

39. Maintenance of international peace and security

Overview

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings and issued two presidential statements under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”. Sub-items included: (a) nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security; (b) piracy; and (c) conflict prevention and natural resources.

Nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security

On 19 April 2012, at the initiative of the United States, the Council held a debate on nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security. The Council had before it a concept note¹¹⁴² concerning the purpose of the meeting, which was, *inter alia*, to take stock of international efforts relating to the issues of non-proliferation, disarmament and security and renew the Council’s attention and determination to address them. The concept note also made reference to the opportunity for the Council to reaffirm its support for the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its commitment to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).¹¹⁴³

The Secretary-General recalled that in spite of the progress achieved, much work remained to be done, given the existence of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons threatening humankind. He noted that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had not yet entered into force 16 years after its adoption by the General Assembly and that the Conference on Disarmament remained deadlocked. He affirmed that the current stalemate was unacceptable. He also urged the Democratic Republic of Korea to immediately comply fully with its obligations under the relevant resolutions and emphasized that, with regard to the Islamic Republic of Iran, the only acceptable outcome was a peaceful settlement that would restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, in conformity with the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.¹¹⁴⁴

During the debate, most speakers highlighted the threat posed by the availability of nuclear weapons to terrorist groups and non-State actors and reaffirmed the importance of a multilateral approach to nuclear security. In that regard, a number of speakers emphasized the central roles of IAEA and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in pursuing global disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Many speakers expressed concern about the lack of progress at the Conference on Disarmament and called for the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.¹¹⁴⁵ Several speakers emphasized the need for Member States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in order to achieve a prompt entry into force.¹¹⁴⁶ Many speakers advocated in favour of global nuclear disarmament and called for the promotion of nuclear-weapon-free-zones.¹¹⁴⁷ Most speakers emphasized the need for a coordinated approach, and highlighted the specific role of the United Nations in nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security.

At the end of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement, in which it expressed grave concern with regard to the threat of terrorism and the risk of weapons of mass destruction becoming available. The Council made reference in particular to resolution 1540 (2004), in connection with the obligation of Member States to take measures to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The Council affirmed the essential role of IAEA, called upon States parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to ratify the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material as soon as possible, and encouraged all States that had not yet done so to adhere to the Convention and adopt its amendment as soon as possible. The Council also called on Member States to become a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of

¹¹⁴² S/2012/194, annex.

¹¹⁴³ For more information, see part IX, sect. I, B, “Committees established under Chapter VII of the Charter”.

¹¹⁴⁴ S/PV.6753, pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4 (Colombia); p. 6 (India); p. 8 (Morocco); p. 9 (Portugal); p. 11 (Germany); p. 14 (Togo); p. 16 (France); p. 21 (United Kingdom); and p. 23 (United States).

¹¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4 (Colombia); p. 9 (Portugal); p. 11 (Germany); p. 17 (Guatemala); and p. 23 (United States).

¹¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4 (Colombia); p. 5 (Azerbaijan); p. 6 (India); p. 8 (Morocco); p. 9 (Portugal); p. 10 (China); p. 12 (Germany); p. 15 (France); and p. 17 (Guatemala).

Nuclear Terrorism and to improve their national capabilities to detect, deter and disrupt illicit trafficking in nuclear materials.¹¹⁴⁸

Piracy

On 19 November 2012, on the initiative of India, the Council held an open debate on piracy under the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, having before it a concept note¹¹⁴⁹ highlighting the purpose of the debate, namely, to take account of the efforts that the Council had made so far in countering piracy in a holistic manner, with a special focus on the issue of seafarers being held hostage by the pirates, including their welfare, both while in captivity and after their release.

The Deputy Secretary-General emphasized the global nature of the problem of piracy as well as its global implications. He warned that while the Secretary-General, in his report,¹¹⁵⁰ had noted a sharp decline in pirate attacks in waters off the coast of Somalia in 2012 compared to 2011, those gains could be easily reversed if the causes of piracy were not addressed. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive maritime security and economic strategy for Somalia with a proper legal framework, including the proclamation of an exclusive economic zone in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. He also mentioned the need to strengthen the prosecutorial capacity against individuals suspected of piracy and the need to encourage the shipping industry to protect itself. He stated that three challenges required immediate attention: the need for better coordination and information-sharing among countries and agencies involved in counter-piracy operations; the strengthening of prosecutorial capacities; and the establishment of a framework to govern the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board vessels.¹¹⁵¹

During the debate, most speakers welcomed the recent positive trend towards a decrease in piracy incidents. However, many speakers warned that the situation could be reversed if attention was diverted from the problem. Speakers endorsed the need for a holistic and comprehensive approach to maritime safety that also tackled the root causes of piracy, as set out in

the concept note. Several speakers emphasized the primary responsibility of coastal States in combating piracy with the support of the international community.¹¹⁵² The representative of Togo noted that despite the individual or bilateral efforts to fight piracy by the countries affected, they did not have the capacity to effectively prevent or diminish the threat on their own.¹¹⁵³ Some speakers raised concerns about the Council’s intervention in the area of piracy and emphasized its limited role, as provided for in Article 39 of the Charter.¹¹⁵⁴ Other speakers mentioned the importance of targeting the crime leaders and the need to strengthen regional and international cooperation in that regard. Finally, speakers expressed the need to strengthen various legal frameworks, namely, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the regulation on the use of armed security personnel on board vessels and the national legislation of coastal States in relation to piracy.

