In 2021, the Council was composed of China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and Viet Nam. In 2021, the Security Council progressively returned to pre-pandemic patterns of activity, overcoming some of the difficulties faced in 2020.

Introduction

In 2021, the Council was composed of its five permanent members (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States), as well as ten non-permanent members, namely Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya, Niger, Norway, Mexico, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and Viet Nam.

Among the ten non-permanent members, Estonia, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and Viet Nam completed their two-year tenure at the end of 2021, which was marked by a newly introduced lowering of the flag ceremony by the outgoing members, held on 31 December 2021 at the initiative of Viet Nam.


Faced with the continued challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021, the Security Council did not hold in-person meetings until 25 May 2021 and conducted its business following a hybrid model, alternating videoconferences and in-person meetings to ensure the continuity of the Council’s functioning. While during the first half of the year, most of the Council discussions were held via videoconference, during the second half of the year, the Council was able to return to the Security Council Chamber and hold in-person meetings. Indeed, as of June 2021 and until the end of the year, Council members held nearly all meetings in person and occasionally held videoconferences, as necessary.
Given the continued impact of COVID-19, successive presidencies in 2021 continued to issue monthly letters regulating the working methods for the functioning of the Council, virtually and in person. In addition, 11 out of 12 presidencies informally circulated monthly commitments to enhance the implementation of the working methods agreed upon in the presidential note of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507) and the various notes by the President adopted in 2019 and 2021.

In 2021, the Council progressively returned to pre-pandemic patterns of activity with a total of 164 public and private meetings and 147 videoconferences (90 open and 57 closed). In addition, the Council experienced an exponential increase in the participation of high-level representatives in its discussions, with a total of 29 high-level meetings and open videoconferences, compared to 19 in 2020, and only 18 meetings in 2019. Importantly, in 2021, the Council resumed the holding of open debates with the participation in person of the wider membership. The first such open debate was held on 21 October 2021 under the agenda item "Women and peace and security".

In 2021, the Council also renewed its invitations to the presidents of other UN principal organs. On 7 May, the Council invited the President of the General Assembly to provide a briefing in an open videoconference in connection with the agenda item "Maintenance of international peace and security" focused on upholding multilateralism and the United Nations-centred international system. On 16 November 2021 and under the agenda item, the Council invited the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to provide briefings specifically on the sub-item "Peace and security through preventive diplomacy: a common objective to all the principal organs of the United Nations".

In 2021, the Security Council considered a total of 42 agenda items in meetings and Council members considered 31 agenda items in the context of open videoconferences resulting in a combined total of 45 agenda items. In 2021, the Council deleted the following items from its agenda: General issues relating to sanctions, The situation in Côte d'Ivoire and Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, as described in the summary statement by the Secretary-General.

For the first time since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Security Council conducted a visiting mission to the Sahel. Co-led by France, Kenya and Niger, the Council sent a mission to Mali and Niger, from 23 to 25 October.

In terms of decisions, in 2021, the Council adopted 57 resolutions and issued 24 presidential statements. With regard to the latter, it registered a considerable increase of this type of decisions, close to a twofold increase with respect to 2020.

In 2021, the Council unanimously adopted a number of important thematic resolutions. On 26 February 2021, by resolution 2565 (2021), the Council called for the strengthening of national and multilateral approaches and international cooperation, such as the COVAX facility for increased COVID-19 vaccine access. By resolution 2573 (2021), adopted on 27 April 2021, the Council strongly condemned attacks in situations of armed conflict directed against civilians or civilian objects, resulting in the deprivation to the civilian population of objects indispensable to their survival as flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. By resolution 2589 (2021), adopted on 18 August 2021, the Council called on Member States to promote accountability for the killing of and all acts of violence against United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations. The Council also adopted resolution 2594 (2021) on 9 September 2021, emphasizing the need for peace operations to engage on transitions at the earliest possible stage in integrated planning and coordination with the Resident Coordinators, United Nations Country Team, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as the host State. By resolution 2601 (2021), adopted on 29 October 2021, the Council called on all parties to safeguard, protect, respect, and promote the right to education, including in armed conflict, and reaffirmed its contribution to the achievement of peace and security.

In 2021, the Council also issued notable thematic presidential statements. At the outset of the year, in January 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/1), marking the 20th anniversary of resolution 1373 (2001), which established the Counter Terrorism Committee. The Council issued three presidential statements (S/PRST/2021/2, S/PRST/2021/3 and S/PRST/2021/16), in January, February and August 2021, encouraging cooperation with regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the G5 Sahel and the African Union. In November 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/23), emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace and expressing its continued commitment to foster interaction on regular basis with the General Assembly, ECOSOC, ICJ, and the Secretariat, in particular on matters relating to preventive diplomacy tools and mechanisms.

