21 November 2014

Presentation of the United Nations Security Council annual report to the General Assembly

Ambassador Gary Quinlan
President of the Security Council

Mr President,

Let me open by congratulating you, on behalf of all the Members of the Security Council, on your election as President of the General Assembly. I thank you for arranging today’s meeting.

As the President of the Security Council for the month of November, it is my honour to introduce the annual report of the Security Council, contained in document A/69/2. The report covers the period from 1 August 2013 until 31 July 2014.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Over the past year, with the support of the full membership of the United Nations, the Security Council has discharged its responsibilities by supporting the peaceful resolution of conflicts and undertaking a range of peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities.

During the reporting period, the Security Council held 238 formal meetings, of which 218 were public. The Security Council adopted 55 resolutions and 26 presidential statements, while also issuing 113 statements to the press. The Security Council also conducted two field missions, one to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Ethiopia in October 2013 and another to Mali in February 2014.
During the reporting period the Security Council maintained its usual focus on the African continent. Over the past year, there was some progress. The mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone was completed. Substantial gains were made by the Somali Armed Forces against Al-Shabaab, with the support of the African Union mission in Somalia. Constitutional order was restored in Guinea-Bissau. And the Force Intervention Brigade deployed as part of the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) became fully operational.

The Security Council responded to conflicts in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Libya. The Security Council reinforced the protection of civilians mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and established the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

The situations across the Middle East also featured prominently on the Security Council’s agenda, in relation to Gaza as well as to Iraq. The security situation worsened in both Syria and Yemen. In September 2013, the Security Council adopted resolution 2118 on the elimination of Syria’s chemical weapons program and adopted resolutions 2139 and 2165 during 2014 to address the humanitarian situation in the country. The Security Council established a Yemen sanctions committee to oversee the imposition of sanctions on spoilers to Yemen’s political transition.

The Security Council met frequently on the conflict in Ukraine and responded quickly to the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 in Donetsk oblast, which resulted in the loss of 298 lives. The Security Council adopted resolution 2166 (2014) to condemn that incident in the strongest terms, demand a full, thorough and independent investigation and stress that those responsible should be held accountable.

The Security Council also adopted resolutions to extend the mandates of peace and stability missions. These included: the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the UN Interim Force in Abyei (UNIFSA), the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), the UN Interim Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the UN Office in Burundi (BNUB), the UN Support Mission in Libya.
(UNSMIL), the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNOSOM), the UN Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI), the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

Complementing its focus on country situations on the agenda, the Security Council also paid close attention to thematic, general and cross-cutting issues. The Security Council held meetings on the protection of civilians, children and armed conflict, and women, peace and security. The Security Council remained closely engaged on non-proliferation and peacekeeping and peacebuilding. During the reporting period, the Security Council adopted significant resolutions on thematic issues including: small arms, women peace and security, children and armed conflict, security sector reform and peacekeeping.

Upholding rule of law and accountability for the most serious crimes remain significant topics of interest for the Security Council. The ICC prosecutor briefed the Council periodically. The Security Council has also worked to ensure close cooperation and collaboration with regional organisations. This included two consultative meetings with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and a briefing by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union.

Consistent with usual practice, the introduction to the report was prepared by Rwanda, which held the presidency of the Security Council in July 2014. Members of the Security Council also contributed to the preparation of the report. I extend thanks to the Secretariat for compiling the report and to all those involved in producing it. I look forward to the discussion of the report by Member States and will convey your views to my colleagues in the Security Council.

Thank you Mr President.