During the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement, in which it stressed the need for a comprehensive response by the international community to repress piracy and tackle its underlying causes. The Council reiterated its call upon States to criminalize piracy under their domestic law. The Council urged States and international organizations to share evidence, information and intelligence, as appropriate. The Council also encouraged Member States to continue to cooperate with each other in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, underlined the primary responsibility of Somali authorities, and requested the Somali authorities to pass a complete set of counter-piracy laws. In addition, the Council welcomed the initiatives taken by States and regional organizations to enhance maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea.¹¹⁵⁵

Conflict prevention and natural resources

On 19 June 2013, on the initiative of the United Kingdom, the Council held an open debate on conflict prevention and natural resources. The Council had before it a concept note which stated that in the light of

¹¹⁴⁸ [S/PRST/2012/14](#).

¹¹⁴⁹ [S/2012/814](#), annex.

¹¹⁵⁰ [S/2012/783](#).

¹¹⁵¹ [S/PV.6865](#), pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 7 (Germany); p. 11 (Portugal); p. 15 (Colombia); p. 17 (Azerbaijan); and p. 18 (Morocco).

¹¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹¹⁵⁴ [S/PV.6865](#), p. 12 (South Africa); and [S/PV.6865 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 6 (Argentina).

¹¹⁵⁵ [S/PRST/2012/24](#).

the engagement of the Security Council in countries in which extractive industries played a major role in the economy, it was essential that the Council consider the link between conflict and natural resources and reflect on how national Governments could access the support they needed to manage their extractive industries effectively and transparently and mitigate any potential risks of conflict. The concept note mentioned specifically the need for the Council to consider the instruments at its disposal for engaging with the issues, and their comparative advantages, and for the United Nations to ensure a well-coordinated approach on the ground between Council-mandated missions, the United Nations country team, and other actors.¹¹⁵⁶

The Deputy Secretary-General opened the debate. He cautioned that unequally distributed resources were precursors of conflict, but also said that, managed wisely, extractive resources could and should be the foundation for sustainable development and lasting peace. He noted that the private sector was a key player in equitable, transparent and sustainable exploitation of extractive resources, but that civil society, national Governments and international organizations also had important roles to play. He stated that where conflict raged or was a risk, the Council had its obligations, but he stressed that the primary responsibility for preventing conflict and transparently and equitably managing resources lay with Governments. The Deputy Secretary-General echoed the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, in which the Panel stated that there was a need for a transparency revolution in the extractive industries,¹¹⁵⁷ and he called for support of that process of transparency and sharing so that the people of developing nations could benefit from their own natural resources.¹¹⁵⁸

Speaking after the Deputy Secretary-General, the Chair of the Africa Progress Panel noted that natural resources were neither a curse nor a blessing but simply a source of opportunity. He added that natural resources had become a powerful magnet for foreign investment in Africa; the challenge facing Governments in the region was to convert the temporary windfall into a permanent breakthrough in human development. He stated that natural resources did not cause war, but pointed out that competition for natural resources could often amplify and accelerate conflict, tearing apart the weak fabric of

fragile States. He suggested, therefore, that the discussion needed to focus on how natural resources could contribute to higher human development outcomes and reduce inequality. He stressed that the responsibility lay primarily with African Governments, but acknowledged that they could not resolve all governance challenges on their own and that the international community also had to shoulder its responsibility. In that connection, he noted that the Council could play an important role in ending the plunder of minerals and other natural resources that perpetuated violent conflict. He emphasized the need for a much more ambitious and comprehensive framework for transparency, fair tax practices and asset pricing so that the conditions that contributed to conflict over natural resources could be eliminated.¹¹⁵⁹

The Managing Director of the World Bank recalled the World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development, which said that slow-developing low-income economies largely dependent on natural resources were 10 times more likely than others to experience civil war. She added, however, that managed well, natural resources had the potential to transform countries and get them out of the cycle of violence and fragility and aid dependency. She emphasized the importance of a level playing field to negotiate contracts and regulate industries so that countries were not at a disadvantage in negotiating with international companies. She stated that transparency enabled a level playing field, which was good for private sector-led growth and gave citizens the tools to hold Governments accountable.¹¹⁶⁰

The Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme indicated that over half of all countries with Security Council-mandated missions were resource-dependent, which left no doubt of the importance of the extractive sector as an international peace and stability issue that demanded a development response at the national and international levels.¹¹⁶¹

During the debate, speakers agreed on the need for transparency and accountability in the use of natural resources. They also recalled the important role of good governance and institution-building and emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation with other organizations, both regional and specialized, as a

¹¹⁵⁶ See [S/2013/334](#), annex.