In 2021, the Council adopted by acclamation resolution 2580 (2021), recommending to the General Assembly that Mr. António Guterres be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office. As provided for in the provisional rules of procedure and consistent with previous practice, the resolution was adopted in a private meeting on 8 June 2021. On 18 June 2021, the General Assembly adopted resolution 75/286, effectively appointing Mr. António Guterres as Secretary-General of the United Nations for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2022 and ending on 31 December 2026.
Meetings

Meetings of the Security Council are governed by Article 28 of the Charter of the United Nations, and rules 1-5 and 48 of its Provisional Rules of Procedure. Under its current practice, the Council convenes meetings, which are classified as either public or private. Council members also frequently meet in informal consultations of the whole (also known as consultations). In 2021, in response to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Council members agreed to maintain a combination of videoconferences and in-person meetings initiated in 2020 to ensure the continuity of the Council’s work.

In 2021, the Council held, on average, 24 videoconferences per month in the first half of the year and 22 meetings per month in the second half. The Council held a total of 150 public meetings and 90 open videoconferences, which combined amounted to a total of 240. In addition, in 2021 the total number of informal consultations and closed videoconferences amounted to 124.

164 public and private meetings
90 open videoconferences
67 consultations
57 closed videoconferences
Overview

In 2021, the Council continued to function with a "hybrid model" through both videoconferences and in-person meetings. Out of 147 videoconferences held, a majority (98%) of videoconferences were held during the first half of the year. From January to June, Council members held an average of 24 videoconferences per month. Of the 147 videoconferences, Council members held 90 open videoconferences and 57 closed videoconferences. Two closed videoconferences were held with TCCs/PCCs.

With the stabilization of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York, the Council was able to progressively return to holding meetings in person. On 25 May 2021, the Council resumed its in-person meetings in the Security Council Chamber, starting with the 8779th meeting (S/PV.8779), the first one since 7 December 2020 (S/PV.8778). As of June 2021, the Council conducted most of its work in-person and in July 2021, the Council held all meetings in person for the first time since February 2020. Out of 164 meetings held, a majority (80%) of meetings were held during the second half of the year. From July to the end of the year, Council members held an average of 22 meetings per month. In 2021, the Council held a total of 150 public meetings and 14 private meetings, eight of which were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs). The rest of private meetings were held in relation to the following topics: Myanmar (three), Haiti, the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and annual briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice (one respectively).
CHART 1A
Number of Security Council meetings, VTCs and consultations 1946-2021

* Informal consultations of the whole were held since the inception of the Security Council. This chart only includes data on informal consultations of the whole from 1988 onwards since prior records are not verifiable.

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

CHART 1B
Number of Security Council meetings, VTCs and consultations 2012-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
Meetings, consultations, and VTCs

In 2021, the Council held a total of 150 public meetings and 90 open videoconferences. In the first half of the year, the Council held, on average, five public meetings and 15 open videoconferences per month, while in the second half of the year, the average was 20 public meetings versus less than one open videoconference per month. In addition, in 2021, the Council held a total of 14 private meetings; eight of which were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs); three private meetings on Myanmar; one private meeting on Haiti; one private meeting on the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and one private meeting to hear an annual briefing from the President of the International Court of Justice. All private meetings were held as of June 2021. Finally, in 2021, Council members held 67 informal consultations and 57 closed videoconferences. Two closed videoconferences were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs). On average, Council members held two consultations and 10 closed videoconferences per month from January to June 2021, and nine consultations per month and no closed videoconferences from July to December 2021.
In 2021, the Council continued to witness the coalescing of Council members around policy goals, regions and thematic items, such as the A3+1 or the “WPS Presidency Trio”
In 2021, the Council continued to witness the coalescing of Council members around policy goals, regions and thematic items. In January and February 2021, Tunisia and the United Kingdom joined forces to launch the so-called “New Year Resolutions” focusing on promoting efficiency and more interactive discussions of peace and security challenges in the Security Council. Continuing with the same approach followed in 2020, the A3+1 (Kenya, Niger and Tunisia (A3) together with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) delivered joint statements to the Council at 53 public meetings and open videoconferences, on country-specific agenda items focusing on the African region and thematic agenda items such as UN peacekeeping operations and children and armed conflict. Similarly, the A3+1 aligned their approach to working methods, proposing collective monthly commitments. In addition, between the months of September and November, Ireland, Kenya and Mexico, went one step further and aligned their working methods as the Presidencies of the Security Council in what they termed the “WPS Presidency Trio”, mainstreaming the Women, and peace and security agenda into their respective monthly programmes of work. This same approach to working methods was also embraced by the Presidency of Niger in December.
In 2021, the Council held **12 high-level meetings** and **17 high-level videoconferences**, in which two or more Council members were represented at ministerial level or above. This was a very significant increase with respect to the past high-level participation in Council proceedings, facilitated by the ability of high-level representatives to participate remotely. The topics of high-level meetings and videoconferences varied greatly and included both thematic and country-specific items. Council members held seven high-level videoconferences and two high-level meetings in connection with the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security”, focusing on a wide variety of themes such as “Challenges of maintaining peace and security in fragile contexts” (6 January 2021), “Implementation of resolution 2532 (2020)” (17 February 2021), “Climate and security” (23 February and 23 September 2021), “Food security” (11 March 2021), “Mine action” (8 April 2021), “Upholding multilateralism and the UN-centered international system” (7 May 2021), “Maritime security” (9 August 2021), “Exclusion, inequality, and conflict” (9 November 2021) and “Security in the context of terrorism and climate change” (9 December 2021). In addition, the President of the General Assembly provided a briefing at a high-level videoconference held on 7 May 2021 focused on upholding multilateralism and the United Nations-centred international system. The Council also held high-level meetings and videoconferences in connection with other agenda items such as, “Threats to international peace and security” (12 January 2021), “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security” (19 April and 28 October 2021), “Protection of civilians in armed conflict” (27 April and 16 July 2021), “Children and armed conflict” (28 June 2021), “United Nations peacekeeping operations” (18 August 2021), “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts” (19 August 2021), “Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” (27 September 2021), “Peacebuilding and sustaining peace” (12 October 2021), “Women and peace and security” (21 October 2021) and “Small arms” (22 November 2021). In relation to country-specific situations, the Council held high-level videoconferences and meetings concerning the Middle East including the Palestinian question (26 January and 15 May 2021), the humanitarian situation in Syria (29 March 2021), Peace and security in Africa, focusing on post-pandemic recovery in Africa (19 May 2021), Afghanistan (22 June 2021), Libya (15 July 2021) and the Great Lakes region (20 October 2021).
Representatives on the Council

