

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 14 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as the President of the Security Council for the month of October 2020, I have the honour to inform you that the Security Council open videoconference (debate) entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security: comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf” will be held on 20 October 2020. The concept note for the debate is attached herewith (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**



Annex to the letter dated 14 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Maintenance of international peace and security: comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf

1. The Russian Federation proposes to hold in October 2020 a debate of the Security Council entitled “Maintenance of international peace and security: comprehensive review of the situation in the Persian Gulf” at the level of ministers of foreign affairs to comprehensively examine the causes of increasing conflict potential in the Persian Gulf area and find ways to de-escalate the situation.

Background

2. Conflicts in the Middle East have a destabilizing effect, not only on the military and political situation in the region, but also on international relations as a whole. Their impact is also noticeable in the Persian Gulf region.

3. The major factor of instability in the recent period has been the ambiguous perception by the States of the subregion of the place and role of their neighbours. Reciprocal accusations of destabilizing activity have been made. Alongside that, there is a tendency to ignore factors of mutual concern.

4. During the past years, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has remained an important element in containing escalation. In 2018, the United States unilaterally withdrew from it and reintroduced unilateral sanctions against Iran. Thanks to the joint and collective efforts of the remaining participants in the nuclear deal, it remains in force.

5. The key to the sustainable recovery of the situation in the Persian Gulf region should be collective steps aimed at correcting the trajectory of conflict towards the development and implementation of confidence-building measures, based on respect for the sovereignty and independence of States and the principles of inter-civilization communication.

6. The regional States and regional organizations should play a leading role in this process. De-escalation should be gradual and inclusive. An important element in the first phase could be the development of confidence-building and transparency measures. In this case, influential international extraregional players could act as guarantors of subsequent long-term agreements and, if necessary, provide mediation efforts in a collective format. Russia has voiced a number of concrete proposals in this regard. Their conceptual framework is laid out in the concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf, which we presented in 2019. We are talking about implementing a long-term programme of action to normalize the situation, strengthen stability and security, resolve conflicts and set the main guidelines and parameters for the future system of post-crisis arrangement and ways of implementing related tasks.

7. In the same vein, a proposal was made by the President of the Russian Federation in August 2020 to hold a summit of the five permanent members of the Security Council, with the participation of Iran and Germany, in order to agree on parameters for joint work to establish reliable security and confidence-building mechanisms in the Persian Gulf area.

Objectives of the event

- (a) To consider the main factors characterizing the situation in the Persian Gulf at this stage;
- (b) To determine common denominators in the approaches of regional States to the prospects for the normalization of the situation; to identify priorities around which extraregional partners are consolidating in order to assist the Persian Gulf countries in reaching agreements; and to analyse country-specific problems in the subregion, cohesion in the solving of which may lead to overall regional stabilization;
- (c) To discuss ways to reduce tensions in the region and create an atmosphere of trust based on political and practical measures to reduce the risks of escalation, and to exchange views on concrete options for the creation of collective security mechanisms in the Persian Gulf;
- (d) To outline possible phases towards the creation of a collective security system in the Persian Gulf, starting with the solving of the most acute problems.

Questions for discussion

- (a) What factors hinder the normalization of relations between the countries in the region?
- (b) How can we overcome a situation in which unilateral steps prevail over collective action?
- (c) What political and practical measures would help to reduce mistrust among the States in the region?
- (d) Is it possible to develop a set of confidence-building measures using one of the crisis situations in the region as an example, which will be further used on a common regional platform?
- (e) How can the United Nations be involved in creating a non-conflict atmosphere, encouraging regional actors to engage in dialogue, mediating efforts and guaranteeing respect for future agreements?
- (f) What are the ways to further protect the inviolability of the key principles of national sovereignty, as well as the integrity and unity of States' territories?

8. The Russian Federation looks forward to an open and constructive exchange of views that would allow us to come to common denominators in terms of developing collective approaches to crisis management and quality recovery of the situation in the Persian Gulf.

9. The meeting will be held on 20 October 2020, via videoconference, in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security".