



Security Council

Distr.: General
2 March 2022

Original: English

Letter dated 1 March 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith an assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of December 2021 during the presidency of the Niger (see annex).

The assessment was prepared by the Permanent Mission of the Niger to the United Nations and has been agreed upon by Council members after extensive consultations.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdou **Abarry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 1 March 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of the Niger (December 2021)

I. Introduction

Under the presidency of the Niger in December 2021, the Security Council held all meetings physically while taking precautions given the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation.

The Security Council held 29 formal meetings, including one open debate, one debate and seven consultations. In addition, it held one videoconference and adopted 10 resolutions. The agenda items covered the geographical areas of Africa, the Middle East and Asia, as well as thematic questions and other issues.

In view of the unprecedented circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security Council adopted provisional working methods, allowing it to continue its work safely.

The programme of work of the presidency of the Niger for the month of December was adopted on Wednesday, 1 December 2021.

II. Africa

1. Somalia

On 3 December 2021, the Security Council adopted resolution [2608 \(2021\)](#), by which it decided to renew, for a period of three months from the date of the resolution, the authorizations granted to States and regional organizations cooperating with Somali authorities in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia, for which advance notification had been provided by Somali authorities to the Secretary-General.

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council adopted resolution [2614 \(2021\)](#) on 21 December 2021, to maintain the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) until 31 March 2022 and authorize AMISOM to take all necessary measures to carry out its mandate, in full compliance with the obligations of participating States under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and in full respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia.

2. Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 3 December 2021, a meeting of the Security Council with the troop- and police-contributing countries was held pursuant to resolution [1353 \(2001\)](#), annex II, sections A and B.

Presenting an overview of the latest report of the Secretary-General ([S/2021/987](#)) at the briefing and consultations of the Security Council on 6 December 2021, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Bintou Keita, said that, as the country looked ahead to elections in 2023, all political stakeholders must focus on taking forward the key reforms needed

to consolidate the hard-won stabilization gains and overcome the remaining challenges, particularly in eastern provinces. Concerning the implementation of the progressive, responsible and conditions-based drawdown of MONUSCO, the Special Representative said that the Mission, the United Nations country team and the Government continued to coordinate the operationalization of the joint transition plan presented to the Council in October 2021.

Delegates urged international partners to continue to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo to implement its programme of action for 2021–2023. At the meeting, the Security Council examined the forthcoming renewal of the mandate for the United Nations peacekeeping operation in the country.

The women's rights activist and member of the African Women Leaders Network, Marie-Madeleine Kalala, said that the issue regarding the appointment of the Independent National Electoral Commission was a matter of concern, as it was incomplete owing to a lack of consensus with the opposition. It was essential for all stakeholders to agree on the process so that it could be truly consensual, transparent and peaceful.

The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1533 \(2004\)](#) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Abdou Abarry, also addressed the Council members about the Committee's work since his previous briefing in October 2020. The information included an overview of his visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 6 to 10 November, which he undertook to obtain first-hand accounts of the effective implementation of the measures imposed under Council resolution [2360 \(2017\)](#) by the Government and representatives of MONUSCO, among others.

In unanimously adopting, on 20 December 2021, its resolution [2612 \(2021\)](#) under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of MONUSCO, including its Intervention Brigade, until 20 December 2022, and further decided that the Mission's authorized troop ceiling would comprise 13,500 military personnel, 660 military observers and staff officers, 591 police and 1,050 formed police units. It also agreed to the temporary deployment of up to 360 formed police units, provided that they were replacing military personnel. However, the Council invited the Secretariat to consider a further reduction in the Mission's level of military deployment and area of operations on the basis of the positive evolution of the situation on the ground. The Council requested the Secretary-General, Member States and the Government to take all appropriate measures to ensure the best level possible of safety and security of the Mission personnel in line with Council resolution [2518 \(2020\)](#) and requested the Secretary-General to implement the provisions of resolution [2589 \(2021\)](#) for establishing accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. Reaffirming that the protection of civilians must be given priority in decisions about the use of available capacity and resources, the Council decided that the Mission's strategic priorities were to contribute to the protection of civilians and to support the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions in the country, along with key governance and security reforms.

