

15. The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

During the period under review, the Council held no meetings and adopted no decisions in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”. Council members held one open videoconference in connection with the item. More information on the videoconference is provided in the table below.⁴⁰⁸

During the open videoconference,⁴⁰⁹ Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on the political and humanitarian situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. She recalled the identical letters dated 13 May 2020 addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Council⁴¹⁰ in which the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela alleged that on 3 and 4 May 2020 armed groups of mercenaries and terrorists, organized, trained, financed and protected by the Governments of Colombia and the United States, had illegally entered the Venezuelan territory with the involvement of an extremist sector of the Venezuelan opposition. Colombia and the United States, as well as the Venezuelan opposition, had rejected the allegations of their involvement.⁴¹¹ The Under-Secretary-General recalled the statement of the Secretary-General on 4 May that the United Nations stood against any escalation of the situation and that the only way to resolve it was through political dialogue and full respect for human rights.

The Under-Secretary-General updated Council members on what she described as a deepening protracted crisis in the country, noting the suspension of discussions between lawmakers from the Government and the opposition on the modalities for the holding of presidential and legislative elections. The Under-Secretary-General also expressed concern regarding the politicization of humanitarian aid, the operational constraints imposed by fuel shortages and reports of human rights violations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the Under-Secretary-General stated that the economic sanctions imposed on the country were exacerbating an already critical situation. In that regard, she recalled the appeal of the Secretary-General for the waiving of sanctions that could undermine the capacity of countries to respond to the pandemic and the call of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Human Rights for humanitarian exemptions to such measures to be given broad and practical effect. She also recalled the support expressed by the Secretary-General for a negotiated solution to the crisis and his offer of good offices, concluding that an agreement that strengthened democratic governance, with full respect for human rights, was more urgent than ever.

Participants expressed diverging views in connection with the information presented in the letter from the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. While the representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States and Colombia rejected the allegations in the letter regarding the involvement of the Governments of the United States and Colombia, the representative of the Russian Federation described the allegations contained in the letter as a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urged the Council to recognize the acts of aggression and demand that the perpetrators immediately bring to an end the use of force and the commission of further attacks. Several Council members also shared their views regarding the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States⁴¹² and the prohibition on the use of force.⁴¹³ The representative of the Russian Federation presented a draft Council press statement prepared by his delegation which, inter alia, rejected the use or threat of use of force, reaffirmed relevant resolutions on the condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and on the use of mercenaries.⁴¹⁴ The draft press statement further called for the current situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to be resolved through a dialogue by Venezuelans, without interference, and through peaceful and political means.

Most Council members expressed the view that only a peaceful political dialogue would resolve the crisis in the country.⁴¹⁵ Several Council members called for a peaceful democratic transition in the

⁴⁰⁸ For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

⁴⁰⁹ See [S/2020/435](#).

⁴¹⁰ See [S/2020/399](#).

⁴¹¹ See [S/2020/435](#).

⁴¹² Belgium, Dominican Republic, Indonesia and South Africa.

⁴¹³ Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Viet Nam. For more information on the principle of the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state under Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, see part III, sect. II.

⁴¹⁴ See [S/2020/435](#).

⁴¹⁵ Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

country,⁴¹⁶ as well as the conduct of transparent, free and fair presidential and legislative elections.⁴¹⁷ Council members expressed concern regarding the humanitarian situation, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with several of them also condemning the politicization of humanitarian assistance.⁴¹⁸ Several Council members expressed concern regarding the increase in human rights violations.⁴¹⁹ Several Council members deplored the

humanitarian and socioeconomic impact of sanctions measures imposed on the country,⁴²⁰ while the representatives of France and Germany maintained that the sanctions measures imposed by the European Union did not impede international humanitarian assistance. The representative of Indonesia expressed regret at the lack of unity in the Council to move forward to address the situation in the country, including its already dire humanitarian challenges.

⁴¹⁶ Dominican Republic, Estonia and Germany.

⁴¹⁷ Belgium, Dominican Republic, France and Germany.

⁴¹⁸ Belgium, France and Germany.

⁴¹⁹ Estonia, France and Germany.

⁴²⁰ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Viet Nam.

Videoconference: the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
20 May 2020	S/2020/435	Letter dated 22 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

Asia

16. The situation in Afghanistan

During the period under review, the Council held two meetings under the item entitled “The situation in Afghanistan”. Both were convened to adopt a resolution, namely, resolutions [2513 \(2020\)](#) and [2543 \(2020\)](#), the second of which was adopted to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).⁴²¹ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of four videoconferences in connection with the situation in Afghanistan.⁴²² More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.

In 2020, Council members were briefed at quarterly videoconferences⁴²³ by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for

Afghanistan and Officer in Charge of UNAMA in connection with the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan.⁴²⁴ The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and her Deputy discussed in their briefings the outcome of the presidential election of September 2019, the developments in the peace process further to resolution [2513 \(2020\)](#) and the security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Council members were also briefed⁴²⁵ by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1988 \(2011\)](#) and the Afghan Youth Representative to the United Nations. In addition, in a videoconference held on 3 September,⁴²⁶ Council members heard a briefing by the Chief Executive of MOBY Group. In addition to the briefers, the representatives of Afghanistan and the Islamic

⁴²¹ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II sect. II.

⁴²² For information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

⁴²³ See [S/2020/274](#), [S/2020/597](#), [S/2020/891](#) and [S/2020/1274](#).

⁴²⁴ See [S/2020/210](#), [S/2020/549](#), [S/2020/809](#) and [S/2020/1182](#).

⁴²⁵ See [S/2020/597](#) and [S/2020/1274](#).

⁴²⁶ See [S/2020/891](#).