According to Article 28 of the Charter of the United Nations, each member of the Security Council shall be represented at all times at the seat of the Organization. Rule 13 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure provides further that each member of the Security Council shall be represented at the meetings of the Security Council by an accredited representative. While all Council members have one Permanent Representative (PR) for a total of 15, some Council members may appoint more than one Deputy Permanent Representative (DPR) to the Council. In 2021, the number of women Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives on the Council was 13, while the number of men Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives was 30.

CHART 3A
Permanent Representatives (PR) on the Council 2017-2021

CHART 3B
Deputy Permanent Representatives (DPR) on the Council 2017-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe
Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France and President of Security Council for the month of July, chairs the Security Council meeting on the situation in Libya. 15 July 2021.
According to rule 39 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure, the Council may invite members of the Secretariat or other persons, whom it considers competent for the purpose, to supply it with information or to give other assistance in examining matters within its competence.

As reflected in the monthly letters of the President of the Council concerning its working methods, non-members of the Council were invited to participate in videoconferences “within the principles of rules 37 and 39” if there were no objections from Council members. The Council extended a total of 354 invitations under rule 39, of which 199 were to men (56%) and 155 were to women (44%). In addition, out of 354 invitations, 214 were extended to officials belonging to the UN System, 44 to officials representing regional intergovernmental organizations, 10 to invitees from international organizations other than the UN, and 86 to representatives of other entities such as non-governmental organizations and civil society.

By categories, sex-disaggregated data reveal varying degrees of participation of men and women in 2021. Of the 214 invitations to officials belonging to the UN System, 143 (or 67%) were extended to men, and 71 (or 33%) to women, a similar level with respect to 2020. Of the 44 invitations to officials representing regional intergovernmental organizations, 34 (or 77%) were extended to men, and 10 (or 23%) to women, an increase of 13% with respect to the percentage of women under this category in 2020. Of the 10 invitations to international organizations other than the UN, seven were extended to men and three to women, a similar level with respect to 2020. Finally, of 86 representatives of other entities such as non-governmental organizations and civil society, 15 (or 17%) were extended to men, and 71 (or 83%) to women, an increase of 26% with respect to the percentage of women under this category in 2020.
* The category "UN system" includes officials of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).
Informal consultations of the whole and closed VTCs

In 2021, Council members held 67 consultations and 57 closed videoconferences. The most discussed topics in consultations and closed videoconferences during 2021 were the following: Syria (12 times), Yemen (11 times), Middle East including the Palestinian question and Non-proliferation/DPRK (8 times, respectively), Ethiopia and Somalia (7 times, respectively), and Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon and Mali (5 times each).

FIGURE 1
Frequency of topics discussed in informal consultations of the whole in 2021

Informal interactive dialogues

In 2021, the practice of holding informal interactive dialogues (IID) continued. IIDs are convened at the initiative of one or more Council members, with the participation of all Council members and are presided over by the President of the Security Council for the month. They are intended to seek the views of Member States that are parties to a conflict and/or other interested and affected parties. Informal interactive dialogues are not open to the public or broadcast. In 2021, the Council held seven IIDs, four of which were held virtually as closed VTCs.