¹¹⁵⁷ See [A/67/890](#), annex.

¹¹⁵⁸ [S/PV.6982](#), pp. 2-4.

¹¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

means of achieving such goals. A majority of speakers called for utilizing the existing sanctions regimes as a means of preventing, or at least limiting, the abuse of natural resources to fund conflict.

Speakers were divided between those who believed that competition for natural resources could be a cause of armed conflict and supported an active role of the Council in dealing with issues of conflict and natural resources¹¹⁶² and those who held the view

that there was no causal link between natural resources and conflict.¹¹⁶³ Among the latter, the representative of Argentina noted the importance of avoiding the securitization of the development agenda,¹¹⁶⁴ and most cautioned against having the Council engaged in matters that were beyond its powers in relation to the maintenance of international peace and security.¹¹⁶⁵

¹¹⁶² Ibid., p. 11 (Luxembourg); p. 12 (Pakistan); p. 13 (France); p. 18 (Morocco); p. 22 (Azerbaijan); p. 23 (Rwanda); p. 26 (Denmark); p. 28 (Brazil); p. 29 (Germany); p. 30 (Uganda); and p. 32 (Switzerland); [S/PV.6982 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 2 (New Zealand); p. 4 (Turkey); p. 5 (Botswana); p. 9 (Nigeria); and p. 11 (Malaysia).

¹¹⁶³ [S/PV.6982](#), p. 15 (China); and p. 20 (Argentina); [S/PV.6982 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 10 (Qatar); p. 14 (Gabon); p. 16 (Sudan); and p. 17 (Ecuador).

¹¹⁶⁴ [S/PV.6982](#), p. 21.

¹¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 19 (Guatemala); and p. 20 (Argentina); [S/PV.6982 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 7 (Bolivia (Plurinational State of)); p. 10 (Qatar); p. 15 (India); and p. 17 (Ecuador).

Meetings: 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>
S/PV.6753 19 April 2012	Nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security Letter dated 5 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/194)	Letter dated 9 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/207)			Secretary-General, all Council members	S/PRST/2012/14
S/PV.6865 and S/PV.6865 (Resumption 1) 19 November 2012	Piracy Letter dated 6 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/814)	Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2020 (2011) (S/2012/783)	29 Member States ^a	Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	Deputy Secretary-General, all Council members, 28 invitees under rule 37, ^b Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	S/PRST/2012/24
S/PV.6982 and S/PV.6982 (Resumption 1) 19 June 2013	Conflict prevention and natural resources Letter dated 6 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/334)		30 Member States ^c	Chair of the Africa Progress Panel, Managing Director of the World Bank, Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union	Deputy Secretary-General, all Council members, 27 invitees under rule 37, ^d all invitees under rule 39	

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to Meetings: maintenance of international peace and security)

^a Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam.

^b Seychelles did not make a statement.

^c Denmark (Minister for Development Cooperation), Armenia, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Germany, India, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uganda and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

^d The representatives of Chile, Cyprus and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela did not make a statement.

40. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held four meetings and adopted one resolution and two presidential statements under the item entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security”. At the meetings, the Council focused on the relationship of the United Nations with the African Union, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and other regional organizations from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Strengthening the relationship with regional organizations, in particular the African Union

On 12 January 2012, the President of South Africa reviewed the lessons to be drawn from the situation in Libya and affirmed that greater political coherence and a common vision between the African Union and the United Nations were critical to the resolution of African conflicts.¹¹⁶⁶ He noted the positive experience of 10 years of cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations and offered a series of proposals, including the institutionalization of the relationship between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, the development and definition of modalities for cooperation and decision-making between the two

institutions, a clear division of labour and the exploration of solutions for capacity-building and sustainable resource allocation.¹¹⁶⁷

The Secretary-General said that the collective efforts of the United Nations and the African Union in conflict prevention and mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding were making a real difference throughout the continent, and highlighted examples of the strengthened partnership.¹¹⁶⁸ The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union said that both traditional and new threats required concerted responses by the two organizations and a much closer partnership, on the basis of a creative reading of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. He specifically mentioned the need for the two organizations to agree on a set of principles aimed at clarifying the relationship and anchoring it on a more solid platform, including support for African ownership and priority-setting.¹¹⁶⁹ Echoing the previous speaker, the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union offered a series of reflections on innovative ways of interpreting Chapter VIII of the Charter that would add value, improve the relationship and optimize the chances of achieving sustainable peace. He highlighted issues that required measures of improvement, namely the process of decision-making, particularly in determining when and how to engage in

¹¹⁶⁶ See also the concept note circulated by South Africa (S/2012/13, annex).

¹¹⁶⁷ S/PV.6702, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

¹¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 7.