# United Nations

# HIGHLIGHTS OF SECURITY COUNCIL PRACTICE
## 2020

Meetings          Agenda          Decisions and Voting          Subsidiary Bodies

# Introduction

In 2020, the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, 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 Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and Viet Nam.

Among the ten non-permanent members, Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa successfully completed their two-year tenure at the end of 2020. India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, and Norway have joined the Security Council on 1 January 2021. Consolidating a practice initiated by Kazakhstan in 2017, the new incoming members participated in the flag raising ceremony on 4 January 2021.

Following the World Health Organization's declaration of the COVID-19 as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 and the subsequent decision by the Secretary-General on 16 March 2020 to restrict the presence in the UN Headquarters to essential personnel, the Security Council did not hold in-person meetings between 12 March and 14 July 2020. Instead, the members of the Council held videoconferences (VTCs) to ensure the continuity of the Council's work. As of 14 July 2020, in-person meetings and videoconferences were held interchangeably until the end of the year. In 2020, therefore, the Security Council and its members held 81 public and private meetings, 269 videoconferences, adopted 57 resolutions and issued 13 presidential statements.

Responding to the procedural challenges posed by the remote environment, successive presidencies in 2020 issued monthly letters devoted to regulating the working methods for conducting the work of the Council virtually, including new procedures for the adoption of resolutions and presidential statements. From July to October, in-person meetings were held in the Economic and Social Council Chamber in order to ensure the necessary social distancing consistent with the health and safety guidelines agreed upon by the respective presidencies in coordination with the Secretary-General. As of 8 October 2020, in-person meetings were held at the Security Council Chamber.

In 2020, the President of the Security Council participated and delivered statements at various events marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. On 26 June 2020, the President of the Council for the month (France) participated in the Virtual Ceremony to commemorate the signing of the Charter of the United Nations. On 21 September 2020, the President of the Council for that month (Niger) participated in the High-level Meeting to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. On 26 October 2020, the President of the Council for the month (Russian Federation) also participated at the Observance Ceremony in commemoration of United Nations Day. In addition, on 19 November 2020, the President of the Council during that month (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) participated in a Joint meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) entitled "Fostering Global Solidarity and Conflict-Sensitive Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its Socioeconomic Impacts". The President of the Council for the month of December (South Africa) also participated in the Special Session of the General Assembly in Response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic, held on 3-4 December 2020. Moreover, in December 2020, the Council and the General Assembly adopted the third set of identical resolutions (Security Council resolution 2558 (2020) and General Assembly resolution 75/201) in connection with peacebuilding and sustaining peace further to the review in 2020 of the peacebuilding architecture of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In 2020, the Council unanimously adopted a number of important resolutions. In March, the Council adopted resolution 2518 (2020), emphasizing the importance of enhancing the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers. In July 2020, it adopted resolution 2532 (2020), recognizing efforts and measures proposed by the Secretary-General concerning the response to the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to conflict-affected countries, in particular his appeal for an immediate global ceasefire. Consequently, the Council demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda. Also in July, the Council adopted resolution 2535 (2020), calling on relevant actors to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation of youth in building sustainable peace. In August, it adopted resolution 2538 (2020), the first presidential text since 2018, concerning women in peacekeeping in connection with the agenda item "United Nations peacekeeping". In addition, marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the Council issued in January 2020 a presidential statement (S/PRST/2020/1) reaffirming its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and in December 2020, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2020/13) expressing its continued commitment to foster interaction between the International Court of Justice and the Council.

In 2020, the Security Council also established a new field mission, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) by resolution 2524 (2020) and decided to terminate the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) as of 31 December 2020 by resolution 2559 (2020) . The Security Council also extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) until 31 December and requested to focus on the transition plan for its gradual drawdown by resolution 2512 (2020).

In 2020, marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the Security Council was composed of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, the Russian Federation, South Africa, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Viet Nam. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security Council sustained its activity in 2020 by holding both in-person meetings and videoconferences.

# 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 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council members agreed to convene videoconferences in order to ensure the continuity of the Council's work.



*UN Photo / Evan Schneider*
António Guterres (left), Secretary-General, addresses the Security Council meeting on children and armed conflict with a focus on integrating child protection into peace processes. 12 February 2020.

In 2020, the Council held, on average, seven in-person meetings and 22 videoconferences per month. The Council held a total of 79 public meetings and 143 open videoconferences, which combined amount to 222. In addition, in 2020 the total number of 46 informal consultations and 126 closed videoconferences combined amounted to 172.

## Overview



*UN Photo / Loey Felipe*
Nicolas De Rivière, Permanent Representative of France and Christoph Heusgen, Permanent Representative of Germany speak to each other during the Security Council meeting on the situation in Mali. 15 January 2020.

In March 2020, in response to the impact of the pandemic, the Security Council agreed to convene videoconferences, first in a closed format and as of 21 April 2020 also in open format. The first closed videoconference was held on 24 March 2020. In subsequent months and until 14 July 2020, Council members only held videoconferences (in open and closed formats) due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 14 July 2020, the Council resumed in-person meetings (first in the ECOSOC Chamber and then in the Security Council Chamber) which it alternated with videoconferences, developing a "hybrid model" until the end of the year. In 2020, the Security Council held 81 public and private meetings and Council members held 269 videoconferences. Out of the 81 meetings, the Council held 79 public meetings and two private meetings, all of which were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs). Of the 269 videoconferences, Council members held 143 open videoconferences and 126 closed videoconferences. Eight closed videoconferences were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs).

## Number of Security Council meetings, VTCs and consultations 1946-2020
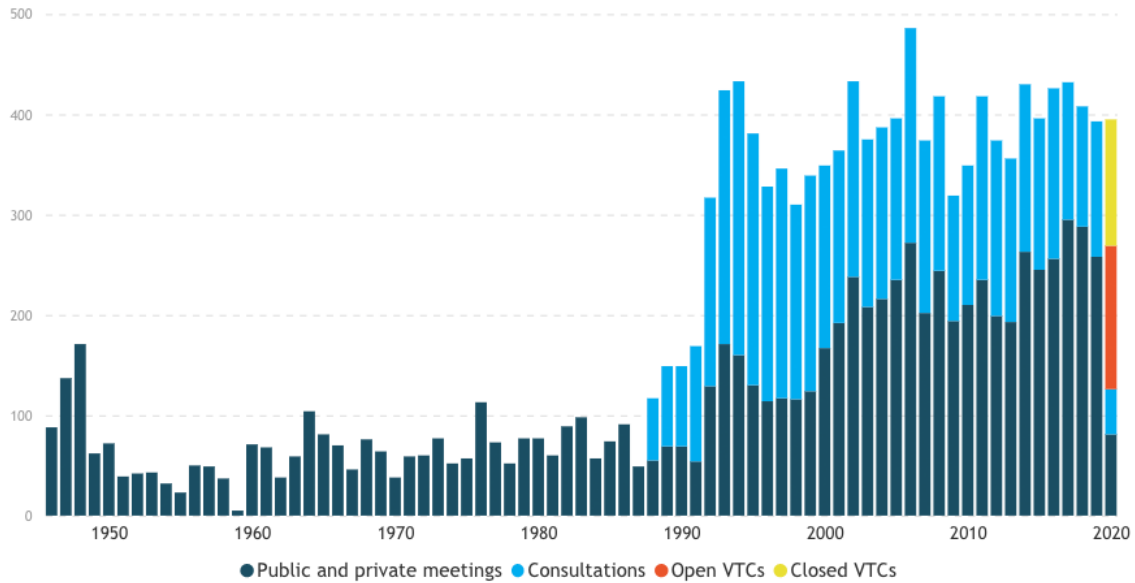


* Informal consultations of the whole were held since the inception of the Security Council. This chart only includes data on informal consultations of the whole from 1988 onwards since prior records are not verifiable.

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

## Number of Security Council meetings, VTCs and consultations 2011-2020
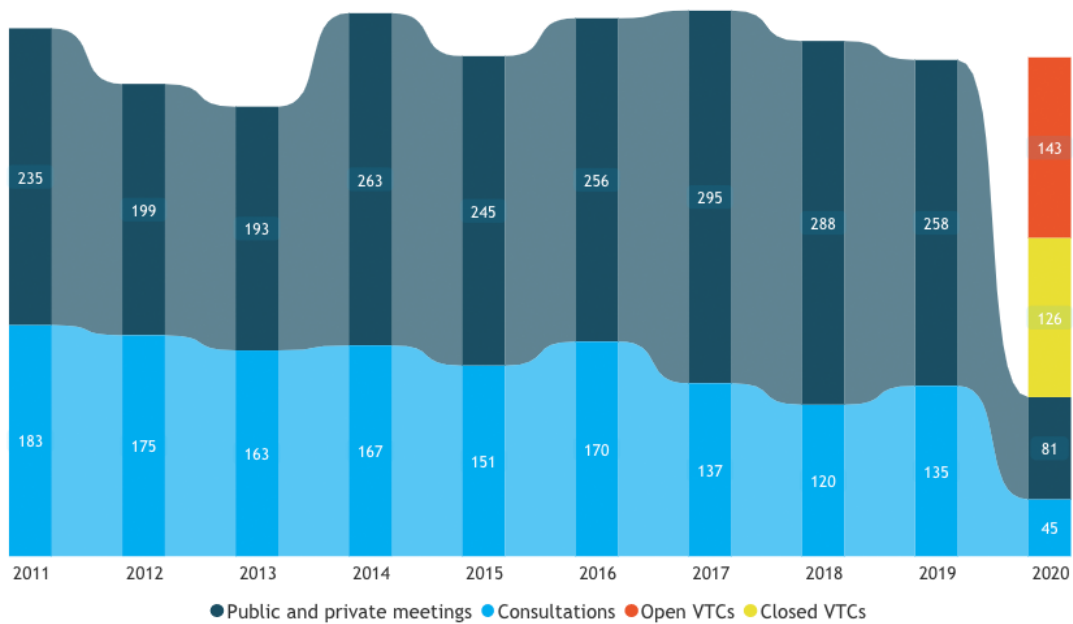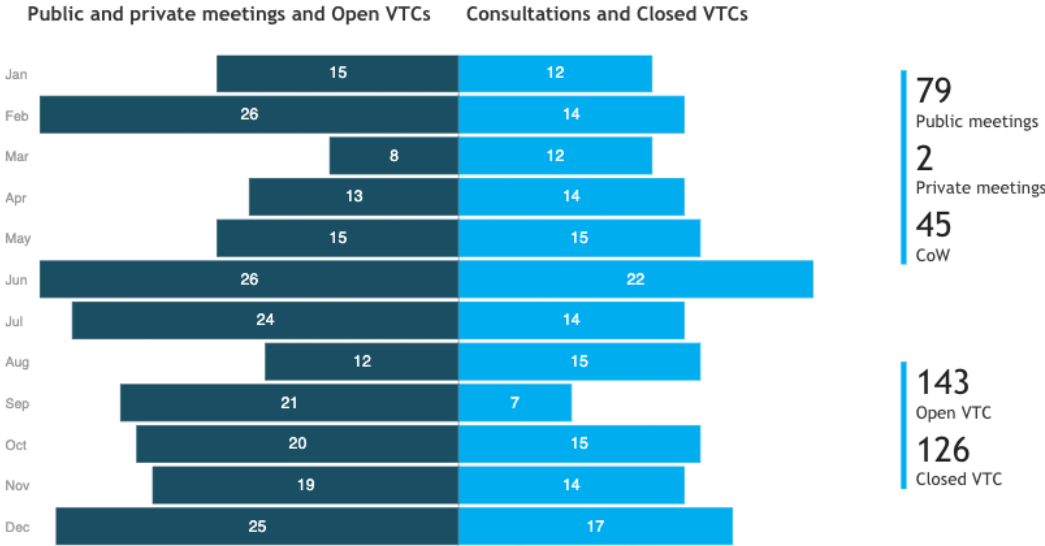