On 22 September, presided by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Ireland, the Council held an in-person high-level informal interactive dialogue with the Arab Summit Troika (Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia) of the League of Arab States (LAS). It was the first IID with the LAS since the issuance of the presidential statement of 29 January (S/PRST/2021/2) encouraging such meetings.

UN Photo / Manuel Elías
Othman Jerandi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republic of Tunisia, attends the informal Security Council meeting with League of Arab States. 22 September 2021.
CHART 5

Number of informal interactive dialogues 2012-2021

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Arria-formula meetings

*Arria-formula meetings* are informal gatherings convened at the initiative of one or more Council members (in some instances, they are convened also by non-Council members) with the participation of all or some Council members. Arria-formula meetings do not constitute an activity of the Council and are not presided by the President of the Council. Whilst in past practice Arria-formula meetings were closed to the public, since 2016 these meetings have been open to the public or even broadcast. In 2021, the Council held 32 *Arria-formula meetings* (10 more than in 2020), 30 of which were open to public and 27 of which were held virtually.

UN Photo / Manuel Elias
Waad Al-Kateab, Syrian activist and award-winning filmmaker, addresses the Security Council Arria-formula meeting on Accountability in the Syrian Arab Republic. 29 November 2021.
CHART 6
Number of Arria-formula meetings 2012-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
In 2021, the Security Council sent a mission to Mali and Niger, co-led by France, Kenya and Niger.

Missions in 2021

In 2021, the Security Council conducted a visiting mission to the Sahel for the first time since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. From 23 to 25 October, the Council sent a mission to Mali and Niger, co-led by France, Kenya and Niger. Further to the completion of the mission, the Council held a briefing in the context of a public meeting (S/PV.8892). On 4 November, the Council also issued a press statement on the mission to Mali and Niger (SC/14687) and report on 31 December 2021 (S/2021/1106).
FIGURE 2
Security Council Missions in 2021

CHART 7
Number of Security Council missions by region 2012-2021

* In 2014, the Security Council dispatched two missions; one mission to Africa and one mission to both Africa and Europe.

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
In 2021, the Security Council considered a total of 45 agenda items in meetings and open videoconferences, compared to 43 in 2020. Out of the 45 agenda items, 23 addressed country-specific or regional situations and 22 thematic and other issues.

In accordance with rule 11 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure and presidential note of 30 August 2017 S/2017/507, every January, the Council reviews the list of matters of which it is seized. Agenda items which have not been considered at a Council meeting in the preceding three years are deleted unless a Member State objects. In the latter case, an item will remain on the list for an additional year, unless the Council decides otherwise, and will be subject to the same procedure described above if not considered by the Council during that additional year.
Overview

In 2021, the Security Council considered a total of 42 agenda items in meetings and Council members considered 31 agenda items in the context of open videoconferences resulting in a combined total of 45 agenda items addressed in 2021, compared to 43 in 2020 and 49 in 2019. Out of the 45 agenda items, 23 addressed country-specific or regional situations and 22 thematic and other issues. Open videoconferences were sometimes used to announce the adoption of more than one resolution in connection with different agenda items. Those videoconferences are featured more than once in the graphs included below under multiple agenda items. In 2021, the Security Council did not add any new item to its agenda but deleted three items, as described in the summary statement of the Secretary-General.

CHART 8
Percentage of meetings and open VTCs on country-specific/regional situations and thematic and other issues in 2021
CHART 9
Number of meetings and open VTCs held and resolutions/PRSTs adopted by agenda item in 2021


SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

Country-specific and regional situations

CHART 10
Percentage of meetings and open VTCs by geographic region in 2021

In 2021, the Council dealt with country-specific or regional situations in 115 meetings and 69 open videoconferences of the Council. Among those meetings and open videoconferences combined, Africa accounted for 91 of them, followed by the Middle East with 58, Asia with 13, Americas with 12 and Europe with 10.

UN Photo / Loey Felipe
Mariam Alsadig Al Sedeeg Al Mahadi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Sudan, addresses the Security Council meeting on Peace and security in Africa. 8 July 2021.
Thematic and other issues

In 2021, 49 public meetings and 26 open videoconferences were held under agenda items of a thematic or cross-cutting nature. Among those meetings and open videoconferences combined, maintenance of international peace and security accounted for 18 of them, followed by meetings with troops or police contributing countries (eight), threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (seven), UN peacekeeping operations and (six), cooperation with regional organizations (five), protection of civilians in armed conflict, weapons of mass destruction and threats to international peace and security (three respectively).

