

12. Peace consolidation in West Africa

During the period 2016 to 2017, the Council held 10 meetings, adopted one resolution and issued five presidential statements in connection with the item entitled “Peace consolidation in West Africa”, a threefold increase of activity with respect to the previous two years (2014–2015).¹³³ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below.¹³⁴

The Security Council concurred with the recommendations of the Secretary-General to merge the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), which was renamed the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).¹³⁵ In a presidential statement issued on 28 July 2016, the Council welcomed the merger of the two offices and noted that a unified management of the structure of UNOWAS should be ensured.¹³⁶

During the period, the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWAS, who presented the reports of the Secretary-General on the most recent political developments and trends in West Africa and the Sahel.¹³⁷ The reports highlighted the efforts of UNOWAS to enhance its ongoing activities in the areas of conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, subregional and regional cooperation to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security, the promotion of good governance, respect for the rule of law and human rights, gender mainstreaming and support to regional initiatives.¹³⁸ In addition, during the period under review, the Special Representative updated the Council on the progress made in the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel in close collaboration with Member States, regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders.¹³⁹

In its deliberations, Council members focused on the evolving political, governance, security, socioeconomic and humanitarian trends in West Africa and the Sahel, including terrorist acts attributed to Boko Haram and other organizations, transnational organized crime and other cross-cutting threats to peace and security. Discussions in the Council also focused on the implementation of the mandate of UNOWAS and the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Council discussed the challenge of elections and installation of new Governments in several countries in the subregion and the success achieved in the fight against Ebola by countries of the region.¹⁴⁰

At a meeting held on 21 December 2016,¹⁴¹ the Council discussed the post-election crisis in the Gambia and issued a presidential statement calling on the Gambian authorities to carry out a peaceful and orderly transition process and to transfer power to President-elect Adama Barrow by 19 January 2017, in accordance with the Gambian Constitution. It commended the initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and reiterated its support for the continued efforts of ECOWAS and the African Union to promote peace, stability and good governance.¹⁴²

By resolution 2337 (2017), the Council endorsed the decisions of ECOWAS and the African Union to recognize Mr. Adama Barrow as President of the Gambia, and called upon the countries in the region and the relevant regional organizations to cooperate with President Barrow in his efforts to realize the transition of power.¹⁴³ In a presidential statement, the Council welcomed the positive political developments in several West African countries, in particular the peaceful transition of power in the Gambia, and also welcomed the subregional, regional and international efforts to mitigate the security, humanitarian and development consequences of Boko Haram’s operations.¹⁴⁴

The Council expressed its deep concern at the level of violence of acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, stressed that the coordination of efforts at the regional level was key, noted the need for international assistance to Member

¹³³ For more information, see *Repertoire, Supplement 2014–2015*, part I, sect. 12, “Peace consolidation in West Africa”.

¹³⁴ In 2014 and 2015, the Council held three meetings; no decisions were adopted.

¹³⁵ See S/2016/88 and S/2016/89.

¹³⁶ S/PRST/2016/11, second paragraph.

¹³⁷ S/2015/1012, S/2016/566, S/2016/1072 and S/2017/563.

¹³⁸ For more information on the mandate of UNOWAS, see part X, sect. II, “Special political missions”.

¹³⁹ S/PV.7735, p. 3; S/PV.7862, p. 3; and S/PV.8002, p. 3. For more information, see part I, sect. 13, “Peace and security in Africa”.

¹⁴⁰ See for example, S/PV.8002, S/PV.7735 and S/PV.7604.

The meetings were followed by informal consultations.

¹⁴¹ See S/PV.7848.

¹⁴² S/PRST/2016/19, third, fourth and tenth paragraphs.

¹⁴³ Resolution 2337 (2017), paras. 2 and 3.

¹⁴⁴ S/PRST/2017/10, third and ninth paragraphs.

States and encouraged the regional organizations to enhance their cooperation, and welcomed the establishment of the Interregional Coordination Centre in Cameroon, implementing the regional strategy on safety and security.¹⁴⁵

In a letter dated 29 December 2016 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General, the Council concurred with the

recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of UNOWAS for a period of three years.¹⁴⁶ In addition, the Council issued a presidential statement on 20 January 2017, in which it welcomed the letter of the President of the Security Council and its annex concerning the extension of the mandate of UNOWAS for a further period of three years, from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ S/PRST/2016/4, fifth, ninth and thirteenth paragraphs.

¹⁴⁶ S/2016/1129 and annex.

¹⁴⁷ S/PRST/2017/2, second paragraph.

