

Table 2
Videoconferences: peace consolidation in West Africa

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
9 July 2020	S/2020/706	Letter dated 13 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

10. Peace and security in Africa

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting, in the form of an open debate, and issued one presidential statement in connection with the item entitled “Peace and security in Africa”.²⁷⁰ More information on the meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is provided in table 1 below. Council members also held three open videoconferences in connection with the item. More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below.

In 2020, Council members held two open videoconferences focusing on the operations of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel on the basis of reports of the Secretary-General on the Joint Force.²⁷¹ In addition, Council members held an open debate to discuss terrorism and violent extremism in Africa and an open videoconference on the situation regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

On 11 March, at the initiative of China, which held the Presidency of the Council for the month,²⁷² the Council held an open debate under the sub-item entitled “Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa”.²⁷³ The Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, and the Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator. Speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General noted that Africa continued to face vulnerabilities that threatened its peace and security, among which were terrorism and violent extremism, which continued to grow in various parts of

the continent, notably in Somalia and East Africa, West Africa, the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin. Recalling the statement of the Secretary-General that the phenomenon could not be addressed without addressing its underlying factors, she stated that the threat of terrorism was often a consequence of development, humanitarian, human rights and security challenges.

In her remarks on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Permanent Observer of the African Union noted the evolving approaches of the African Union in response to the increasing sophistication of tools employed by terrorist groups, including technology. She emphasized the importance of addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in an integrated and comprehensive manner, understanding the motivation, particularly for young people, to join the ranks of extremist groups, and paying more attention to the factors that lay beyond the immediate local context. The Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Administrator of UNDP emphasized that an integrated and balanced approach to security and development was needed to effectively address the challenges posed by violent extremism.

Following the briefings, some speakers emphasized the need to focus on the root causes and structural causes of terrorism and extremism in Africa.²⁷⁴ In addition, some speakers called for the strengthening

²⁷⁰ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

²⁷¹ See [S/2020/373](#) and [S/2020/1074](#).

²⁷² The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 26 February 2020 ([S/2020/161](#)).

²⁷³ See [S/PV.8743](#).

²⁷⁴ See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Germany, France, Viet Nam, Estonia, Indonesia, European Union, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco and Ethiopia); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Algeria, Eritrea and Senegal).

of international, regional and subregional cooperation,²⁷⁵ and others called for the implementation of relevant Council resolutions.²⁷⁶

At the same meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement.²⁷⁷ In the presidential statement, the Council noted the increasing threat posed to peace and security in Africa by terrorism, especially in the Sahel, the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa, and underlined the importance of prompt and effective implementation of its resolutions related to the fight against terrorism.²⁷⁸ The Council also commended the efforts and progress made by African countries, the African Union and other African regional and subregional organizations in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.²⁷⁹ In addition, the Council stressed the need to continue to provide and strengthen support to African Member States at the national, subregional and regional levels²⁸⁰ and called on the international community to strengthen its political commitment and consider mobilizing more sustainable and predictable resources and expertise to strengthen the capacity of African countries in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.²⁸¹ The Council underscored the importance of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and stressed the importance of cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in Africa, and in that regard encouraged the participation and leadership of women and the constructive engagement of youth in that process.²⁸²

Further to the letters submitted respectively by Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan,²⁸³ on 29 June Council

²⁷⁵ See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Tunisia, United Kingdom, France, Viet Nam, Estonia, Indonesia, Sierra Leon, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Ethiopia and Guinea); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Japan, Kenya, Eritrea, Angola and Senegal).

²⁷⁶ See [S/PV.8743](#) (China, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Guinea); and [S/PV.8743 \(Resumption 1\)](#) (Angola).

²⁷⁷ [S/PRST/2020/5](#).

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, first and third paragraphs.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, fifth paragraph.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, nineteenth paragraph. See also seventeenth paragraph.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, twenty-first paragraph.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, twelfth paragraph.