**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Meetings, consultations, and VTCs



*UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe*
Security Council members hold open VTC on the situation in the Middle East (Yemen). 16 April 2020.

In 2020, the Council held, on average, seven in-person meetings and 22 videoconferences per month. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the Council sustained its activity in 2020 with respect to 2019. In 2020, the Council held a total of 79 public meetings and 143 open videoconferences, which combined amount to 222 compared to 243 public meetings in 2019. In addition, in 2020 the total number of informal consultations (46) and closed videoconferences (126) combined amounted to 172 compared to 135 consultations in 2019. Finally, the Council held a total of two private meetings as well as eight closed videoconferences with TCCs/PCCs in 2020 and one closed videoconference to hear the annual briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice, compared to 15 private meetings in 2019.

CHART 2
## Number of Security Council meetings, VTCs and consultations by month in 2020



| | Public and private meetings and Open VTCs | Consultations and Closed VTCs |
|---|---|---|
| Jan | 15 | 12 |
| Feb | 26 | 14 |
| Mar | 8 | 12 |
| Apr | 13 | 14 |
| May | 15 | 15 |
| Jun | 26 | 22 |
| Jul | 24 | 14 |
| Aug | 12 | 15 |
| Sep | 21 | 7 |
| Oct | 20 | 15 |
| Nov | 19 | 14 |
| Dec | 25 | 17 |

**79** Public meetings
**2** Private meetings
**45** CoW

**143** Open VTC
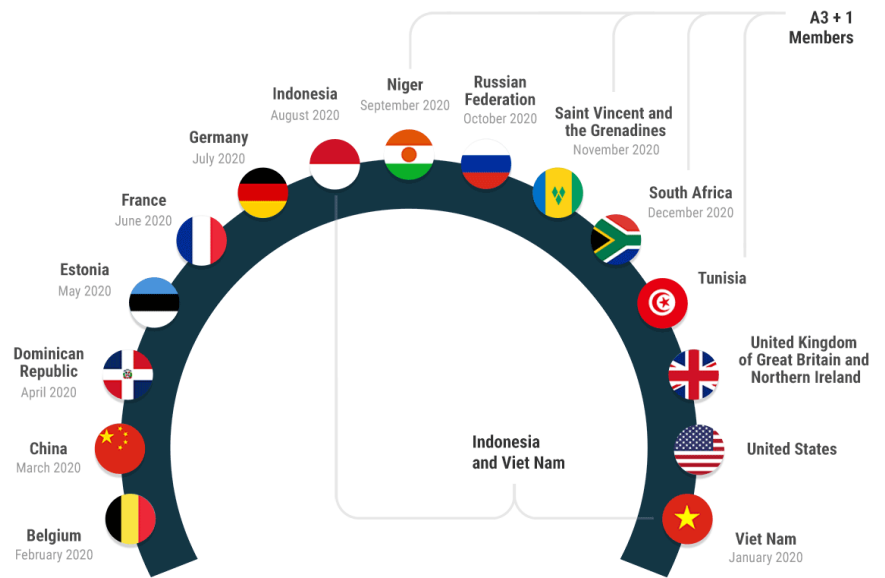**126** Closed VTC

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# In 2020, the Council witnessed the increasing coalescing of Council members around regions (i.e. A3+1, Viet Nam + Indonesia, the European members).

In 2020, the Council witnessed the increasing coalescing of Council members around regions (i.e. A3+1, Viet Nam + Indonesia, the European members). The European members aligned their working methods in what they termed as "the European spring" (involving the Presidencies of Estonia, France and Germany).

The A3+1 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia (A3) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) also delivered statements to the Council as a regional group at 35 public meetings and open VTCs, on country-specific agenda items focusing on the African region and thematic agenda items such as UN peacekeeping operations and children and armed conflict.

Indonesia and Viet Nam also spoke on behalf of each other at 12 public meetings and open VTCs, on agenda items such as Haiti, Mali, and the Great Lakes region. As two ASEAN Member States, Indonesia and Viet Nam also presented their views on the comprehensive partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations at a thematic briefing on "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security" on 30 January 2020.

A3 + 1 Members

Niger
September 2020

Russian Federation
October 2020

Indonesia
August 2020

Germany
July 2020

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
November 2020

France
June 2020

South Africa
December 2020

Estonia
May 2020

Tunisia

Dominican Republic
April 2020

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

China
March 2020

Indonesia and Viet Nam

United States

Belgium
February 2020

Viet Nam
January 2020

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# High-level meetings and VTCs

In 2020, the Council held <u>4 high-level meetings and 15 high-level videoconferences</u>, in which two or more Council members were represented at ministerial level or above. On 24 September 2020, under the Presidency of Niger, Council members held a summit-level videoconference under the agenda item "Maintenance of international peace and security", focusing on global governance post COVID-19. Niger, South Africa, Estonia and Tunisia were represented by the respective Heads of States, and China, the Russian Federation, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, France, Viet Nam, Belgium, United Kingdom, Germany and Indonesia were represented at ministerial level.



*UN Photo / Mark Garten*
António Guterres (left), Secretary-General and Phạm Bình Minh (right), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam speak to each other during the Security Council meeting on maintenance of international peace and security, with a focus on upholding the United Nations Charter. 9 January 2020.
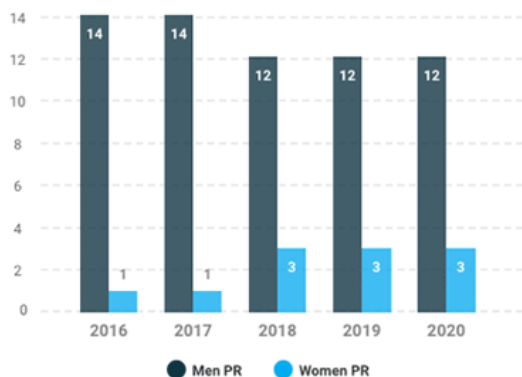
# Representatives on the Council



*UN Photo/Manuel Elias*
Inga Rhonda King (left), Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of November, chairs the Security Council meeting on the situation in Mali. 17 November 2020.

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 2020, the number of women Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives on the Council was 11, while the number of men Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives was 29.

## Permanent Representatives (PR) on the Council 2016-2020



Men PR ● Women PR ●

## Deputy Permanent Representatives (DPR) on the Council 2016-2020



Men DPR ● Women DPR ●
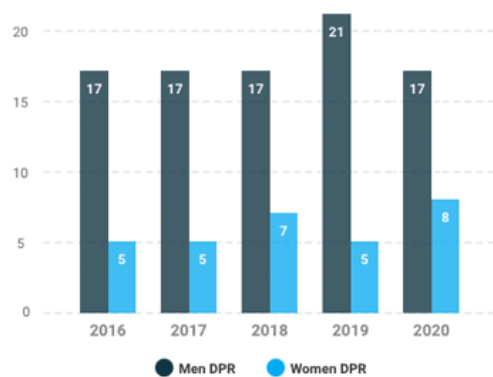
# Invitations under rule 39 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure



*UN Photo / Evan Schneider*
Jo Becker, Chair of the Advisory Board of Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, addresses the Security Council on children and armed conflict.
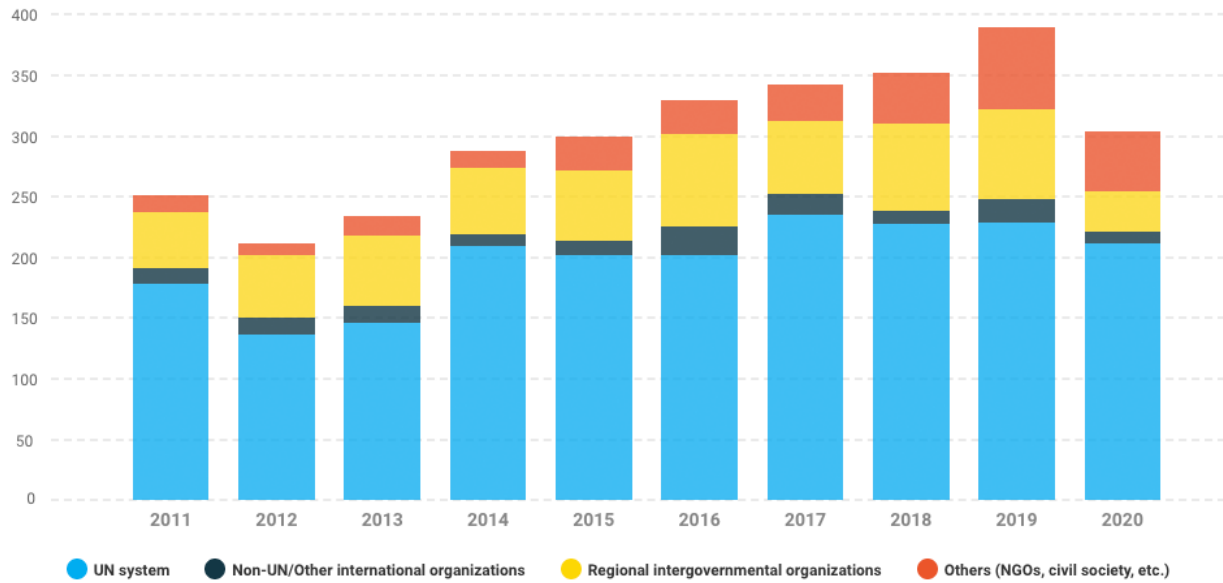12 February 2020.

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. Given the technical limitations imposed by videoconferences as well as the health and safety guidelines imposed by the pandemic for in-person meetings, participation by non-members of the Council significantly decreased in 2020. This notwithstanding, the Council extended a total of 304 invitations under rule 39, of which 200 were to men (65.8%) and 104 were to women (34.2%). In

addition, out of 304 invitations, 212 were extended to officials belonging to the UN System, 32 to officials representing regional intergovernmental organizations, 9 to invitees from international organizations other than the UN, and 51 to representatives of other entities such as non-governmental organizations and civil society.

Despite the overall decrease of rule 39 invitees, the number of invitations to representatives of other entities including non-governmental organizations and civil society under rule 39 was sustained in 2020. Out of 51 representatives of other entities including non-governmental organizations and civil society, 29 were women (57%). Disrupting the trend of previous years, the participation of female rule 39 invitees decreased in 2020 (female rule 39 invitees decreased almost twice as much as male rule 39 invitees).

## Rule 39 invitees 2011-2020



Legend: ● UN system  ● Non-UN/Other international organizations  ● Regional intergovernmental organizations  ● Others (NGOs, civil society, etc.)
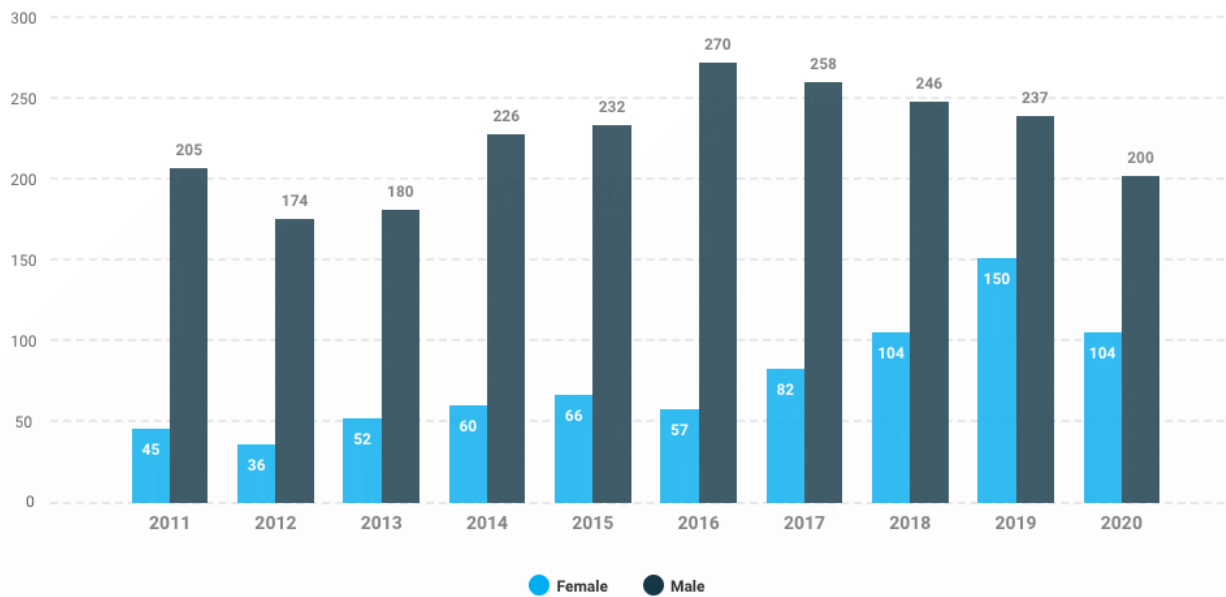
* The category "UN system" includes officials of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

## Rule 39 invitees 2011-2020 (by gender)



Legend: ● Female  ● Male

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Informal consultations of the whole and closed VTCs

In 2020, Council members held 46 consultations and 126 closed videoconferences, eight of which were held with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs) and one held as a briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice. The most discussed topics in consultations and closed videoconferences during 2020 were: Syria (22 times), Working methods (19), Yemen (16), Libya (13), Non-proliferation/DPRK (9), Sudan and South Sudan (8) Middle East, including the Palestinian question (6), COVID-19 (5) and Somalia (5).

FIGURE 1

## Frequency of topics discussed in informal consultations of the whole in 2020
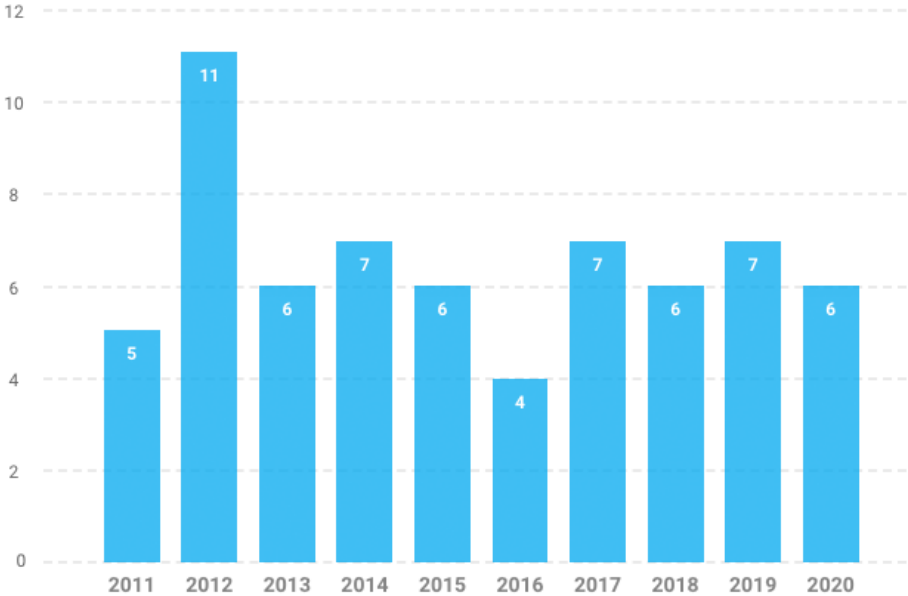
# Informal interactive dialogues

In 2020, 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 2020, the Council held six IIDs, three of which were held virtually as closed VTCs.

CHART 5
## Number of informal interactive dialogues 2011-2020



| Year | Value |
|------|-------|
| 2011 | 5 |
| 2012 | 11 |
| 2013 | 6 |
| 2014 | 7 |
| 2015 | 6 |
| 2016 | 4 |
| 2017 | 7 |
| 2018 | 6 |
| 2019 | 7 |
| 2020 | 6 |

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# 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, in recent practice these meetings have been open to the public or even broadcast. In 2020, the Council held 22 Arria-formula meetings, 18 of which were held virtually.



*UN Web TV*

Karen Pierce, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, speaks at the Arria-formula meeting on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). 20 January 2020.

## Number of Arria-formula meetings 2011-2020
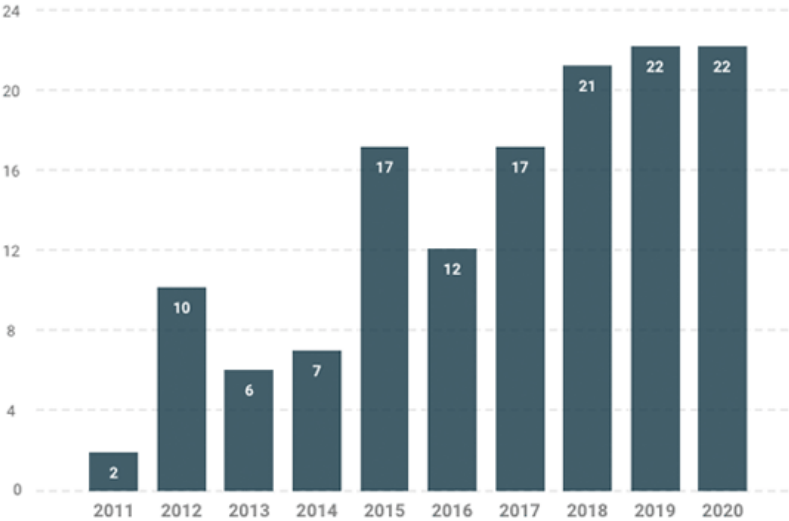


SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

# Agenda

In accordance with rule 11 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure and presidential note 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.



*UN Photo / Evan Schneider*
Abdou Abarry, Permanent Representative of Niger and Jerry Matthews Matjila, Permanent Representative of South Africa speak to each other during the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East (Syria). 10 January 2020.

# Overview

In 2020, the Security Council considered a total of 30 agenda items in meetings and Council members considered 35 agenda items in the context of open videoconferences resulting in a combined total of 43* agenda items addressed in 2020, against a total of 49 in 2019. Out of the 43 agenda items, 23 addressed country-specific or regional situations and 20 thematic and other issues. Open videoconferences were often 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 2020, the Security Council did not add any new item to its agenda.

* excludes Non-proliferation/DPRK since resolution 2515 (2020) was not announced via VTC and was not discussed in meetings or open VTCs in 2020

Out of the 43 agenda items, 23 addressed country-specific or regional situations and 20 thematic and other issues.

CHART 7

**Percentage of meetings and open VTCs on country-specific/regional situations and thematic and other issues in 2020**
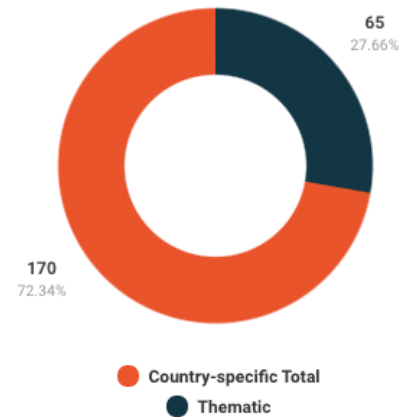


65
27.66%
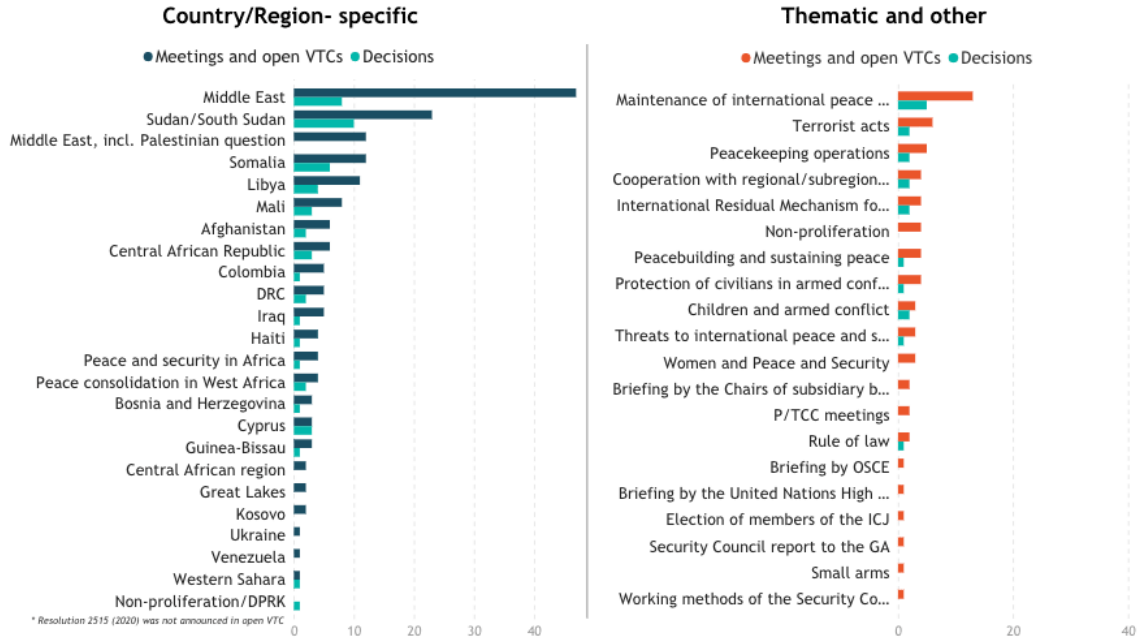
170
72.34%

● Country-specific Total
● Thematic

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

CHART 8

## Number of meetings and open VTCs held and resolutions/PRSTs adopted by agenda item in 2020



**Country/Region- specific**

● Meetings and open VTCs  ● Decisions

- Middle East
- Sudan/South Sudan
- Middle East, incl. Palestinian question
- Somalia
- Libya
- Mali
- Afghanistan
- Central African Republic
- Colombia
- DRC
- Iraq
- Haiti
- Peace and security in Africa
- Peace consolidation in West Africa
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Cyprus
- Guinea-Bissau
- Central African region
- Great Lakes
- Kosovo
- Ukraine
- Venezuela
- Western Sahara
- Non-proliferation/DPRK

*Resolution 2515 (2020) was not announced in open VTC*

0  10  20  30  40

**Thematic and other**

● Meetings and open VTCs  ● Decisions

- Maintenance of international peace ...
- Terrorist acts
- Peacekeeping operations
- Cooperation with regional/subregion...
- International Residual Mechanism fo...
- Non-proliferation
- Peacebuilding and sustaining peace
- Protection of civilians in armed conf...
- Children and armed conflict
- Threats to international peace and s...
- Women and Peace and Security
- Briefing by the Chairs of subsidiary b...
- P/TCC meetings
- Rule of law
- Briefing by OSCE
- Briefing by the United Nations High ...
- Election of members of the ICJ
- Security Council report to the GA
- Small arms
- Working methods of the Security Co...

0  20  40

* Under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)
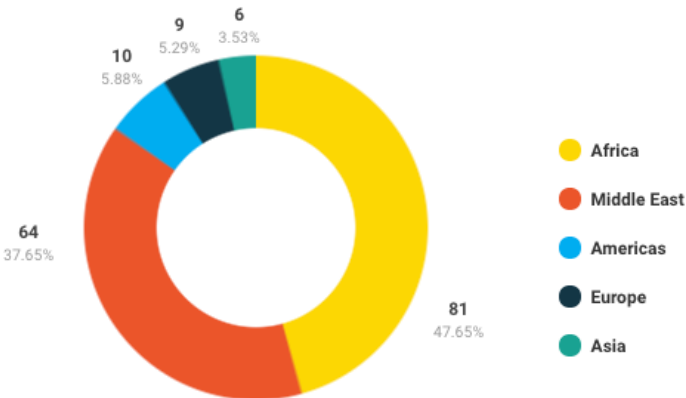
**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Country-specific and regional situations

In 2020, the Council dealt with country-specific or regional situations in 65 meetings and 105 open videoconferences of the Council. Among those meetings and open videoconferences combined, Africa accounted for 81 of them, followed by the Middle East with 64, Americas with 10, Europe with 9 and Asia with 6.



*UN Photo / Manuel Elias*
Catherine Imaji Udida, Representative of Nigeria speaks with adviser during the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. 22 January 2020.

**Percentage of meetings and open VTCs by geographic region in 2020**



9
5.29%

6
3.53%

10
5.88%

64
37.65%

81
47.65%

- Africa
- Middle East
- Americas
- Europe
- Asia

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Thematic and other issues

In 2020, 16 public meetings and 49 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 13 of them, followed by threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (6), peacekeeping operations (5), protection of civilians in armed conflict (4), non-proliferation (4), cooperation with regional and subregional organizations (4), the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (4), and peacebuilding and sustaining peace (4), children and armed conflict (3), women and peace and security (3) and threats to international peace and security (3). On 1 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2532 (2020), under the agenda item "Maintenance of international peace and security", supporting the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire and demanding a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda. Further to the adoption of the resolution, Council members addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in a series of dedicated open videoconferences on "pandemics and security" on 2 July 2020, on the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020) on 9 September 2020,

and on "global governance after COVID-19" on 24 September 2020. On 3 November 2020, under the Presidency of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Security Council virtually held a high-level open debate on contemporary drivers of conflict and insecurity under the agenda item "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace". On 3 December 2020, under the Presidency of South Africa, the Security Council held a virtual ministerial-level debate on "Maintenance of international peace and security" with a focus on security sector reform.

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 for the month of January by Viet Nam, February by Belgium, April by the Dominican Republic, May by Estonia, June by France, July by Germany, August by Indonesia, September by Niger, October by the Russian Federation, November by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and December by South Africa. Except for January and February, all wrap-up sessions in 2020 were held virtually.



*UN Photo / Mark Garten*
Mary Robinson, Chair of The Elders, briefs the Security Council on maintenance of international peace and security and upholding the UN Charter. 9 January 2020.

# 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 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council adopted a series of new working methods for conducting its work virtually, including new written voting procedures for the adoption of resolutions (S/2020/253).



*UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe*
Security Council unanimously adopts resolution 2513 (2020) on Afghanistan, welcoming the significant steps towards ending the war. 10 March 2020.

In 2020, the Security Council adopted a total of 57 resolutions, issued 13 presidential statements, 11 notes by the President, and 242 letters by the President. Council members also issued 46 press statements. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council also agreed to adopt a series of new working methods, which were recorded in letters of the President of the Council.

# Overview

In 2020, the Security Council adopted a total of 57 resolutions, issued 13 presidential statements, 11 notes by the President, and 242 letters by the President. Council members also issued 46 press statements.

In 2020, the Council unanimously adopted resolutions 2518 (2020), emphasizing the importance of enhancing the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers and called on host States to promptly investigate and effectively prosecute those responsible for attacks on United Nations personnel. By resolution 2532 (2020), which was unanimously adopted, the Council expressed its support for the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire issued in March to help unite efforts to fight COVID-19. The Council also unanimously adopted resolution 2535 (2020), calling on relevant actors to increase the representation of youth for conflict prevention and resolution. By unanimously adopting resolution 2538 (2020), the Council called upon Member States, the United Nations and regional organizations to strengthen the collective efforts to bolster the role of women in all levels of peacekeeping action, making it the first presidential text to be adopted since 2018. In December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2553 (2020), the second on the issue of security sector reform, six years after the adoption of resolution 2151 (2014) reaffirming the importance of security sector reform in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

At the outset of the year, in January 2020, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2020/1) reaffirming its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, including the purposes and principles of the Charter, and an international order based on international law, on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. In April 2020, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2020/6) recalling the link between armed conflict, violence and conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine, and calling on all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law. In December 2020, on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/2020/13) expressing its continued commitment to foster interaction between the International Court of Justice and the Council.

The Council failed to adopt seven draft resolutions on the situation in the Middle East, specifically in connection with the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic (S/2020/654, S/2020/658, S/2020/667 and S/2020/683), non-proliferation in connection with extending arms-related restrictions on Iran (S/2020/797), threats to international peace and security by terrorist acts concerning foreign terrorist fighters (S/2020/852) and women and peace and security, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council's landmark resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2020/1054). Draft resolutions contained in documents S/2020/654, S/2020/667 and S/2020/852 failed to be adopted due to the veto of one or more permanent members, whereas draft resolutions contained in documents S/2020/658, S/2020/683, S/2020/797 and S/2020/1054 were not adopted having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

Furthermore, the Council failed to adopt various amendments to draft resolutions relating to the situation in the Middle East, specifically in connection with the renewal of the cross-border mechanism for humanitarian deliveries to the Syrian Arab Republic. The Council considered and did not adopt an oral amendment proposed at the 8700<sup>th</sup> meeting (S/PV.8700) as well as the amendments contained in documents S/2020/668 (amending draft resolution S/2020/667), S/2020/690 (amending draft resolution S/2020/684), S/2020/691 (amending draft resolution S/2020/684) and S/2020/692 (amending draft resolution S/2020/684). Draft resolutions S/2020/24 and S/2020/684 were nonetheless adopted as resolutions 2504 (2020) and 2533 (2020), albeit non-unanimously.



*UN Photo / Loey Felipe*
The Security Council votes to authorize a one-year extension of the asset freeze and travel ban imposed in 2014 on individuals or entities threatening peace, security and stability in Yemen. 25 February 2020.

## CHART 10

**Number of resolutions, presidential statements, notes, and letters by the President 2011-2020**

| Resolutions | Presidential statements | Notes by the President | Letters by the President |
|---|---|---|---|
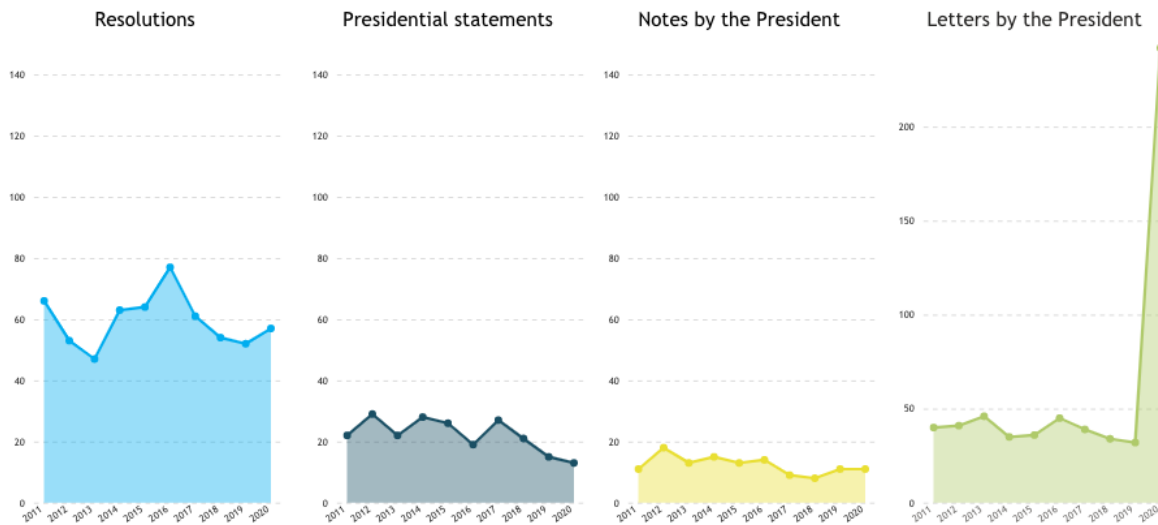
# Procedural votes

In 2020, the proposed invitation to participate in a meeting of the Council under rule 39 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure was put to a vote at the 8764th meeting under the agenda item "The situation in the Middle East" (S/PV.8764), more specifically in connection with the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the alleged use of chemical weapons. The proposed invitation under rule 39 failed to obtain the required number of votes. Chart 11 shows the total number of procedural votes over the past five years.
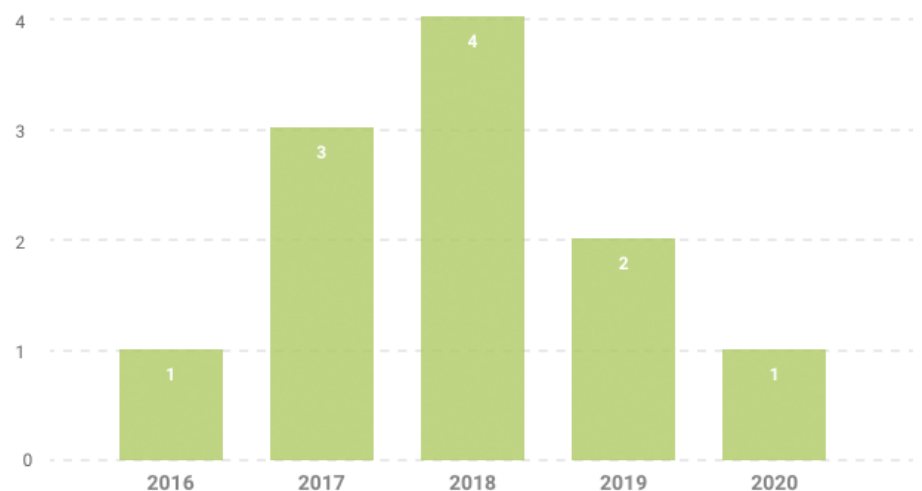


*UN Photo / Evan Schneider*
Nicolas De Rivière, Permanent Representative of France votes during the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East (Syria).
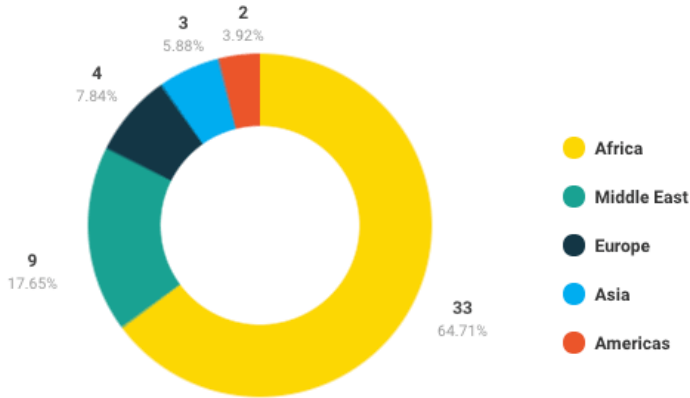5 October 2020.

CHART 11
**Procedural votes 2016-2020**

# Decisions by geographic region

CHART 12

**Percentage of decisions by geographic region in 2020**

3
5.88%

2
3.92%

4
7.84%

9
17.65%

33
64.71%

- Africa
- Middle East
- Europe
- Asia
- Americas

In 2020, 46 of the 57 resolutions and five of the 13 presidential statements concerned country or region-specific situations or conflicts; Africa accounted for 29 resolutions and four presidential statements, followed by the Middle East with nine resolutions, and Asia with three resolutions, Europe with three resolutions and one presidential statement and Americas with two resolutions.



*UN Photo / Manuel Elias*
Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, briefs the Security Council meeting on peace and security in Africa, with a focus on countering terrorism and extremism in Africa. 11 March 2020.

# Press statements

In 2020, Council members issued 46 press statements, 28 of which concerned political developments, peace and electoral processes, 17 of which concerned terrorist-related activities, attacks against civilians or attacks against United Nations personnel in the field and one of which concerned non-proliferation. The most frequently referenced countries or regions in press statements were the following: Afghanistan (7 times), Yemen (6 times), Mali (5 times), Colombia and the Central African Republic (4 times, respectively), and Sudan and Nigeria (3 times, respectively).



*UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe*
Kelly Craft, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, briefs reporters after the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. 11 February 2020.

## Frequency of countries referred to in press statements in 2020



**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD Expand Figure 2

# 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 2020, one presidential text was adopted, compared to seven presidential texts in 2010 and five in 2016.



*UN Photo / Manuel Elias*
Philippe Goffin, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense of Belgium and President of the Security Council for the month of February, chairs the Security Council meeting on the situation in Libya. 12 February 2020.

# Voting

In 2020, out of 57 resolutions 44, or 77.2%, were adopted unanimously compared to 84.6% in 2019 (an overall decrease of 7.4%). Of the 13 resolutions not adopted unanimously, three were adopted in relation to the situation in the Middle East (Syria), three related to the situation in Libya, and one each in relation to Sudan and South Sudan, the Central African Republic, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Haiti, Western Sahara, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2020, five vetoes were cast in connection with three draft resolutions related to the situation in the Middle East (Syria) and threats to international peace and security by terrorist acts, specifically in connection with foreign terrorist fighters. Four draft resolutions were not adopted due to an insufficient number of

affirmative votes in connection with the situation in the Middle East (Syria), non-proliferation, specifically in connection with extending arms-related restrictions on Iran, and women and peace and security, on the 20th anniversary of the Council's landmark resolution 1325 (2000).

In the period 2011 to 2020, the Council adopted a total of 594 resolutions, out of which 530 were adopted unanimously. In this period, 36 vetoes were cast in connection with 25 draft resolutions. The chart below shows the voting record for draft resolutions tabled in the period 2011-2020, 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 13
## Voting on draft resolutions in the period 2011-2020



Adopted unanimously    Adopted non-unanimously    Not adopted due to insufficient number of votes    Veto
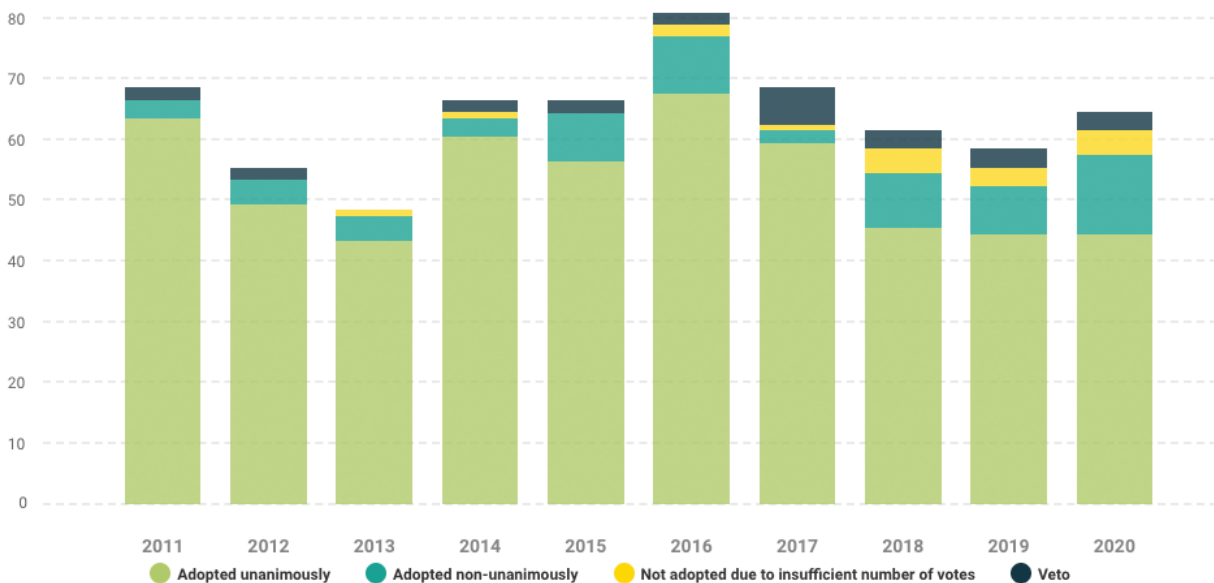
**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Cross-cutting issues in country-specific decisions of the Security Council

In 2020, 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 2020, the Council adopted 51 decisions relating to country-specific or regional situations, 39 of which contained one or more provisions on POC; 29 of which contained one or more provisions on WPS; and 18 of which contained one or more provisions on CAAC. Consistent with the slight decline in the number of decisions adopted in the context of country-specific or regional situations compared to 2019 (4%), the number of decisions containing one or more provisions on WPS and CAAC also decreased slightly 1.6% and 2.6%, respectively, while the number of decisions containing one or more provisions on POC increased by more than 10%.

Zhang Jun, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of March, chairs the Security Council meeting on peace and security in Africa, with a focus on countering terrorism and extremism in Africa. 11 March 2020.

CHART 14

## Number of decisions adopted under country-specific or regional situations with provisions on POC, WPS or CAAC 2011-2020
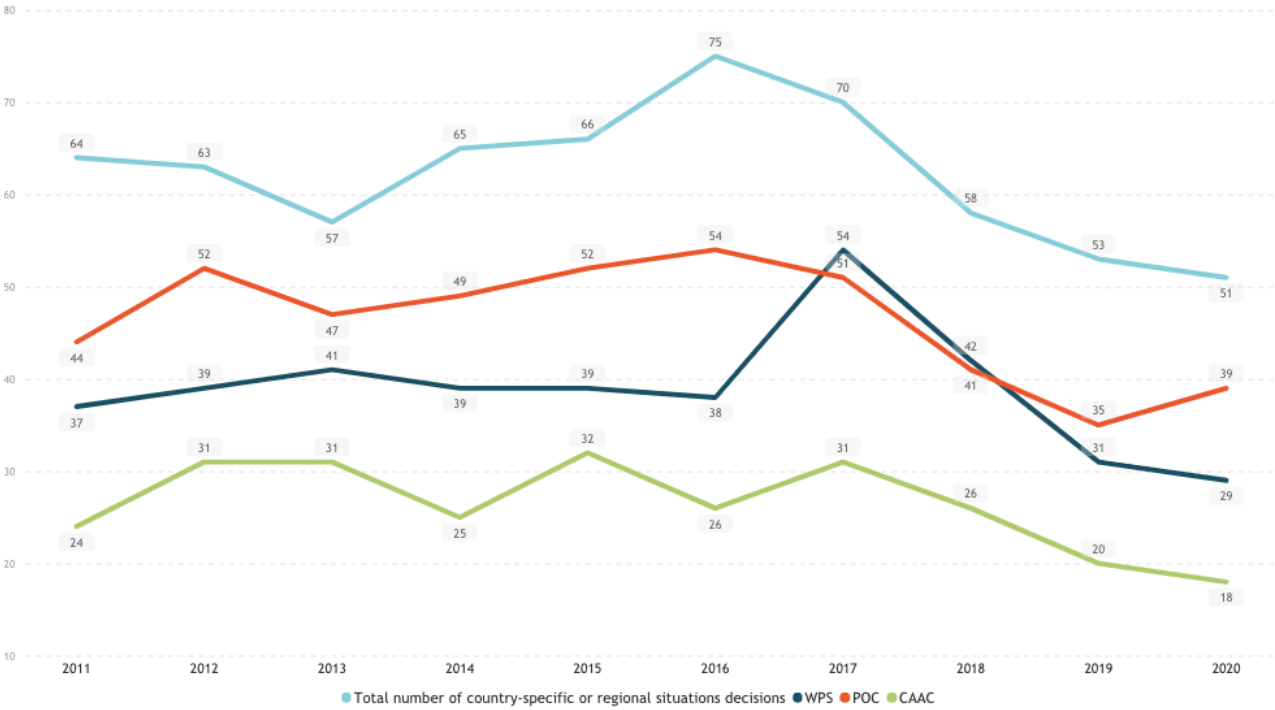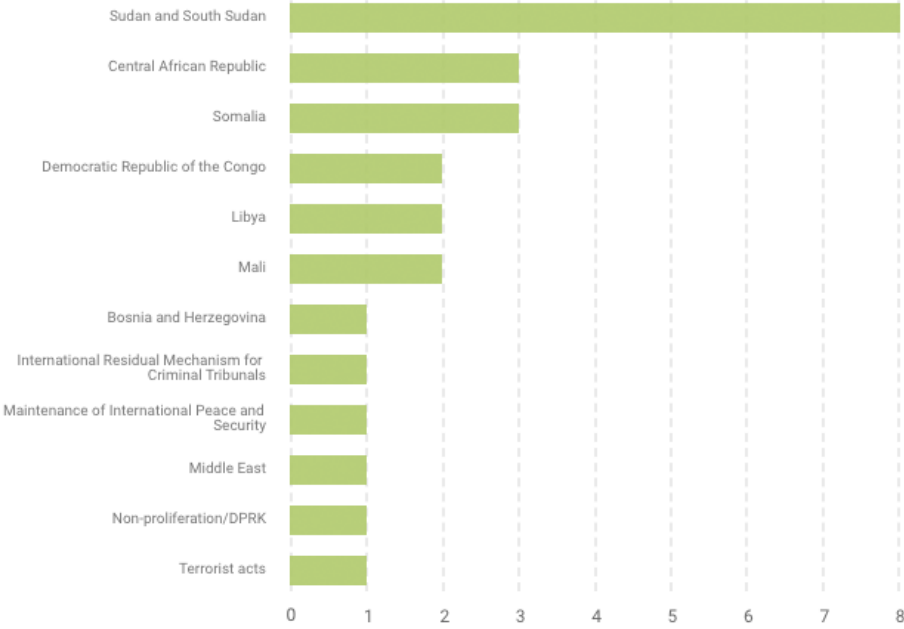


**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Resolutions under Chapter VII

In 2020, out of a total of 57 resolutions, the Council adopted 26 resolutions explicitly under Chapter VII of the Charter, including resolution 2515 (2020) 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 26 resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, 20 concerned the African continent. Except for resolution 2526 (2020), adopted under the agenda item "The situation in Libya", extending the authorization to inspect vessels off the coast of Libya, and resolution 2529 (2020), adopted under the agenda item "International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals", renewing the mandate of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism, all other resolutions (24) extended and modified mandates of peacekeeping operations and sanctions related bodies or concerned the renewal of sanctions imposed by the Council.

CHART 15

**Resolutions adopted explicitly under Chapter VII of the Charter in 2020**



SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

# 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.



*UN Photo / Mark Garten*
Peacekeepers attend the International Conference on 40 Years of Hosting Afghan Refugees in Pakistan. 17 February 2020.

In 2020, the Council adopted decisions concerning the mandate of 11 peacekeeping operations (out of 13 that were in operation in 2020) and ten special political missions (out of 13 that were in operation in 2020), primarily extending their mandates.

# UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions



*UN Photo / Herve Serefio*
Commander Carla Monteiro de Castro Araujo, MINUSCA Gender Advocacy Officer, on field visit in Mbomou, Central African Republic. 18 May 2020.

In 2020, the Council adopted decisions concerning the mandate of 11 peacekeeping operations (out of 13 that were in operation in 2020) and ten special political missions (out of 13 that were in operation in 2020), primarily extending their mandates.

On 28 February 2020, by resolution 2512 (2020), the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) until 31 December and requested the Secretary-General to start the liquidation of the Mission immediately thereafter. The Council also requested that UNIOGBIS continue to focus on the transition plan for its gradual drawdown and transfer of tasks to the United Nations country team, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and other regional and international partners by the end of 2020.

On 2 June 2020, by resolution 2524 (2020), the Security Council established a new special political mission, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), to assist the political transition in the Sudan, support peace processes and the implementation of future peace agreements, assist in peacebuilding, and support the

mobilisation of economic and development assistance and the coordination of humanitarian assistance. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to continue transition planning and management to ensure a phased, sequenced and efficient transition from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to UNITAMS. On 22 December 2020, by resolution 2559 (2020), the Council decided to terminate UNAMID as of 31 December 2020 and requested the Secretary-General to commence the drawdown of UNAMID personnel on 1 January 2021 and to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian UNAMID personnel by 30 June 2021, other than those required for the Mission's liquidation.

On 23 December 2020, by a letter from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2020/1291), the Council approved the temporary redeployment, for a two-month period, of two infantry companies and two military utility helicopters from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to assist the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

# Changes in mandate and in the authorized strength

In 2020, the Council amended the mandates of eight peacekeeping operations and six special political missions and established a new mandate for UNITAMS. As part of these changes, the Council introduced new elements to the work of nine field missions in support of efforts to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making in political processes, peacebuilding, and the maintenance of international peace and security. In the mandates of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), UNITAMS, UNMISS, United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), and United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the Council underscored the importance of supporting the prevention and measures to address and ensure accountability for sexual and gender-based violence.

Underscoring the importance of United Nations electoral support in order to prevent relapses or escalation of conflict, the Council provided further details on the mandates of MINUSCA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

(UNAMI), UNITAMS, UNSOM, and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) to provide good offices, technical, logistical and, in the cases of MINUSCA and MINUSMA, security support for the conduct of national and local elections and other voting processes. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNAMID and UNDOF were tasked with taking steps to ensure the safety and health of their personnel, while MINUSCA and UNITAMS were requested to support assistance efforts to address the consequences of the pandemic. Further details are available in the Field Missions Dashboard prepared by the Security Council Affairs Division.

In addition, in 2020, two peacekeeping operations, namely UNIFIL and MINUSCA, underwent a revision of their authorized troop and police strength or composition. By resolution 2539 (2020), the Council decided to renew the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 August 2021 while authorizing to reduce the maximum number of authorized troops from 15,000 to 13,000. Furthermore, the Council adopted resolution 2552 (2020), maintaining MINUSCA's current troop levels of 11,650 military personnel and 2,080 police personnel while modifying its composition.



*UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe*
Security Council unanimously adopts a resolution 2552 (2020), authorizing a one-year mandate extension of MINUSCA. 12 November 2020.

FIGURE 3

## UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions in 2020



🟡 Peacekeeping Operation    🟢 Special Political Mission
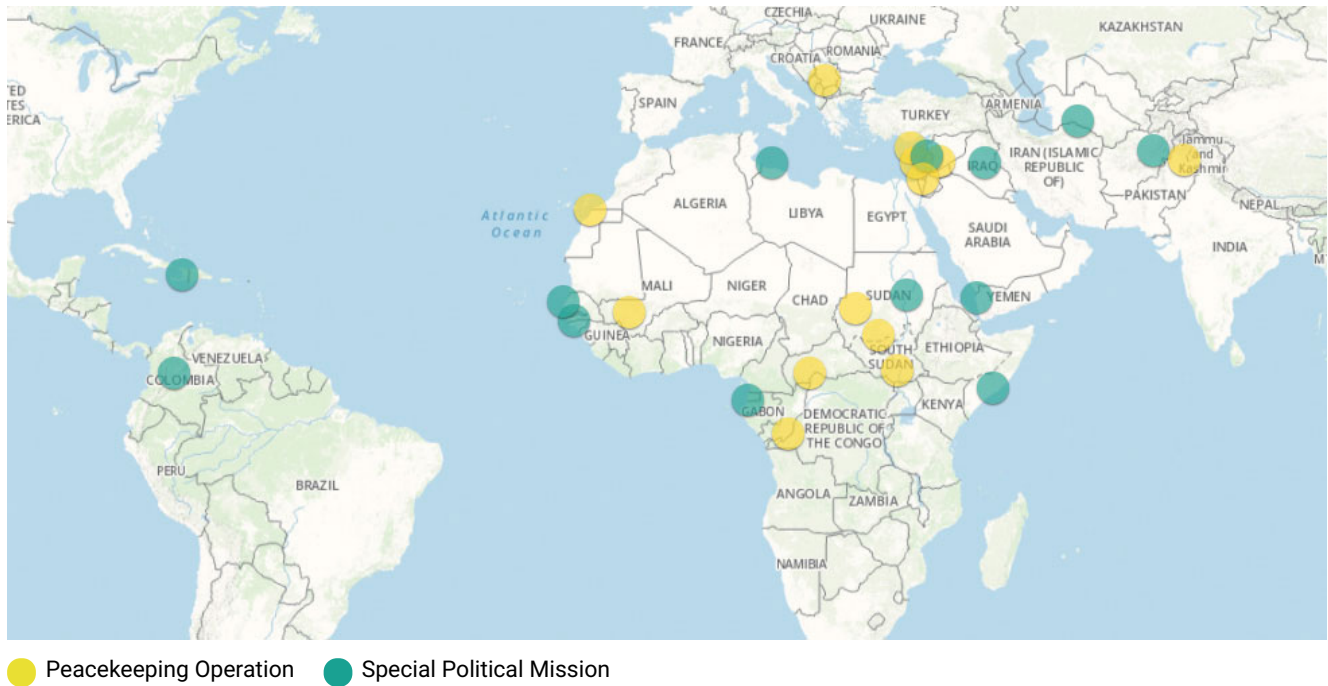
**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups



*UN Photo / Evan Schneider*
Michele Coninsx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), briefs the Security Council on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. 7 February 2020.
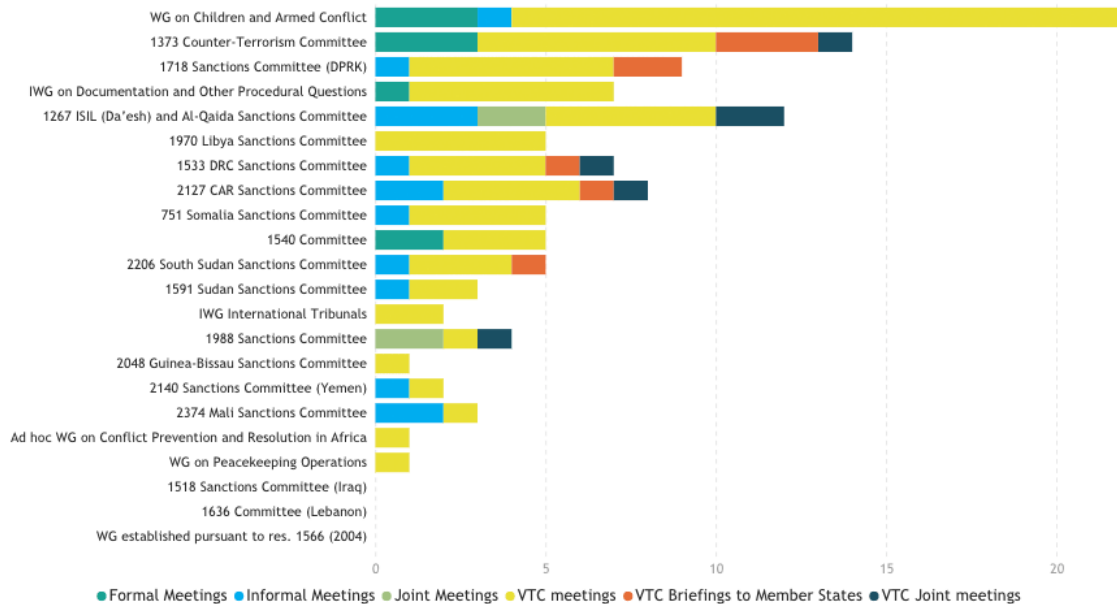
Security Council Committees and Working Groups met a cumulative number of 111 times in 2020, both in-person and virtual meetings and briefings. A total of 8 briefings to Member States were held virtually by sanctions and other committees.

CHART 16

**Meetings and briefings per Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups in 2020**



| | |
|---|---|
| ●Formal Meetings | ●Informal Meetings ●Joint Meetings ●VTC meetings ●VTC Briefings to Member States ●VTC Joint meetings |

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# Chairs of Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups

According to presidential note 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). Presidential note S/2019/991 provides further that the selection of the Chairs should take place in a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way. In 2020, the number of women Chairs of subsidiary bodies was 2, while the number of men Chairs was 21.



*UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe*

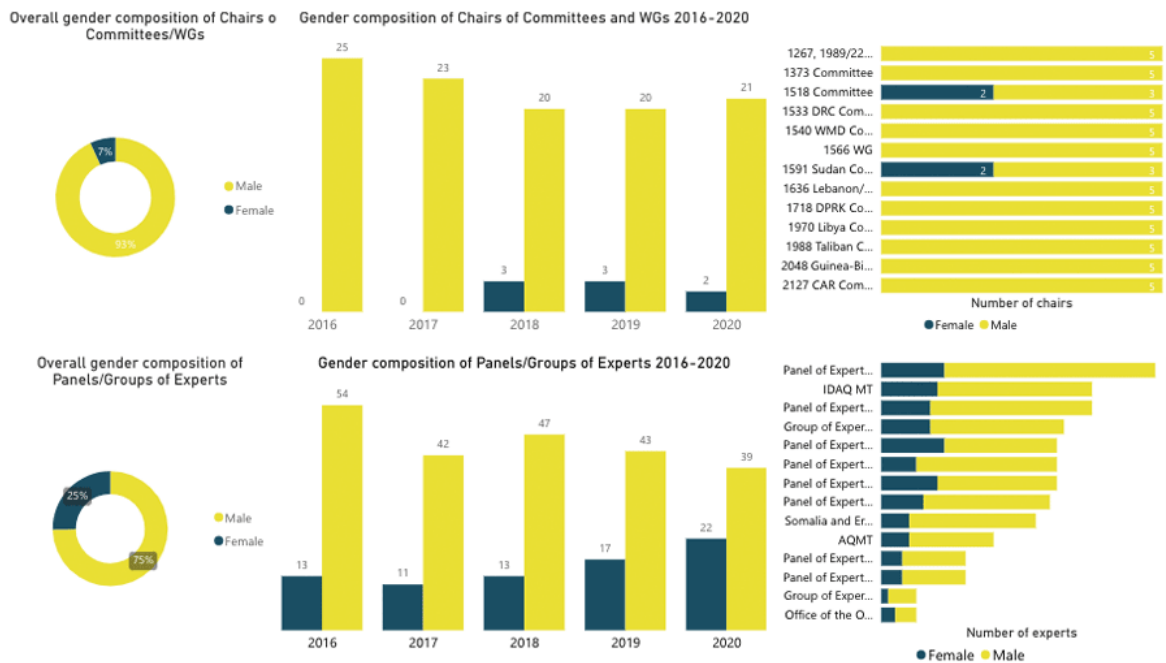Dian Triansyah Djani, Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations and chair of the 1540 Committee, briefs the videoconference with Security Council members in connection with the 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Committee (1373), and the committee on non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons (1540). 23 November 2020.