Welcoming the Mission's transition plan based on the joint strategy on the progressive and phased drawdown of MONUSCO endorsed in its resolution [2556 \(2020\)](#), the Security Council requested the Mission to withdraw from Tanganyika by mid-2022 and to consolidate its footprint in Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu – the three provinces where active conflicts persist. The Council further called on MONUSCO to work closely with the United Nations country team to identify ways to address gaps in capabilities in order to prepare for the Mission's exit and

underscored the need to progressively transfer the Mission's tasks to the Government, the country team and other relevant stakeholders.

3. Mali

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali

The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017) concerning Mali, Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez, provided an overview of the work of the Panel of Experts on Mali assisting the Committee on briefing the Council on 8 December 2021. He said that the Committee had met by videoconference on 9 February 2021 for the presentation of the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on the midterm report mandated under Council resolution 2541 (2020), which it officially relayed to the Council on 17 February.

The Committee subsequently met virtually on 5 May with the representatives of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal to discuss the implementation of the sanctions regime.

He noted that, during the reporting period, the Committee had received one request for an exception to the ban on international travel. Eight individuals were presently on the Committee's sanctions list.

Lastly, he noted that, under Security Council resolution 2590 (2021), the mandate of the Panel of Experts had been extended until 30 September 2022 and added that the appointment of experts was on hold and under discussion.

4. Sudan

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan

On 10 December 2021, the Permanent Representative of Estonia, Sven Jürgenson, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, informed the Council about the work of the Committee.

Briefing the Council, the Head of the Committee said that, during the reporting period, from 15 September to 10 December, the Panel of Experts on the Sudan had submitted its second quarterly report, which included updates on the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, regional dynamics, the status of armed groups, intercommunal violence, human rights violations and the humanitarian situation.

Mohamed Ibrahim Mohamed Elbahi, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Sudan, reiterated the country's call for the lifting of sanctions, which it viewed as outdated.

5. South Sudan

At the briefing and consultations of the Council on 15 December 2021, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Nicholas Haysom, presented the most recent report on the situation (S/2021/1015) and outlined several positive developments in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

While the Special Representative welcomed those steps, he stressed that they were not sufficient if the peace process were to be sustained. He expressed concern

over restrictions imposed on the civic space in advance of the elections planned for 2023 and over the slow operationalization of the country's Parliament that threatened to delay critical legislation that would facilitate constitution-making and electoral preparations. Turning to civilian protection, he underscored that the Mission was doing all that it could to support the Government in that responsibility, including through the flexible deployment of temporary operating bases that enabled rapid humanitarian assistance, stabilization and security for returning displaced persons. He added that the Mission was also working to address climate-related security risks, given the increasing frequency of droughts and severe floods in South Sudan.

The Director of the Coordination Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Wafaa Saeed, briefing the Security Council, pointed out that the humanitarian situation in South Sudan had deteriorated since September.

Also briefing the Security Council was Hai Anh Pham (Viet Nam), speaking on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2206 \(2015\)](#) concerning South Sudan, who provided an overview of the Committee's activities in 2021.

In the ensuing discussion, many Security Council members expressed concern over the slow implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement, stating that the inertia had led to an increase in subnational violence that further frustrated efforts to address a dire humanitarian situation. Some representatives, underlining the importance of establishing transitional security arrangements and the constitutional framework for upcoming elections, called upon the international community to provide resources and capacity-building assistance to the Government towards achieving those ends.

6. Sudan and South Sudan

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

The Security Council held a briefing and consultations on 10 December 2021, at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), Volker Perthes, presented an overview of the related report of the Secretary-General ([S/2021/1008](#)), describing the country's political transition over the preceding six weeks as "undergoing its greatest crisis to date".

In the ensuing discussion, Security Council members exchanged their views on the power-sharing arrangement of 21 November and the way forward, and expressed both concern over the military takeover of 25 October and support for UNITAMS, which is mandated to assist with the political transition in the Sudan, the peace process, and the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, among other objectives.

United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

On 15 December 2021, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) until 15 May 2022, urging the Governments of the Sudan and of South Sudan to take all necessary steps to ensure that the area was effectively demilitarized. The Council decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling to 3,250 and expressed its intention to keep under review the recommendations contained in the letter of the Secretary-General dated 17 September 2021 ([S/2021/805](#)).