²⁸³ See [S/2020/355](#), [S/2020/409](#), [S/2020/566](#), [S/2020/567](#), [S/2020/586](#), [S/2020/617](#) and [S/2020/623](#). For more information on referral of disputes or situations to the attention of the Council by States, see part VI, sect. I.A.

members held an open videoconference²⁸⁴ in connection with the item to discuss the issues arising from the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam by Ethiopia. At the videoconference, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. In her remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted that the Blue Nile was an important transboundary water resource critical for the livelihoods and development of the people of Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan. The Under-Secretary-General recalled that the three Blue Nile riparian countries had signed the 2015 Agreement on Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, in which they had committed to cooperation, equitable and reasonable utilization, security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and had formed a national independent scientific research group in 2018 to discuss the filling and operation of the Dam. She noted the various mediation efforts of the African Union, South Africa, the Sudan, the United States and the European Union, following the inconclusive negotiations among the three countries in February 2020. The Under-Secretary-General reiterated the call of the Secretary-General for the parties to resolve peacefully all outstanding differences with urgency.

In their statements following the briefing, some Council members called on the three States to solve their differences through dialogue,²⁸⁵ while others urged them to avoid unilateral actions that would undermine the negotiations.²⁸⁶ The representative of Egypt expressed the view that the unilateral filling and operation of the Dam would heighten tensions and could provoke crises and conflicts that would further destabilize an already troubled region. In that context, he stated that it was important for the Council to consider the matter. The representative of Ethiopia stated that his country did not believe that the dispute related to the Dam had a legitimate place in the Council. He also said that the role of regional organizations was ignored when it was brought to the Council's attention, which contravened Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.²⁸⁷

In relation to the activities of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, Council members heard briefings in June and November 2020 in the

²⁸⁴ See [S/2020/636](#).

²⁸⁵ China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

²⁸⁶ France, Indonesia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

²⁸⁷ For more information on the practice of the Council in relation to Chapter VI of the Charter, including Article 33, see part VI.

context of two open videoconferences. On 5 June,²⁸⁸ Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritania, in his capacity as Chair of the Group of Five for the Sahel. In his remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted that the strengthening of the Joint Force was only one strand in the comprehensive international approach required to tackle the root causes of instability in Mali and the Sahel region. In that regard, he underscored that improving governance, eradicating poverty and protecting the human rights of all citizens remained critical. On the support provided by the international community for the operationalization of the Joint Force during the reporting period, especially by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), he noted, *inter alia*, that the rate at which the support provided by MINUSMA was collected and disbursed by the Force had increased from 21 per cent to almost 50 per cent. The Under-Secretary-General also reiterated the call by the Secretary-General for a comprehensive support package for the Joint Force, funded by assessed contributions. In the view of the Under-Secretary-General, that would allow for predictable and sustainable support and would also make it easier to pursue a long-term strategy to phase out the support and render the Joint Force autonomous. In his intervention, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritania commended the close collaboration between the Joint Force and MINUSMA and reaffirmed the support of the Group of Five for the Sahel for MINUSMA and for the extension and strengthening of the Mission's mandate. He also communicated the request of the Group of Five for the Council to consider the Joint Force under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In the statements that followed the briefings, Council members expressed concern at the security situation in the Sahel region,²⁸⁹ as well as the deteriorating security situation in the region.²⁹⁰ Some Council members also highlighted the need to address the root causes of instability in the region.²⁹¹ Furthermore, certain Council members noted the progress achieved by the Joint Force, including with regard to its counter-terrorism operations carried out during the reporting period and the improvement in its

capabilities.²⁹² Lastly, some Council members discussed the subject of adherence to human rights and international humanitarian law in counter-terrorism efforts by the Joint Force.²⁹³

On 16 November,²⁹⁴ Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service, on behalf of the European Union, and the representative of Canada in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. In his remarks, the Under-Secretary-General noted, in relation to the support model between MINUSMA and the Joint Force, that the issue of predictability of funding remained a matter of concern. In that regard, he emphasized that the Joint Force played a critical role in the regional response to violent extremism and that it was essential for the Joint Force to receive the required assistance to carry out its mandated tasks. Concerning the support that the international community, particularly MINUSMA, had provided to the Joint Force during the reporting period, he stated, *inter alia*, that further to the Council's authorization for MINUSMA to engage commercial contractors to deliver life-support consumables to Joint Force contingents operating outside Mali, the Mission had begun to make appropriate arrangements to implement such support. The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union reported that the African Union had decided, in February 2020, to deploy 3,000 troops to the Sahel to strengthen the ongoing efforts to address the security situation in the region, and that it had adopted its Sahel strategy, which focused on governance, security and integrated development with a main objective of addressing the root causes of the challenges facing the Sahel region. He also stated that it was of utmost importance for the United Nations to consider taking the necessary steps that would guarantee sustainable and predictable funding for the Joint Force from United Nations assessed contributions, as doing so would undoubtedly enhance the capabilities of the regional force. The Managing Director for Africa of the European External Action Service said that the sixth ministerial meeting between the European Union and the Group of Five for the Sahel, held on 9 November 2020, had allowed for

²⁸⁸ See [S/2020/515](#).