Meetings: peace consolidation in West Africa

<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.7604 14 January 2016	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) (S/2015/1012)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWA	Special Representative	
S/PV.7675 25 April 2016	Piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea Letter dated 6 April 2016 from the representatives of Angola, China and Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/321)		16 Member States ^a	Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	All Council members, ^b all invitees ^c	S/PRST/2016/4
S/PV.7735 11 July 2016	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) (S/2016/566)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWAS	Special Representative	
S/PV.7749 28 July 2016	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2016/566)					S/PRST/2016/11

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of
the Security Council for the maintenance of
international peace and security**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.7848 21 December 2016						S/PRST/2016/19
S/PV.7862 13 January 2017	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2016/1072)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWAS	One Council member (Uruguay), Special Representative	
S/PV.7866 19 January 2017		Draft resolution submitted by Senegal (S/2017/55)			All Council members	Resolution 2337 (2017) 15-0-0
S/PV.7868 20 January 2017	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2016/1072)					S/PRST/2017/2
S/PV.8002 13 July 2017	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2017/563)			Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOWAS	Four Council members (Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Uruguay), Special Representative	
S/PV.8009 24 July 2017	Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOWAS (S/2017/563)					S/PRST/2017/10

^a Belgium, Brazil, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Kazakhstan, Italy, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Togo and Turkey.

^b Japan was represented by the Deputy Director General of the Foreign Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

^c Sweden was represented by its State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who spoke on behalf of the Nordic countries, and Togo was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration. The Head of the Delegation of the European Union spoke on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

13. Peace and security in Africa

During the period under review the Security Council held 11 meetings, including two high-level meetings,¹⁴⁸ and adopted three resolutions under the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”. Of the 11 meetings, two were held in 2016, and nine in 2017. Three meetings on the item were convened to adopt a resolution; seven were briefings; and one was an open debate. More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below. The deliberations of the Council focused mainly on the developments concerning the Sahel and on the challenges that the region was facing, including the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region.

At a meeting held on 26 May 2016, Council members discussed the impact of climate change on security, development and stability in the region, and the linkages between those threats and organized crime, trafficking and violent extremism. In his briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) reported on the multifaceted challenges facing West Africa and the Sahel. He mentioned the various unresolved conflicts in those regions, the ongoing terrorist activities, trafficking and violent extremism, and the impact of climate change. He also briefed the Council on the fight against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin area and on the humanitarian situation in the region.¹⁴⁹

At a meeting held on 27 July 2016, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that significant numbers of refugees and internally displaced people in the region placed added pressure on host communities that were already food insecure, and noted the registered increase in the number of reports of incidents of sexual and gender-based violence among the displaced.¹⁵⁰ The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs cited the figures pertaining to the humanitarian crisis affecting the Lake Chad Basin and reported that children were being abducted and forcibly recruited by Boko Haram to take part in the violence, including by acting as suicide bombers.¹⁵¹ Both speakers addressed the economic aspects of the situation in the region and highlighted

the need to address the root causes of the crisis in their respective briefings.¹⁵²

On 12 January 2017, the Council heard briefings on the ongoing violence and attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram and on the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the region. The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that, despite the challenges, progress had been made in addressing the immediate humanitarian needs, and in the restoration of State authority and local governance systems in reclaimed areas. He emphasized, however, that grave human rights violations and abuses had accompanied Boko Haram attacks and the counter-terrorism responses. In that connection, he reported that women and girls remained subject to sexual violence, including sexual slavery and forced marriage, and that counter-insurgency operations, by both national forces and the Multinational Joint Task Force, had been accused of breaches of international humanitarian law.¹⁵³

From 2 to 7 March 2017, the Council dispatched a mission to the Lake Chad Basin region to engage in a dialogue with the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria.¹⁵⁴ Following the mission, on 31 March 2017, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2349 (2017), in which it strongly condemned all terrorist attacks, violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights by Boko Haram and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Lake Chad Basin region, including those involving killings and other violence against civilians. In the same resolution the Council reiterated its call upon Member States to move vigorously and decisively to cut the flows of funds and other financial assets and economic resources to individuals, groups, undertakings and entities on the sanctions list, and reiterated its readiness to consider listing those providing support to Boko Haram.¹⁵⁵

On 21 June 2017, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2359 (2017), in which it expressed its continued concern over the transnational dimension of the terrorist threat in the Sahel region and the serious challenges posed by transnational organized

¹⁴⁸ S/PV.8006 and S/PV.8080. For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. I.

¹⁴⁹ S/PV.7699, pp. 2–4.

¹⁵⁰ S/PV.7748, p. 2.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3–7.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 3 (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs); and p. 6 (Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator).

¹⁵³ S/PV.7861, pp. 3.

¹⁵⁴ For more information on the Security Council missions, see part I, sect. 36.

¹⁵⁵ Resolution 2349 (2017), paras. 1 and 6.