

	<i>Item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
Thematic	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2601 (2021)	19
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution 2565 (2021)	7
	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	Resolution 2573 (2021)	12
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution 2594 (2021)	4
Imposition of targeted measures against perpetrators of violations against civilians in armed conflict			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2588 (2021)	5
		Resolution 2605 (2021)	5, 22
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2582 (2021)	3
		Resolution 2612 (2021)	5
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2590 (2021)	2
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2567 (2021)	16
Resolution 2577 (2021)		12	
Inclusion of mission-specific protection mandates and benchmarks^a			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2605 (2021)	34 (a) (i)–(iv) and (c)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2612 (2021)	29 (i), 31, 36, 43
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2584 (2021)	30 (b) (i) and (iii), (c) (ii)–(iii) and (d) (i)
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2567 (2021)	3 (a) and (b) (i)
		Resolution 2579 (2021)	3 (iii) and (iv) (b)
Resolution 2609 (2021)	14, 30 (j)		
Thematic	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2601 (2021)	23

^a For additional information on mandates and decisions relevant to peacekeeping and political missions, see part X.

26. Small arms

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings in connection with the item entitled “Small arms”. The first meeting took the form of a briefing, while the second was held as a high-level open debate.⁹⁴¹ More information on the meetings, including on the participants and speakers, is given in the table below.⁹⁴²

On 6 October, the Council held a meeting under the item in connection with the biennial report of the

Secretary-General.⁹⁴³ At the meeting,⁹⁴⁴ the Council heard briefings by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States and a Senior Researcher at Small Arms Survey. In her briefing, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs focused on the need to address the threats

⁹⁴¹ For more information on the format of meetings, including high-level meetings and videoconferences, see part II, sect. II.

⁹⁴² See also [A/76/2](#), part II, chap. 15.

⁹⁴³ [S/2021/839](#). For more information on the biennial report of the Secretary-General, which was requested by the Council in its presidential statement adopted on 29 June 2007 ([S/PRST/2007/24](#)), see *Repertoire, Supplement 2004–2007*, chap. VIII, sect. 40.

⁹⁴⁴ See [S/PV.8874](#).

posed by illicit flows of small arms and light weapons in the context of peace operations. In that regard, she stated that the misuse, illicit transfer and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition remained a defining factor in undermining peace and security at the national, regional and global levels and had deeply aggravated situations for vulnerable populations already suffering from conflict. She commended the Council's increasing consideration of the issue of small arms in its work, including the inclusion of arms-related provisions in recent peace operation mandates, as well as the growing number of resolutions in which weapons and ammunition management and control measures for small arms and light weapons were taken into account. She also noted the Council's efforts to support States in the strengthening of national security services through adjustments to relevant arms embargoes and the employment of weapons and ammunition management as part of the benchmark assessments of arms embargoes. In that regard, she encouraged the Council to fully integrate considerations of weapons and ammunition into its work on both country-specific and thematic discussions, including addressing the arms-crime-terrorism nexus as one interrelated and multifaceted security threat that required complementary approaches and responses. The High Representative said that another dimension to consider was the nexus between sustainable development and small arms, which was firmly anchored in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thematic discussions on such issues as children and armed conflict and the women and peace and security agenda were also important opportunities to reflect on convergence with small arms-related issues as part of the Council's programme of work. In closing, she reiterated the need for mainstreaming small arms and light weapons considerations across the work of the Council and highlighted a recommendation from the Secretary-General's report, namely, that wherever a mission was mandated to provide support to the host State in the processing of recovered weapons and the treatment of ammunition recovered from the illicit sphere, the Council should consider the establishment or designation of a dedicated component, unit or cell within the mission to support the systematic collection, centralization and analysis of small arms-related data and ensure evidence-based policymaking and programming on the ground.⁹⁴⁵

The Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States gave a brief history on the

Regional Centre and described the history and work of his organization in combating the proliferation of small arms.⁹⁴⁶ In addition to elaborating on the many drivers of the proliferation of illicit weapons in the African region, he addressed four guiding questions concerning: (a) trends in the illicit circulation, proliferation and misuse of small arms in the context of peace operations and the impact of those trends in shaping the mandates of the Council; (b) the specific measures that the Council could take to prevent weapons in the possession of peacekeepers from falling into the hands of illicit armed groups; (c) how United Nations peace operations could support enhanced weapons and ammunition management; and (d) which regional or global mechanisms could be developed or strengthened to shore up the control of small arms and light weapons in conflict-affected situations. He stressed that it was important to recognize that small arms proliferation was a development issue and that it was vital to package arms control interventions within wider development programming, as there was a nexus between sustainable development and security.