²⁸⁹ China, Belgium, Estonia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam.

²⁹⁰ Dominican Republic and Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia).

²⁹¹ China, Estonia, United States and Viet Nam.

²⁹² Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia), Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

²⁹³ Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Niger (also on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia) and United Kingdom.

²⁹⁴ See [S/2020/1126](#).

an initial exchange on the ongoing review of the European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel and added in that regard that the future approach was more ambitious. The Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission noted that the Commission had listened carefully to the needs and recommendations of women peacebuilders and business leaders from the Sahel region. He noted that the complex challenges required a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of conflict in the Sahel, prevent further escalation of conflict, build and sustain peace and promote sustainable development.

Following the briefings, some Council members called for investigations into potential violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Joint Force.²⁹⁵ In addition, some Council members encouraged the participation of women and youth in the peace and security architecture of the region.²⁹⁶ Speaking on behalf of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the representative of Mali reiterated the call for a mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter as well as predictable and sustainable funding for the Joint Force.

²⁹⁵ Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States.

²⁹⁶ Dominican Republic, Estonia, France and Viet Nam.

Table 1
Meetings: peace and security in 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.8743 and S/PV.8743 (Resumption 1) 11 March 2020	Countering terrorism and extremism in Africa Letter dated 26 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2020/161)		16 invitees ^a	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Assistant-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the United Nations Development Programme Administrator, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	12 Council members ^b all invitees ^c	S/PRST/2020/5

^a Algeria, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Togo.

^b Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Tunisia (also on behalf of the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa), United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam.

^c The Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations spoke on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Turkey also aligned themselves with the statement.

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5 June 2020	S/2020/515	Letter dated 9 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 June 2020	S/2020/636	Letter dated 1 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
16 November 2020	S/2020/1126	Letter dated 18 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

11. The situation in Libya

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings under the item entitled “The situation in Libya”.²⁹⁷ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. Council members also held seven open videoconferences in connection with the item.²⁹⁸ More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. The Council adopted four resolutions, including two under Chapter VII of the Charter.²⁹⁹ In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, Council members held closed videoconferences, informal consultations of the whole and an informal interactive dialogue to discuss the item.³⁰⁰

In 2020, the Council was briefed once by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), who resigned in early March. Subsequently, the regular briefings to the Council were provided by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNSMIL. Briefings by the Special Representative and the Acting Special

Representative focused on the political, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic developments in Libya. Other briefers included the Secretary-General, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) concerning Libya, who briefed the Council on the activities and developments relating to the work of the Committee and its Panel of Experts, and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, whose briefings were focused mainly on the Court’s ongoing investigations regarding the situation in Libya.

In January, the Council heard the last briefing by the Special Representative, during which he provided updates on the Berlin Conference held on 19 January 2020, describing the conference as a serious effort to try to unify a discordant international community and to give hope to the beleaguered Libyans, in the form of a “protective international umbrella”. He urged the Council to adopt a resolution to endorse the conclusions of the Berlin Conference. The Special Representative further expressed concern that the recent truce held in name only and reported that foreign sponsors were providing the warring parties in Libya with equipment and fighters, in brazen violation of the arms embargo and the pledges made by representatives of those countries in Berlin. The Special Representative expressed “deep anger and disappointment” over the actions of “unscrupulous actors inside and outside Libya”.³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

²⁹⁸ For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

²⁹⁹ Resolutions [2509 \(2020\)](#) (adopted under Chapter VII), [2510 \(2020\)](#), [2526 \(2020\)](#) (adopted under Chapter VII) and [2542 \(2020\)](#).

³⁰⁰ See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 38. See also [S/2020/258](#), [S/2020/344](#), [S/2020/558](#), [S/2020/789](#), [S/2020/1102](#) and [S/2021/203](#).

³⁰¹ See [S/PV.8710](#). The Secretary-General had briefed the Council on the outcomes of the Berlin conference on 21 January 2020 (see [S/2020/258](#)).