CHART 17

## Chairs of Sanctions and other Committees and Working Groups 2016-2020

### Overall gender composition of Chairs of Committees/WGs

- Male 93%
- Female 7%

### Gender composition of Chairs of Committees and WGs 2016-2020

| Year | Male | Female |
|------|------|--------|
| 2016 | 25 | 0 |
| 2017 | 23 | 0 |
| 2018 | 20 | 3 |
| 2019 | 20 | 3 |
| 2020 | 21 | 2 |

- Female
- Male

| Committee | |
|-----------|---|
| 1267, 1989/22... | 5 |
| 1373 Committee | 5 |
| 1518 Committee | 2 / 3 |
| 1533 DRC Com... | 5 |
| 1540 WMD Co... | 5 |
| 1566 WG | 5 |
| 1591 Sudan Co... | 2 / 3 |
| 1636 Lebanon/... | 5 |
| 1718 DPRK Co... | 5 |
| 1970 Libya Co... | 5 |
| 1988 Taliban C... | 5 |
| 2048 Guinea-Bi... | 5 |
| 2127 CAR Com... | 5 |

Number of chairs

- Female
- Male

### Overall gender composition of Panels/Groups of Experts

- Male 75%
- Female 25%

### Gender composition of Panels/Groups of Experts 2016-2020

| Year | Male | Female |
|------|------|--------|
| 2016 | 54 | 13 |
| 2017 | 42 | 11 |
| 2018 | 47 | 13 |
| 2019 | 43 | 17 |
| 2020 | 39 | 22 |

- Male
- Female

| Panel | |
|-------|---|
| Panel of Expert... | |
| IDAQ MT | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Group of Exper... | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Somalia and Er... | |
| AQMT | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Panel of Expert... | |
| Group of Exper... | |
| Office of the O... | |

Number of experts

- Female
- Male

# Individuals and entities on Security Council sanctions and restrictive measures lists

In 2020, a total of 712 individuals and 293 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 2020, 7 individuals and 5 entities were added to the lis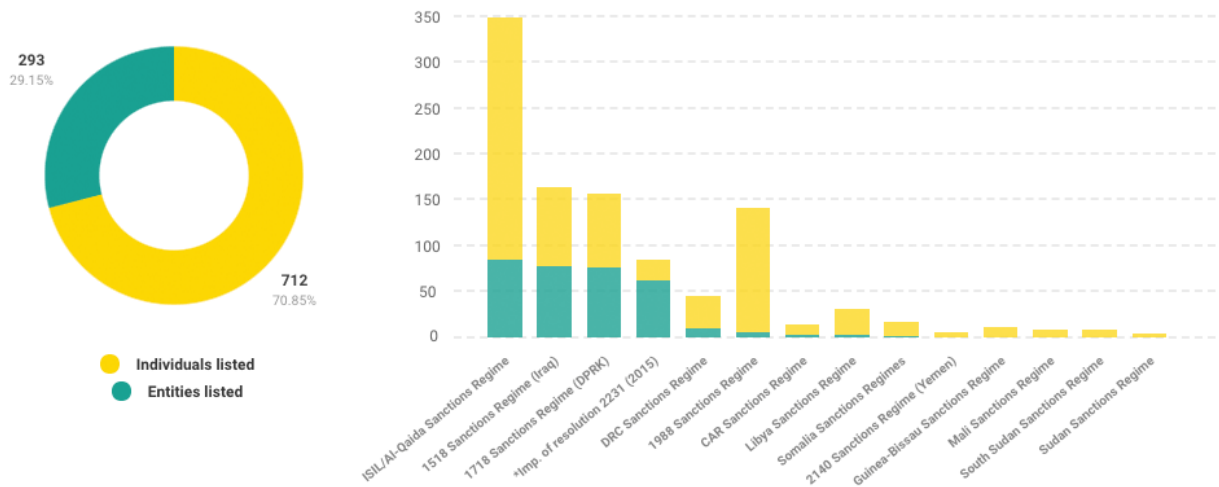t. The charts below illustrate the number of listed individuals and entities for each sanctions committee as well as those added this year. Information on each committee, including individuals and entities designated by the relevant committee and the applicable sanctions measures, as well as the procedures for the processing of listing and delisting requests can be found on the Security Council website.

*UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe*
Anna Evstigneeva, Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of October, chairs the Security Council's open VTC on the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). 6 October 2020.

## Individuals and entities listed as of 31 December 2020

**293**
29.15%

**712**
70.85%

- Individuals listed
- Entities listed

350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0

ISIL/Al-Qaida Sanctions Regime
1518 Sanctions Regime (Iraq)
1718 Sanctions Regime (DPRK)
*Imp. of resolution 2231 (2015)
DRC Sanctions Regime
1988 Sanctions Regime
CAR Sanctions Regime
Libya Sanctions Regime
Somalia Sanctions Regimes
2140 Sanctions Regime (Yemen)
Guinea-Bissau Sanctions Regime
Mali Sanctions Regime
South Sudan Sanctions Regime
Sudan Sanctions Regime

\* Upon implementation of resolution 2231 (2015)

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# De-listings from Security Council sanctions committees' lists in 2020

In 2020, 26 entities and 2 individual 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 19
## De-listings from Security Council Sanctions Committees in 2020

**2**
7.14%

**26**
92.86%

- Individuals delisted
- Entities delisted

30
25
20
15
10
5
0

1518 Sanctions Regime (Iraq)

ISIL/Al-Qaida Sanctions Regime
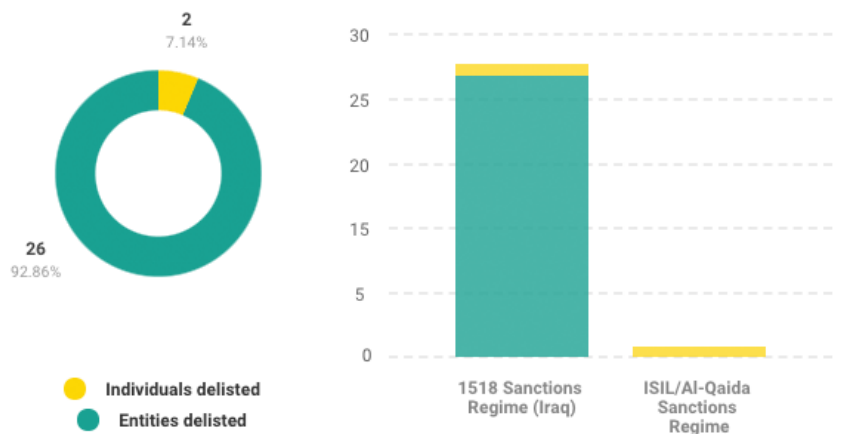
**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD

# 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 106 requests to de-list individuals and/or entities. 95 of these requests have been processed with 11 pending. As a result of this process, a total of 17 individuals and 17 entities have been de-listed and 46 individuals and 20 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 93 requests to de-list individuals and/or entities since 2009, of which 89 have been processed and four are pending. As a result, a total of 57 individuals and 28 entities have been de-listed and 22 listings remain.

CHART 20

## De-listings by the Focal Point for De-listing as of the end of 2020
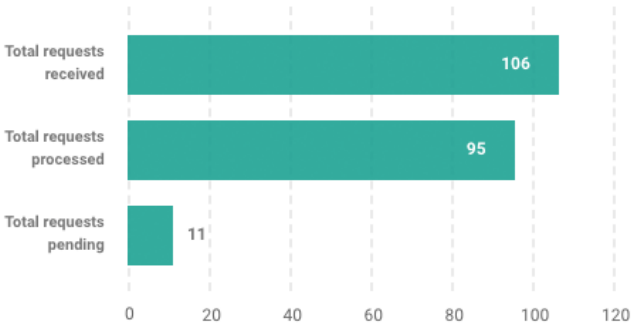


SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

CHART 21

## De-listings by the Office of the Ombudsperson as of the end of 2020
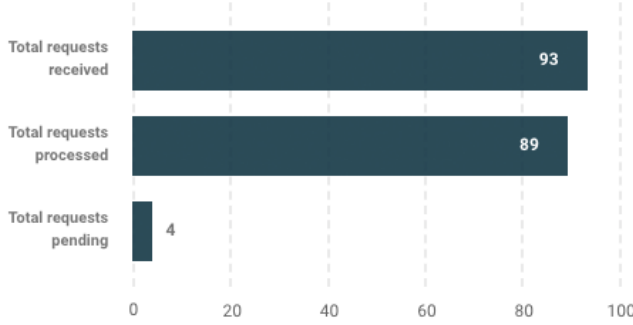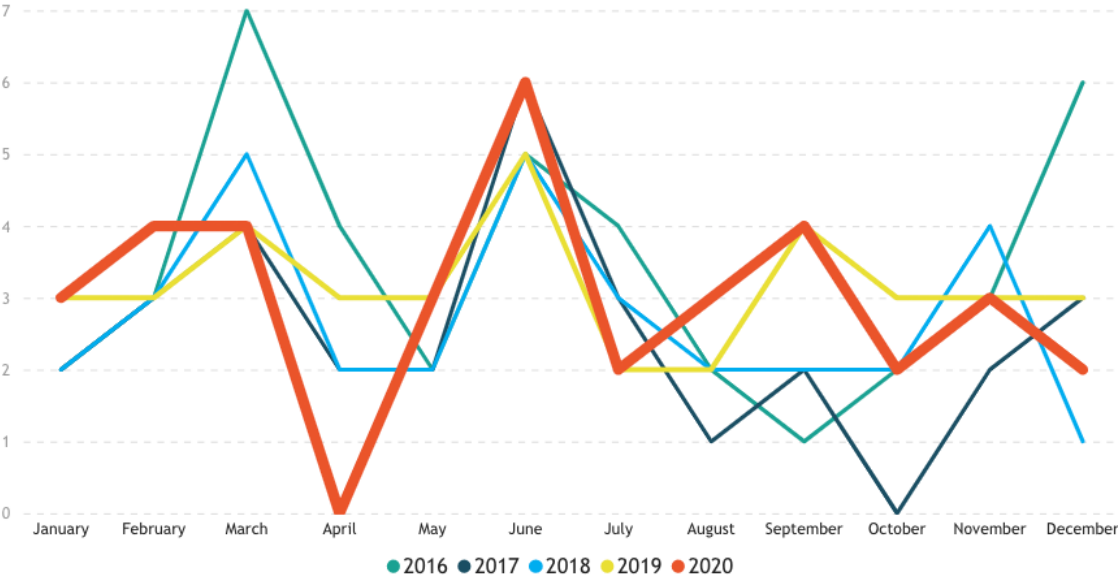


SOURCE: SCPCRB/SCAD

# 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*
Peacekeepers welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations to Gao, Mali. 28 January 2020.

CHART 22
## Mandate renewal per month 2016-2020



Legend: ● 2016 ● 2017 ● 2018 ● 2019 ● 2020

**SOURCE:** SCPCRB/SCAD