The Senior Researcher at Small Arms Survey affirmed that the unchecked proliferation of arms, ammunition and explosives posed one of the greatest challenges to peacekeeping. He then offered a summary of the trends in the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition based on research. He first recounted that the availability of arms to non-State armed groups, criminals and terrorists in peacekeeping contexts was often a product of historical regional conflict. He then noted that, in States and regions where the illegal use of small arms and light weapons had reached chronic and destabilizing proportions, direct interventions and operations to reduce flows were important. Lastly, he said that missions could be clear about whose responsibility it was within a peacekeeping operation to identify and disrupt flows, which required a whole-of-mission effort, with clear benchmarks and reporting requirements. In his briefing, he also addressed some of the questions posed by the Council concerning, *inter alia*, preventing losses and the connections with security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and countering terrorism, weapons and ammunition management and existing tools and mechanisms, and regional or global mechanisms to strengthen arms control in conflict-related situations. He also suggested that new technology could amplify and simplify the collection, analysis and sharing of illicit arms- and ammunition-related data, empowering law enforcement and customs officials and providing a global picture of

⁹⁴⁵ S/2021/839, para. 84.

⁹⁴⁶ See S/PV.8874.

such flows. In closing, the Senior Researcher elaborated on nine key elements that could help peacekeeping operations to mitigate the dangers associated with the proliferation of arms, ammunition and explosives.

Following the briefings, most Council members welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations contained therein. The representative of the Russian Federation expressed support for the fact that Kenya, which held the presidency for the month, was conducting the meeting on small arms and light weapons, not as a disarmament issue, but in the context of peacekeeping operations. In that regard, he expressed the belief that the biennial reports of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons should devote much more attention to peacekeeping. He said that his delegation saw no backdrop for the discussion of small arms and light weapons within the Council other than peacekeeping. He added that it could hardly be considered in the context of such abstract topics as sustainable development, gender or climate change. Discussions within that framework would not bring added value, especially not in the Council, since the priority forum for the discussion of issues relating to small arms and light weapons was the General Assembly. Many speakers⁹⁴⁷ emphasized that the proliferation of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons posed a serious threat to international peace and security. In that regard, they addressed the risks relating to the transfer and trafficking of arms and weapons to terrorists and terrorist groups in the context of peacekeeping and the impact of small weapons in exacerbating conflicts. Many Council members also called for the promotion of a gender perspective when addressing issues related to small arms and light weapons. Some Council members⁹⁴⁸ brought attention to the disproportionate impact of the proliferation of small arms on women and children, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General. In addition, speakers emphasized the need for the effective implementation of several crucial international mechanisms intended to combat the illicit trade, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit

Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The efforts of regional organizations, such as the Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative of the African Union, in dealing with the challenges of illicit flows of small arms and light weapons was commended by many Council members. They further called for strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations. In that context, the representative of Ireland noted that regional road maps, such as those implemented by the Economic Community of West African States and in the Western Balkans, were also making important strides. Furthermore, the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines also pointed out that the Caribbean Community had accelerated the implementation of the Road Map for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030.

On 22 November, at the initiative of Mexico, which held the presidency for the month,⁹⁴⁹ the Council held a high-level open debate under the item.⁹⁵⁰ The Council heard briefings by the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and by a member of the Governance Board of Control Arms. In his briefing, the Director of UNIDIR stated that the diversion of and trafficking in arms, including small arms and light weapons and ammunition, was a defining factor in undermining peace and security. While noting that national ownership was fundamental to effectively tackling arms diversion and trafficking, he said that success would not be achieved without international cooperation and assistance. In that regard, he elaborated on the work of UNIDIR in developing and providing tools to strengthen national ownership of weapons and ammunition management throughout their entire life cycle. Noting that weapons and ammunition management was increasingly recognized as a fundamental component of conflict prevention and actions to tackle armed violence and was increasingly reflected in resolutions adopted by the Council on arms embargoes and peace operations, he explained that, based on research conducted by UNIDIR in support of action 21 of the Secretary-General's disarmament

⁹⁴⁹ A concept note was circulated by a letter dated 22 October (S/2021/892).

⁹⁵⁰ See S/PV.8909 and S/PV.8909 (Resumption 1). See also S/2021/966. While briefers and Council members participated in person at the meeting, non-Council members submitted written statements. This was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the pandemic, see part II, sect. I, and *Repertoire, Supplement 2020*, part II, sect. I.

⁹⁴⁷ Viet Nam, Tunisia, France, India, Ireland, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, Niger and Norway.

⁹⁴⁸ Mexico, Tunisia, India, United Kingdom, Ireland, Niger and Norway.

agenda, entitled “Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament”, UNIDIR had found that peace operations often gathered and had access to critical information for supporting the implementation and enforcement of arms embargoes, but did not systematically integrate conventional arms control measures into their conflict prevention and management toolbox. He explained that UNIDIR was developing arms-related risk analysis tools that could help peace operations to better integrate conventional arms control measures into their conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding efforts. Advancing a United Nations strategic approach to weapons and ammunition management, he added, could further enhance multilateral efforts to deliver peace, security, stability and development around the world.

The member of the Control Arms Governance Board recalled that her organization, which comprised 150 civil society member organizations, was created to influence the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. She outlined the various instruments, agreements and mechanisms that were at the disposal of States to detect, combat and prevent illicit trafficking in and the diversion of small arms and light weapons, including the Arms Trade Treaty, to which three of the five permanent members of the Council and six of the then elected members were States parties. To continue tackling the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, she urged the Council to prioritize the effective implementation of the established global framework and mechanisms regulating the international trade in conventional arms, to promote and seek synergies between international and regional efforts to detect, combat and prevent illicit trafficking in and the diversion of arms and to review, revitalize and develop its commitment to resolution [2220 \(2015\)](#).

Following the briefings, Member States expressed their commitment to addressing the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and outlined their

national efforts and initiatives in that regard. They emphasized the need for political will in preventing the diversion of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in conflict situations. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico noted that it was precisely in the context of the Council that serious discussions must be held on the tangible impacts of diversion and trafficking, as well as on the decisions that the organ could promote to strengthen cooperation and better implement international commitments. He clarified that the aim was not to replace but to strengthen the efforts already undertaken in other forums of the United Nations system. Many delegations stressed the importance of collective action on the implementation of arms embargoes, as well as such mechanisms as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. Several underscored the importance of information-sharing⁹⁵¹ and the use of best practices⁹⁵² to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Many participants stressed the importance of an effective tracing of weapons while reiterating the need to incorporate a gender dimension when addressing the issues related to small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, participants emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of peacekeeping missions in the management of illegal flows of small arms and light weapons.

In 2021, in connection with the item entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security”, the Council adopted resolution [2616 \(2021\)](#) concerning the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.⁹⁵³

⁹⁵¹ India, Tunisia, Ireland, Kenya, China, Belgium and Iraq.

⁹⁵² United Kingdom, Russian Federation, Malta and Iraq.

⁹⁵³ For further details, see sect. 34 below.

Meetings: small arms

<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.8874 6 October 2021	Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2021/839)			High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, Senior Researcher at Small Arms Survey	All Council members, all invitees	

<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.8909 , S/PV.8909 (Resumption 1) and S/2021/966 22 November 2021	The impact of the diversion and trafficking of arms on peace and security. Letter dated 22 October 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2021/892)		34 Member States ^a	Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, member of the Control Arms Governance Board, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations	All Council members, ^b all invitees ^c	

^a Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malta, Morocco, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Ukraine.

^b India was represented by its Secretary of Consular Passports and Visas and Overseas Indian Affairs of the Ministry of External Affairs; and Mexico (President of the Council) was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs.

^c The representative of Qatar spoke on behalf of the Group of Arab States; the representative of Sweden spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries; and the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union spoke on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia.

27. Women and peace and security

In 2021, the Council held one meeting under the item entitled “Women and peace and security”, which took the form of a high-level open debate.⁹⁵⁴ More information on the meeting, including on the participants and speakers, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held one open videoconference in connection with the item.⁹⁵⁵ More information on the videoconference is given in table 2 below. In 2021, no decisions were adopted in relation to the item.

On 14 April, at the initiative of Viet Nam, which held the presidency for the month,⁹⁵⁶ the members of the Council held an open videoconference on the subject of sexual violence in conflict.⁹⁵⁷ At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by

the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Denis Mukwege, the Director of the South Sudan Women with Disabilities Network and the Senior Women’s Protection Adviser of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). In her briefing to the Council, the Special Representative underlined the evident chasm between resolutions and reality, as detailed in the annual report of the Secretary-General,⁹⁵⁸ and pointed to the chronic underreporting of wartime sexual violence due to stigma, insecurity, fear of reprisals and lack of services, which had been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹⁵⁹ She said that, while the vast majority of the United Nations-verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence in the report had involved the targeting of women and girls, reports of violence against men and boys had been recorded in almost all of the countries examined. Noting the nexus between sexual violence, conflict-driven trafficking in persons and violent extremism, she expressed concern

⁹⁵⁴ For more information on the format of meetings, including high-level meetings and videoconferences, see part II, sect. II.

⁹⁵⁵ See [A/76/2](#), part II, chap. 16. See also [S/2021/1084](#). 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.

⁹⁵⁶ A concept note was circulated by a letter dated 5 April ([S/2021/333](#)).

⁹⁵⁷ See [S/2021/375](#).

⁹⁵⁸ [S/2021/312](#).

⁹⁵⁹ See [S/2021/375](#).