In addition, the Presidency of the Council continued the practice of conducting wrap-up sessions with the wider membership of the United Nations at the end of each month. Informal wrap-up sessions were held by all Council presidencies. Except for the months of January, February and March, all wrap-up sessions in 2021 were held in person. Consistent with the presidential note of 27 December 2019 (S/2019/994), most wrap-up sessions were held utilizing the “Toledo-style” format, whereby members of the Council presented the activity of the Council for the month jointly and in an interactive manner.
Decisions and Voting

According to Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations, each Council member has one vote. An affirmative vote of nine members is required for decisions to be adopted on procedural and substantive matters, including in the latter case the concurrent votes of the permanent members. In addition to procedural decisions related to the adoption of the agenda, extension of invitations and adjournment of meetings, the Council adopts resolutions and issues presidential statements. Council decisions also take the form of notes and letters by the President of the Council. In 2021, the Council continued to follow a series of new working methods for conducting its work virtually in response to the COVID-19 pandemic introduced in 2020 and most notably reflected in successive letters by the President.

In 2021, the Security Council adopted a total of 57 resolutions, issued 24 presidential statements, 39 notes by the President, and 170 letters by the President. Council members also issued 60 press statements.

57 resolutions
24 presidential statements
39 notes by the President
170 letters by the President
In 2021, the Security Council adopted a total of 57 resolutions, issued 24 presidential statements, 39 notes by the President, and 170 letters by the President.

In 2021, the Council unanimously adopted a number of important resolutions concerning thematic and country- or region-specific items. On 26 February 2021, by resolution 2565 (2021), co-sponsored by 115 member states, including all Council members, the Council called for the strengthening of national and multilateral approaches and international cooperation, such as the COVAX facility for increased COVID-19 vaccine access. By resolution 2573 (2021), adopted on 27 April, the Council strongly condemned attacks in situations of armed conflict directed against civilians or civilian objects, resulting in the deprivation to the civilian population of objects indispensable to their survival as flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. On 9 July 2021, the Council adopted resolution 2585 (2021), extending the cross-border mechanism for the provision of humanitarian aid into Syria (the first unanimous resolution on this matter since resolution 2165 (2014)). By resolution 2589 (2021), adopted on 18 August, the Council called on Member States to promote accountability for the killing of, and all acts of violence against United Nations personnel serving in peacekeeping operations. The Council adopted resolution 2594 (2021) on 9 September 2021 as a presidential text, emphasizing the need for peace operations to engage on transitions at the earliest possible stage in integrated planning and coordination with the Resident Coordinators, United Nations Country Team, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as the host State. By resolution 2601 (2021) adopted on 29 October 2021, the Council called on all parties to safeguard, protect, respect, and promote the right to education, including in armed conflict, and reaffirmed its contribution to the achievement of peace and security. By resolution 2615 (2021), adopted on 22 December 2021, the Council decided that humanitarian assistance and other activities to support basic human needs in Afghanistan would not be a violation of the asset freeze imposed by resolutions 2255 (2015) on individuals and entities designated prior to the date of adoption of resolution 1988 (2011) as the Taliban, as well as other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan. At the end of the year, on 30 December 2021, the Council adopted resolution 2617 (2021), extending the mandate of the Counterterrorism Committee Executive Directorate until 31 December 2025 while deciding to conduct an interim review by 31 December 2023.

In 2021, the Council also issued important presidential statements focusing on both thematic and country- or region-specific items. Of a thematic nature, at the outset of the year, in January 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/1), marking the 20th anniversary of resolution 1373 (2001), which established the Counter Terrorism Committee. The Council issued three presidential statements (S/PRST/2021/2, S/PRST/2021/3, and S/PRST/2021/16), in January, February and August 2021, encouraging cooperation with regional organizations such as the League of Arab States, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the G5 Sahel and the African Union. With regard to the League of Arab States, the Council issued its second presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/2) further to the statement issued on 13 June 2019 (S/PRST/2019/5), supporting the holding of an annual briefing by its Secretary-General to further promote the cooperation with the Security Council on matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security. In April 2021, recalling resolution 2365 (2017), the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/8) emphasizing the importance of mine action and the need to enhance international efforts in this field, particularly in situations of armed conflict. In November 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/23), expressing its continued commitment to foster interaction on regular basis with the General Assembly, ECOSOC, ICJ, and the Secretariat, in particular on matters relating to preventive diplomacy tools and mechanisms. Of a country-specific nature, the Council issued a presidential statement in March 2021 (S/PRST/2021/5), reiterating its deep concerns following the declaration of the state of emergency imposed by the military and the arbitrary detention of members of the Government in Myanmar. In September 2021, it issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/18) encouraging Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sudan to resume negotiations at the invitation of the Chairperson of the African Union to finalize expeditiously the text of a mutually acceptable and binding agreement on the filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project (GERD).
In 2021, the Council failed to adopt two draft resolutions. First, in July 2021, the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution proposed concerning the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2021/667) due to an insufficient number of affirmative votes (S/PV.8823). Secondly, in December 2021, a draft resolution proposed in connection with the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security” and in relation to the issue of climate and security (S/2021/990) failed to be adopted due to the veto of a permanent member of the Security Council (S/PV.8926).