Unanimously adopting resolution [2609 \(2021\)](#), the members of the Security Council decided to extend by six months the mandate of UNISFA along with the Force's support to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, and

determined that both should continue to demonstrate measurable progress on border demarcation.

The representative of South Sudan, welcoming the adoption of the resolution, said that the Government appreciated the presence of UNISFA and its role in the region. He pledged the commitment of South Sudan to peaceful action to reach agreement on the final status of Abyei, which could be decided through holding a free and fair referendum on the issue.

7. Central Africa

United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

At the briefing and consultations of the Security Council on 15 December 2021, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), François Louncény Fall, briefed members on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the region and the activities of UNOCA (S/2021/975). Noting that Central Africa continued to grapple with a worsening situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, he said that the vaccination campaign in the subregion had been slow and asymmetric, with nearly 3 per cent of people vaccinated as at 16 November. Meanwhile, 438,000 cases had been reported, including 7,047 people who had lost their lives since the start of the pandemic – a 100 per cent increase compared to June. He called upon the international community to continue to support the region in mitigating the impact of the pandemic.

In the ensuing debate, several speakers cited the comprehensive efforts by UNOCA to advance dialogue and solutions but echoed concerns over the ongoing terrorist activity and the dire humanitarian situation plaguing the region.

III. The situation in the Middle East

1. Syrian Arab Republic

The Security Council examines the dimensions of the Syrian crisis on a monthly basis.

Chemical weapons

On 8 December 2021, the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, briefed the Security Council on the most recent monthly report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and on the implementation of Council resolution 2118 (2013).

Political/humanitarian situation

At the briefing and consultations of the Security Council on 20 December 2021, the Programme Advocacy Officer at the Syrian American Medical Society, Amani Ballour, briefed the members on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen, briefed the Council by videoconference, stating that 2021 had been a year of deepening suffering of the Syrian people. He called for a step-by-step approach to advancing the political process.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, also briefed the Security Council, stating that efforts were being made to facilitate regular, predictable crossline operations.

In the ensuing debate, Security Council members expressed concern at the unsustainable situation, which encompassed escalating humanitarian needs ahead of a bitter winter, the COVID-19 pandemic spreading through an undervaccinated population, continuing violence and insecurity, and a stalled peace process.

2. Yemen

In the briefing and consultations of the Security Council on 14 December 2021, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, expressed his alarm regarding the considerable military escalation and increased violence since his previous Council briefing.

The Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ramesh Rajasingham, said that serious gaps in reaching the most vulnerable in Yemen persisted owing to funding constraints that were poised to worsen unless donors increased contributions.

Noting the recent appointment of a new governor and board of directors of the Central Bank in Aden, he urged the partners of Yemen to work closely with them and encouraged measures such as the lifting of restrictions on commercial imports through the Red Sea ports to help lower commodity prices.

Security Council members called for the boosting of efforts to advance peace talks and end the spiralling violence. Many urged all parties to cooperate with the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement and heed the obligations under international law to protect civilians.

3. Iraq

United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant

At the briefing of the Security Council on 2 December 2021, the Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Christian Ritscher, tasked with investigating atrocity crimes, informed the Council that significant steps had been taken in the pursuit of justice and in securing accountability for victims, including by gathering and analyzing evidence of crimes perpetrated by Da'esh and tying those crimes to specific members.

Presenting the Team's seventh report (S/2021/974), he outlined its investigations and analysis of documentary, testimonial and forensic evidence, including internal Da'esh documents, to assemble a picture of the terrorist organization's operations.

4. United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Adopting resolution 2613 (2021) on 21 December 2021, by which the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) by six months until 30 June 2022, the Council members also stressed the obligation of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to respect the terms of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces scrupulously and fully and called upon them to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation.

