021) 13-0-2 ^a (Chapter VII) S/2021/515

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

8. Peace consolidation in West Africa

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings under the item entitled “Peace consolidation in West Africa”. One of the meetings took the form of a briefing and the other was convened for the adoption of a decision.²⁶⁴ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held two open videoconferences in connection with the item.²⁶⁵ More information on the videoconferences is included in table 2 below.²⁶⁶ In 2021, the Secretary-General appointed a new Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).²⁶⁷

On 11 January, Council members held a videoconference²⁶⁸ in connection with the item, at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General gave a briefing in which he stressed that it was more important than ever to collaborate to apply the manifold lessons learned from the COVID-19

pandemic in terms of improving governance and delivering essential services for societies to emerge more adept, secure and resilient. With regard to the Sahel, insecurity continued to prevail and harm innocent lives and, as a result, the humanitarian situation had been further aggravated. Since his previous report to the Council in July 2020,²⁶⁹ five presidential, three legislative and two local elections had been held in West Africa and electoral management bodies had been able to maintain the electoral calendar despite the pandemic and had demonstrated impressive technical capacity to organize and conduct elections. He covered specific developments in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, the Niger and Mauritania.²⁷⁰ The Special Representative reiterated that in addressing the multidimensional challenges in the Sahel, UNOWAS was collaborating closely with the Group of Five for the Sahel to support the implementation of the Priority Investment Programme and the Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for Areas Affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Region. Concerning women and youth in the region, who had been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, a joint assessment conducted by UNOWAS in collaboration with the Economic

²⁶⁴ For more information on format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

²⁶⁵ 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.

²⁶⁶ See [A/76/2](#), part. II, chap. 31. See also [S/2021/938](#) and [S/2021/1014](#).

²⁶⁷ See [S/2021/275](#) and [S/2021/276](#).

²⁶⁸ See [S/2021/43](#). See also [S/2021/1014](#).

²⁶⁹ See [S/2020/706](#).

²⁷⁰ See [S/2021/43](#).