In 2021, further to the discussions held in the context of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, the Council issued five new notes by the President in connection with the working methods of the Council. On 12 July 2021, the Council issued four notes concerning the preparation of incoming elected members (S/2021/645), the role of political coordinators in permanent missions with respect to the implementation of the Council’s working methods (S/2021/646), the role of the Presidency and the monthly working methods commitments by Council presidencies (S/2021/647) and multilingualism in the work of the Council (S/2021/648). On 22 December 2021, the Council issued one additional note (S/2021/1074). The Council committed to maintaining its state of readiness under all circumstances, in an effort to ensure that it can function continuously in accordance with Article 28 of the Charter of the United Nations.

In 2021, the Council issued 169 letters by the President compared to 242 in 2020 and 32 in 2019. The exponential increase in letters by the President since 2020 is largely explained by the new working methods of the Council developed further to the COVID-19 pandemic, which established that for open videoconferences a letter by the President would be circulated containing a compilation of statements delivered by Council members and briefers as well as written statements submitted by non-Council members (S/2020/253 and S/2020/273). In addition, due to the impact of the pandemic on the functioning of the Council, successive presidencies in 2020 and 2021 continued to issue monthly letters regulating the working methods of the Council, virtually and in person.
Procedural votes

In 2021, no procedural matters were put to a vote by the Council as opposed to one in 2020 and two in 2019. The difficulties imposed by the pandemic on the holding of meetings in person in 2020 and the first half of 2021 as well as the absence of a mechanism to vote remotely on procedural matters, effectively impeded the ability of the Council to hold procedural votes. Chart 12 shows the total number of procedural votes over the past five years.

![Chart 12: Procedural votes 2017-2021](source: SCPCRB/SCAD)
In 2021, 42 of the 57 resolutions and 14 of the 24 presidential statements concerned country or region-specific situations or conflicts; Africa accounted for 26 resolutions and 11 presidential statements, followed by the Middle East with seven resolutions, and Asia with three resolutions and one presidential statement, Europe with three resolutions and one presidential statement, respectively, and Americas with three resolutions and one presidential statement.

UN Photo / Manuel Elías
Press statements

In 2021, Council members issued 60 press statements, 29 of which concerned political developments, peace and electoral processes, 30 of which concerned terrorist-related activities, attacks against civilians or attacks against United Nations personnel in the field and one of which concerned humanitarian issues. The most frequently referenced countries or regions in press statements were the following: Afghanistan (10 times), Mali (8 times), Iraq (6 times), Yemen and Myanmar (4 times each), and the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia (3 times, respectively).

FIGURE 3
Frequency of countries referred to in press statements in 2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
Sponsorship

A Council member or any other Member State, whether Council member or not, that directly submits a draft resolution is referred to as a sponsor or co-sponsor. A draft resolution co-sponsored by all Council members is referred to as a “presidential text”. In 2021, six presidential texts were adopted, all under thematic agenda items, compared to one in 2020 and none in 2019. In 2021, resolutions 2565 (2021), 2594 (2021) and 2589 (2021) recorded the three highest number of sponsors (115, 97 and 80 member states, respectively).

CHART 14
Number of presidential texts for the period 2012-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

UN Photo / Evan Schneider
Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez (left), Permanent Representative of Mexico and President of the Security Council for the month of November, speaks with delegates prior to the Security Council meeting on maintenance of international peace and security. 16 November 2021.
Voting

The Security Council voted on a resolution on climate and security under maintenance of international peace and security. The resolution was not adopted with 12 votes in favour, 2 against (India, Russian Federation) and 1 abstention (China). 13 December 2021.

In 2021, 48 out of 57 resolutions (or 84%), were adopted unanimously compared to 77% in 2020 (an increase of 7%). Of the nine resolutions not adopted unanimously, three were adopted in relation to the Central African Republic and one in connection with the situation in the Middle East (Yemen), Sudan and South Sudan, Afghanistan, Western Sahara, Somalia and the thematic agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security”, respectively. Except for resolution 2593 (2021) on the situation in Afghanistan and resolution 2616 (2021) concerning the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons, all draft resolutions not adopted unanimously concerned the issue of sanctions.

In 2021, the Council also adopted by acclamation resolution 2580 (2021), recommending to the General Assembly that Mr. António Guterres be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office, from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2026. In addition, on 29 June 2021, the Council adopted by consensus resolution 2583 (2021), deciding that the election to a vacancy in the International Court of Justice would take place on 5 November 2021.

In 2021, there was one instance of a veto cast by a permanent member of the Security Council concerning a draft resolution proposed in connection with the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security” on the issue of climate and security (S/2021/990). The Council also failed to adopt one draft resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2021/667) due to an insufficient number of affirmative votes.

In the period 2012 to 2021, the Council adopted a total of 585 resolutions, out of which 515 or 88% were adopted unanimously. In this period, 34 vetoes were cast in connection with 24 draft resolutions. The chart below shows the voting record for draft resolutions tabled in the period 2012-2021, illustrating the number of draft resolutions adopted unanimously, and non-unanimously, as well as the number of draft resolutions vetoed or not adopted due to the failure to obtain the required number of votes.