5. Palestinian question

At the briefing and consultations on 21 December 2021, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, Tor Wennesland, briefed the Security Council and provided the twentieth report on the implementation of Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#). He told the Council that the rising levels of violence seen in recent weeks “should be a clear warning to us all”, and that – if left unchecked – would lead to yet another destructive, bloody round of violence. Ongoing unilateral steps – such as Israeli settlement advancement, evictions and demolitions, and the severe fiscal and economic crisis regarding the Occupied Palestinian Territory was undermining the institutional stability of the Palestinian Authority and could, if left unchecked, undermine the cessation of hostilities that had held since May.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates shared the Special Coordinator’s concern over rising tensions and violence and joined his call to refrain from unilateral steps that would undercut the advancement of the two-State solution. They recalled their support for a two-State solution.

IV. Asia

1. Afghanistan

On 22 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2615 \(2021\)](#), under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, by which the Council decided that humanitarian assistance, along with other activities that supported basic human needs in Afghanistan, were not a violation of paragraph 1 (a) of its resolution [2255 \(2015\)](#) concerning individuals and entities associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan. It further decided to review the implementation of that provision after a period of one year.

V. Thematic questions

In December, the Council addressed thematic questions related to international peace and security.

Maintenance of international peace and security

High-level open debate on security in the context of terrorism and climate change

On Thursday, 9 December 2021, the high-level open debate on security in the context of terrorism and climate change was held under the presidency of the President of the Republic of the Niger, Mohamed Bazoum. The Security Council was briefed by the Secretary-General, António Guterres, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Head of the Multinational Joint Task Force, Mamman Nuhu.

The President of the Republic of the Niger and President of the Security Council for the month of December, speaking in his national capacity, said that his delegation had chosen the debate topic to discuss the fact that climate change was pushing populations into fierce competition for scarce resources in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions.

In the ensuing debate, speakers offered condolences to the families of the victims of terrorist attacks in the Niger and Mali that week, reaffirming their solidarity

with and support for the Governments and peoples of the region in their fight against terrorism. Some Member States emphasized the immediacy and urgency of addressing the nexus between climate change and the proliferation of terrorism. Others called for a cautious stance in approaching climate change from a strict security angle, including the nexus with terrorism, arguing that such an approach could distance the international community from the appropriate response, politicizing the issue and detaching it from the basic principles and provisions of the climate change regime.

Climate and security

The Security Council had before it a draft resolution, proposed by the Niger and Ireland and co-sponsored by 113 Member States, by which it sought to bring climate change into the ambit of the Council.

On 13 December 2021, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, failed to adopt the draft resolution, with a recorded vote of 12 in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

Arms embargoes

In adopting resolution [2616 \(2021\)](#) on 22 December 2021, with a recorded vote of 12 in favour, 0 against and 3 abstentions, the Security Council resolved to consider, on a case-by-case basis and when appropriate, during the renewal of mandates of peace operations that coincide with Council-mandated arms embargoes, whether and how peace operations could support relevant national authorities in combating the illicit transfer and diversion of arms in violation of arms embargoes in their respective areas of operation.

In explaining their vote, some delegations expressed concerns regarding the approach taken in the resolution to the wide scope of issues that it served to address and argued that there had been insufficient elaboration on the issues therein.

VI. Other issues

1. Subsidiary bodies

Annual briefing of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) concerning counter-terrorism, and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#)

On 2 December 2021, the Security Council heard the annual briefing from the chairs of Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities; the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) concerning counter-terrorism; and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), on the work of those subsidiary bodies. Members stressed the importance of cooperation among the three bodies.

Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

On 17 December 2021, the Security Council unanimously adopted its resolution [2610 \(2021\)](#), by which it extended the mandates of the Monitoring Team and the Office of the Ombudsperson for a period of 30 months.

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism

On 30 December 2021, the Council adopted its resolution [2617 \(2021\)](#), by which it renewed the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for a period of four additional years.

2. Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

In a briefing to the Security Council on 7 December 2021, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, said that, in the face of a slew of challenges, strengthened multilateral action was needed to tackle the complex issues prompting migratory flows. He added that, with such challenges, the multilateral system had never been so important, yet the international system had never been so prone to failure.

