

Table 2

Videoconference: Security Council resolutions [1160 \(1998\)](#), [1199 \(1998\)](#), [1203 \(1998\)](#), [1239 \(1999\)](#) and [1244 \(1999\)](#)

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
13 April 2021	S/2021/370	Letter dated 15 April 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

18. Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2014/264](#))

During the period under review, Council members held one open videoconference in connection with the item entitled “Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2014/264](#))”.⁶⁶⁹ More information on the videoconference is provided in the table below.

At the videoconference, held on 11 February,⁶⁷⁰ Council members heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Special Representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

The Under-Secretary-General recalled the conclusions endorsed by the leaders of France, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine in Paris, in which a series of steps had been outlined to stabilize the situation on the ground, including through confidence-building measures and a sustained ceasefire. She also recalled their agreement to support efforts, both under the Normandy format and by the Trilateral Contact Group, to make progress on the key security and political provisions of the Minsk agreements. In that regard, she noted that the Trilateral Contact Group had agreed to an indefinite ceasefire, which had come into force on 27 July 2020.

She indicated that, since then, the United Nations human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine had reported a significant decrease in civilian casualties from exchanges of fire, and described the release and exchange of conflict-related detainees as another encouraging development. The Under-Secretary-General stressed that, without progress on the related security and political tracks, the overall situation remained fragile. She added that the sides had made little significant progress on implementing the other agreed political and security provisions. While there was relative calm, the humanitarian situation had not improved. She also reported on how the COVID-19 pandemic had compounded the difficult socioeconomic conditions of civilians in conflict-affected areas. The Under-Secretary-General stressed that, until a sustainable political solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine was found, the risk of backsliding was real, and expressed deep concern about the increase in security incidents in several hotspots along the contact line in previous months. She recalled that, in resolution [2202 \(2015\)](#), the Council had endorsed the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements, which, together with the Minsk Protocol and the Minsk Memorandum, remained the only agreed framework for a negotiated, peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

In her briefing, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office updated the Council on the work of the Trilateral Contact Group. In spite of the travel restrictions imposed after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, she reported that the Trilateral Contact Group had continued its efforts towards the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the tasks established under the Normandy format at the summit held in Paris on 9 December 2019. With regard to the

⁶⁶⁹ See [A/76/2](#), part II, chap. 39. 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.

⁶⁷⁰ See [S/2021/159](#).

release and exchange of conflict-related detainees following the “all for all” principle, she noted that a step forward had been taken in April, when 34 prisoners had been released from detention. Concerning the agreement of the Trilateral Contact Group on additional measures to stabilize the ceasefire, the Special Representative affirmed that the number of ceasefire violations observed by the Special Monitoring Mission was still significantly lower than it had been in the first half of the previous year. She said that it was a source of great concern that progress on humanitarian and security-related issues had failed owing to political considerations, concluding that it would be difficult to maintain the relative calm on the front line if humanitarian and political issues remained blocked.

The Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission provided an update on the security situation in eastern Ukraine, recent developments concerning the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the impact of the conflict on civilians. While the overall security situation along the contact line remained volatile, he said that the agreement reached within the Trilateral Contact Group had been followed by a substantial decrease in the level of armed violence and that the Mission had observed the longest-lasting reduction in violence since it had begun systematically recording ceasefire violations. Despite commitments from the sides, newly built trench extensions and improvements to military structures had been observed on both sides of the contact line, in addition to the presence of heavy weapons and military and military-type positions in residential areas, putting civilians in harm’s way. The Chief Monitor also expressed regret that discussions in the working group on security issues of the Trilateral Contact Group had reached an impasse on a joint coordination mechanism to follow up and investigate alleged breaches of the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire. He provided a detailed account of the heavy toll that small-arms fire, shelling and unexploded ordnance had had on the lives of civilians and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, which impeded the ability of civilians to cross the contact line between government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas. He reported that ceasefire violations continued to be observed in close proximity to several critical infrastructure sites. The Chief Monitor also stressed that freedom of movement, which was enshrined in the Mission’s mandate and the Minsk agreements, remained hampered by persistent obstructions, in particular in areas outside government control. Should that trend continue, the Mission would be increasingly constrained in its ability to monitor the situation on the

ground and to report objective and corroborated information, which otherwise could support renewed efforts at the negotiating table to maintain the ceasefire.

Following the briefing, Council members discussed the issues related to the implementation of provisions of the Minsk agreements and the continued challenges to achieving a sustainable resolution of the situation in eastern Ukraine. Council members welcomed the encouraging developments and signs of effort and commitments, in particular the consensus reached under the Normandy format at the summit held in Paris in December 2019, and reiterated the need for strict compliance with resolution 2202 (2015).

Welcoming the progress made since the summit held in Paris in 2019, in particular with regard to prisoner exchanges, the reduction in violence and the establishment of new disengagement zones, many Council members expressed deep concern about the recent spike in ceasefire violations, the issue of mine action and the socioeconomic conditions of civilians in conflict-affected areas, which were further exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and a fragile economy.

In that connection, several delegations⁶⁷¹ addressed the agreed commitments and measures related to the ceasefire, with some⁶⁷² citing those related to unexploded ordnance, landmines and other explosive devices. While the representative of Ireland called for an end to the indiscriminate shelling of residential areas and critical civilian infrastructure and for the easing of movement restrictions to avoid exacerbating an already acute humanitarian crisis, the representative of Norway called on the parties to ensure unrestricted humanitarian access to the conflict-affected population, in line with their obligations under international humanitarian law.

Some Council members⁶⁷³ expressed concern at the restrictions on the freedom of movement of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and urged all parties to provide safe and secure access to the entire territory of Ukraine, including Crimea. Council members⁶⁷⁴ also expressed concern about the serious human rights violations and abuses linked to the conflict, as reported by the human rights monitoring

⁶⁷¹ Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United States, Viet Nam and Germany.

⁶⁷² Ireland, Mexico and Norway.

⁶⁷³ Estonia, France, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and United States.

⁶⁷⁴ Estonia, France, Ireland, Norway and United States.

mission in Ukraine of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with one⁶⁷⁵ calling on the Russian Federation to release political prisoners and others⁶⁷⁶ calling on it to facilitate full and unrestricted access to the whole of Ukraine for the international human rights monitoring mechanisms and bodies.

On the holding of local elections, the representative of France reiterated its appeal to the Russian and Ukrainian sides to make progress on the definition of the political and security conditions for the organization of local elections, as agreed upon by the Heads of State and Government under the Normandy format at the summit held in Paris. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed agreement with regard to local elections needing to pave the way for the special status of Donbas, but stated that the Russian Federation would not support the security conditions needed to enable those elections. She also reminded the Russian Federation of its obligations to withdraw its military personnel and weapons from the territory of Ukraine. The representative of Germany, speaking to the Council as part of the Normandy format, pointed out that the Russian heavy weapons had not been withdrawn from the line of command and control, in violation of the Minsk agreements.

Member States held differing views on the origin of and the responsibilities in connection with the conflict in eastern Ukraine. While several speakers⁶⁷⁷ alleged that the Russian Federation had instigated and continued to fuel the conflict, the Russian Federation affirmed that Ukraine had occupied Ukraine and that it was waging war on its own territory.

The representative of the Russian Federation also stated that Kyiv was unwilling to observe its

obligations under the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements and recalled that the Russian Federation was not mentioned as a party to the Minsk agreements. By contrast, the representative of Germany recalled the reminder by the President of Ukraine that the composition of the Trilateral Contact Group consisted of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and OSCE. Also participating in the videoconference, the Head of Delegation of Ukraine to the Trilateral Contact Group provided an overview of practical steps taken by Ukraine to resolve the conflict and explained that, owing to the artificial obstruction of the work of the Trilateral Contact Group on the political track, there had been no progress in the consideration of the working proposals by Ukraine regarding the implementation of the political aspects of the general conclusions agreed upon under the Normandy format at the summit held in Paris. He added that there was still no adequate response from the Russian side to the actions of Ukraine on other fronts.

A number of Council members⁶⁷⁸ also reiterated their condemnation of the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and the occupation of certain territories in eastern Ukraine and called on the Russian Federation to reverse that act. Recalling General Assembly resolution 68/262, the representative of Mexico reiterated the need to respect the unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine in accordance with international law, especially the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations. In that connection, several other Council members⁶⁷⁹ also reiterated their strong support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

⁶⁷⁵ United States.

⁶⁷⁶ Estonia and Norway.

⁶⁷⁷ Estonia, France, Norway, United Kingdom, United States, Ukraine and Germany.

⁶⁷⁸ Estonia, Norway and United States. For further details on the discussion, see part III, sect. I.

⁶⁷⁹ Estonia, Ireland, Norway, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States.

Videoconference: letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

<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/2021/159	Letter dated 15 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	