**CHART 15**

Voting on draft resolutions in the period 2012–2021
Cross-cutting issues in country-specific decisions of the Security Council

In 2021, the Council continued its practice of including provisions on cross-cutting issues, namely the protection of civilians (POC), women and peace and security (WPS) and children and armed conflict (CAAC), in its resolutions and presidential statements relating to country-specific or regional situations. In 2021, the Council adopted 56 resolutions and presidential statements relating to country-specific or regional situations, 45 of which contained one or more provisions on POC (80.3%); 37 of which contained one or more provisions on WPS (66.1%); and 25 of which contained one or more provisions on CAAC (44.6%).

CHART 16
Number of decisions adopted under country-specific or regional situations with provisions on POC, WPS or CAAC 2012-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
In 2021, out of a total of 57 resolutions, the Council adopted 27 resolution explicitly under Chapter VII of the Charter, including resolution 2569 (2021) adopted under the agenda item “Non-proliferation/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”, under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter. Out of the 27 resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, 19 concerned the African continent (70%) and 21 were adopted unanimously (78%), a slight increase with respect to 2020, when 19 out of 26 resolutions (73%) with an explicit reference to Chapter VII were adopted unanimously.
Subsidiary Bodies

Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Security Council may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions. This is also reflected in Rule 28 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure.

Throughout its history, the Council has established a wide variety of subsidiary organs, such as committees, working groups, investigative bodies, tribunals, ad hoc commissions, as well as peacekeeping and special political missions and sanctions committees, and their mandate can range from procedural matters to substantive ones.

In 2021, the Council adopted decisions concerning the mandate of nine peacekeeping operations (out of 12 that were in operation) and ten special political missions (out of 12 that were in operation), primarily extending their mandates. The Council did not terminate or establish any mission in 2021.

12
peacekeeping operations

12
special political missions
UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions

In 2021, the Council unanimously adopted two resolutions and issued two presidential statements concerning peacekeeping operations, specifically two presidential statements and a resolution on the safety and security of peacekeepers and one resolution concerning mission transitions. Both resolutions were adopted as presidential texts, having been sponsored by all Council members.

By a presidential statement issued on 24 May 2021 (S/PRST/2021/11), the Council requested the Secretary-General to continue to take all appropriate measures to improve the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, and to review and ensure uniformity of UN standards on training and performance. On 18 August 2021, by resolution 2589 (2021) the Council called on host states to work with peacekeeping missions to enhance the safety and security of mission personnel. On that same date, the Council also issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2021/17) recognizing the potential of technology to improve the performance and safety and security of peacekeepers, underscoring the need for the Secretary-General and troop- and police-contributing countries to ensure that missions were adequately resourced and all peacekeepers in the field were willing, capable and equipped to implement their mandate effectively and safely. By resolution 2594 (2021) of 9 September 2021, the Council emphasized the need for peace operations to engage on transitions at the earliest possible stage in integrated planning and coordination with the Resident Coordinators, United Nations Country Team, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as the host State.

In 2021, the Council adopted decisions concerning the mandate of nine peacekeeping operations (out of 12 that were in operation) and ten special political missions (out of 12 that were in operation), primarily extending their mandates. The Council did not terminate or establish any mission in 2021.

In 2021, the Council extended the mandates of nine peacekeeping operations (MINURSO, MONUSCO, MINUSCA, UNISFA, UNMISS, MINUSMA, UNIFCYP, UNDOF and UNIFIL), as well as nine special political missions (UNOCA, UNSMIL, UNSOM, UNITAMS, the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, BINUH, UNAMA, UNAMI and UNMHA). The mandates of three long standing peacekeeping missions (UNMOGIP, UNMIK and UNTSO), and two special political missions (UNRCCA and UNSCOL) remained open-ended while the mandate of UNOWAS had been extended in 2020 until 2023. The Council modified the duration of the mandates of three missions, establishing shorter mandate periods for UNAMA (six months), UNSOM (nine months), UNSMIL (four months) and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (six months) and a longer mandate for UNMHA (one year).