Mr. Grandi went on to depict what he called “the many faces of failure”, which ranged from instability and insecurity to famine, disaster and State collapse, as well as forced displacement, which, he noted, tended to create headlines when it had an impact on countries in the global North. Pointing out that 90 per cent of the world’s 84 million displaced were in developing countries, he commended the solidarity shown by countries such as the Niger towards those in distress, despite limited resources, and in the face of a “perfect storm” combining conflict, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates expressed concern about the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons in countries including Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic and the Sahel region. Some emphasized the need to tackle the destabilizing factors spurring migration flows, including conflict and environmental degradation, while others stressed the need to address human rights abuses experienced by migrants in transit to Europe, including in detention centres.

3. COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#)

The Security Council met on 13 December 2021 in consultations to discuss the implementation of its resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#).

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, and the Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ramesh Rajasingham, gave a briefing to the Council. They stressed the need to accelerate the vaccination campaigns, to ensure full humanitarian access and equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines, and to protect humanitarian and medical workers.

Through press elements, the Security Council reiterated the importance of implementing resolutions [2532 \(2020\)](#) and [2565 \(2021\)](#) and stressed the need for the

relevant United Nations bodies, within their respective mandates, to maintain focus on the issue.

4. International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

The President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Carmel Agius, updated the Security Council about the work of the Mechanism during the reporting period, adding that it would continue to engage actively in the evaluation of its methods, ahead of the Council's next review in 2022.

President Agius also mentioned that the Niger had signed an agreement with the United Nations on the relocation in its territory of nine persons acquitted or released by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda or the Mechanism.

The Prosecutor of the Mechanism, Serge Brammertz, described the work undertaken by his office, including in connection with the Kabuga case, for which the trial team had filed its pretrial brief and responded to additional litigation pertaining to seized assets.

In the ensuing discussion, several Council members reiterated their support for the Mechanism, despite challenges ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to the death of a judge, while some members of the Council called upon the Mechanism to provide and adhere to clear and focused projections of completion timelines.

5. Briefing by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

On 13 December 2021, the outgoing chairs of Security Council subsidiary bodies informed the members of the Security Council that in-person visits to the countries concerned were critical for both gathering first-hand information about the effects of sanctions and correcting misunderstandings about the purpose of such measures, as they reported on the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic had posed to their working methods over the past two years.

Over the course of the meeting, the Chairs of 10 subsidiary bodies gave briefings to the members of the Council on the work of Committees and Working Groups concerning, inter alia, the situations in seven countries in Africa and in the Middle East.

6. Non-proliferation

On 14 December 2021, noting that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America had reaffirmed their willingness to return to full implementation of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs called upon both countries to expeditiously translate those pledges into a mutually acceptable agreement, as she briefed the Security Council on the latest developments.

During her briefing on the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), by which the Council endorsed the nuclear deal reached by China, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States, the Under-Secretary-General said that there was simply no viable alternative to the full and effective implementation of the Plan.

The Council expressed its support for diplomatic engagements in Vienna to facilitate the return to the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

7. Field visit

With the loosening of the restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security Council was able to conduct its first ever field visit to the Sahel, specifically Mali and the Niger, since the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020. The mission, which took place from 23 to 25 October 2021, was co-led by France, Kenya (the President of the Council) and the Niger. Following the visit, the Council issued a press statement. The report of the mission was subsequently agreed upon and issued on 31 December 2021 under the symbol SC/14687.

8. Sixth informal joint seminar and fifteenth annual joint consultative meeting between the members of Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union

On 16 and 17 December 2021, the sixth informal joint seminar and fifteenth annual joint consultative meeting between the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union was held in a virtual format for the second time in their history. The President of the Security Council for the month of December 2021 (the Niger) and the Chair of the Peace and Security Council for the same month (Ethiopia) co-chaired the meetings. The African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, Hanna Tetteh, delivered opening remarks at the sixth informal joint seminar on behalf of the African Union and the United Nations, respectively.

During the informal joint seminar, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council exchanged views on predictable and sustainable financing for African Union-led peace support operations and on enhancing cooperation between the two Councils. At the fifteenth annual joint consultative meeting, participants deliberated on the African Union Mission in Somalia, post-2021; the situation in the Sahel region; efforts towards combating terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in Africa; and support to the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique. At the end of their consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council adopted a joint communiqué ([S/2021/1068](#)).