On 2 August 2021, the Council issued a presidential statement noting the completion of the drawdown of UNAMID on 30 June 2021 and recognized the progress made in Darfur since the Mission’s deployment in 2007 (S/PRST/2021/14).
Changes in mandate and in the authorized strength

In 2021, the Council amended the mandates of six peacekeeping operations and eight special political missions. As part of these changes, the Council introduced new elements to the work of eight missions in support of the participation of women, youth, civil society and other marginalized groups in political decision-making, elections, conflict prevention and resolution, and sustaining peace. In the context of elections scheduled for 2021 or 2022 as well as ongoing political transitions expected to lead to elections, the Council tasked MINUSCA, MINUSMA, UNMISS, UNOCA, UNSOM and UNSMIL with planning, security and logistical support to national electoral authorities. In addition, UNAMI was requested to monitor the elections in Iraq. As part of the political transitions in Libya and the Sudan, the Council provided further details to the ceasefire monitoring tasks of UNSMIL and UNITAMS, while the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia was expanded to include support for transitional justice mechanisms established under the Colombian peace agreement. Moreover, the Council also defined several operational capacities and existing mandate obligations for the Secretary-General to fully implement during the upcoming mandate periods of MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNISFA and UNMISS. Further details are available in the Field Missions Dashboard prepared by the Security Council Affairs Division.

In addition, in 2021, MINUSCA, MONUSCO and UNISFA underwent a revision of their authorized uniformed personnel strength. By resolution 2556 (2021), the Council increased the authorized size of MINUSCA's military component from 11,650 to 14,400 and its police component from 2,080 to 3,020 personnel. By resolutions 2609 (2021) and 2612 (2021), the Council also decreased the military components of UNISFA and MONUSCO, respectively, from 3,550 to 3,250 and from 14,000 to 13,500 troops.

FIGURE 4
UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions in 2021

Peacekeeping Operation  Special Political Mission

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups

Security Council Committees and Working Groups met a cumulative number of 113 times in 2021, in the context of both in-person and virtual meetings and briefings. A total of 9 briefings to Member States were held virtually and in person by sanctions and other committees.


CHART 18
Meetings and briefings per Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups in 2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
According to the presidential note of 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507), the members of the Security Council should make every effort to agree provisionally on the appointment of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies for the following year by no later than 1 October (S/2020/2).

The presidential note of 27 December 2019 (S/2019/991) provides further that the selection of the Chairs should take place in a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way. In 2021, the number of women Chairs of subsidiary bodies was 7 (30%), while the number of male Chairs was 16 (70%) and the number of female experts in a Panel/Group of Experts was 22 (38%) while the number of male experts was 36 (62%).

CHART 19
Chairs of Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups 2017-2021
In 2021, a total of 717 individuals and 257 entities were subject to United Nations targeted sanctions and restrictive measures such as assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo. A consolidated list containing the names of the individuals and entities subject to United Nations targeted measures is also available on the Security Council website. In 2021, 13 individuals and one entity were added to the list. The charts below illustrate the number of listed individuals and entities for each sanctions committee as well as those added this year. Information on each committee, including individuals and entities designated by the relevant committee and the applicable sanctions measures, as well as the procedures for the processing of listing and delisting requests can be found on the Security Council website.

**CHART 20**

**Individuals and entities listed as of 31 December 2021**

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* Upon implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD
De-listings from Security Council sanctions committees’ lists in 2021

In 2021, 37 entities and 8 individuals were removed (also referred to as “de-listed”) from the respective sanctions lists. De-listing requests in relation to the ISIL (Da’esh) & Al-Qaida Sanctions List are submitted directly to the ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee or the Office of the Ombudsperson. De-listing requests with respect to all other sanctions’ lists are submitted to the respective sanctions committees or through the Focal Point for De-listing in the Secretariat. Any Member State can propose the de-listing of an individual or an entity. The relevant committee then considers the proposal, often in consultation with the designating State, and makes a final decision on whether or not to de-list. Often those proposing de-listings are the State of citizenship or residence of a listed individual, the State of location or place of registration of a listed entity, the designating State itself, or a Council member.

CHART 21
De-listings from Security Council Sanctions Committees in 2021

Activities of the Focal Point for De-listing and Office of the Ombudsperson

In addition to the Member States’ ability to de-list, two mechanisms have been established to strengthen the de-listing process: the Office of the Focal Point for De-listing and the Office of the Ombudsperson. Established in 2006, the Office of the Focal Point for De-listing has received a total of 114 requests to de-list individuals and/or entities. 105 of these requests have been processed with 9 pending. As a result of this process, a total of 17 individuals and 17 entities have been de-listed and 17 entities remain on the list. The Office of the Ombudsperson, established to serve as the de-listing mechanism for the ISIL (Da’esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, has received a total of 100 requests to de-list individuals and/or entities since 2009, of which 93 have been processed and seven are pending. As a result, a total of 60 individuals and 28 entities have been de-listed and 22 listings remain. On 17 December 2021, the Council adopted resolution 2610 (2021), acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, extending the mandate of the Office of the Ombudsperson for an additional period of 30 months.

UN Photo / Manuel Elías
Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, briefs the Security Council meeting on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. The Council hears the thirteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da’esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2021/682). 19 August 2021.
Mandate extensions of Security Council Subsidiary Bodies

The chart below shows the number of Council resolutions extending the mandate of subsidiary bodies of the Council per month over the last five years.


UN Photo / Harandane Dicko
CHART 24

Mandate renewal per month 2017-2021

SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD