

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 1 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of September 2020, the Niger intends to organize an open video teleconference under the theme “Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations: role of the International Organization of la Francophonie” on 8 September 2020, at 10 a.m.

In order to guide discussions on this topic, the Niger has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdou **Abarry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 1 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: French]

Permanent Mission of the Niger to the United Nations in New York

Concept note Open debate of the Security Council

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations: role of the International Organization of la Francophonie

8 September 2020

1. Background

When it was founded in Niamey fifty years ago under the name “Agence de coopération culturelle et technique”, the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) had only 21 members. It now consists of 88 States and Governments (54 members, 7 associate members and 27 observers), significantly some of them not French-speaking, from across the five continents.

The members of the International Organization of la Francophonie, which was founded on the principle of sharing focused on the French language, undertake political, cultural and economic cooperation, with four main aims:

- To promote the French language, plurilingualism and cultural diversity
- To promote peace, democracy and human rights
- To support education, training, higher education and research
- To develop economic cooperation for sustainable development

In the political sphere, the International Organization of la Francophonie has set itself the following goals:

- Contributing to the establishment and development of democracy
- Preventing, managing and resolving conflicts
- Supporting the rule of law and human rights.
- Restoring and consolidating peace

Its activities are thus fully in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, whose objectives it pursues.

To that end, it acts through the good offices of its Secretary-General and her appointed special representatives, providing information and technical support in the context of elections, mobilizing networks of francophone institutions, and conducting training and support programmes for civil society and institutions in the countries concerned.

2. Cooperation between the International Organization of la Francophonie and the United Nations

The International Organization of la Francophonie has observer status at the United Nations, to which it has a permanent representative. Its members in New York are organized into a group of French-speaking ambassadors. Seven of its members

are currently serving on the Security Council, which has established peacekeeping operations or special political missions in several member countries (the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Lebanon and Mali).

Very early on, the two organizations established links in their areas of common interest, through a cooperation agreement signed in 1997. There is also a framework for collaboration between OIF and the Department of Peace Operations.

This collaboration covers several areas of interest to the Security Council:

- Early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms: OIF and the United Nations coordinate their preventive diplomacy and mediation in French-speaking countries, as well as their work in electoral contexts. These are areas in which OIF has recognized expertise. Coordination has taken place in countries including Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Madagascar and Mali;
- Peacekeeping: the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Operational Support are working closely with OIF to strengthen the participation of French-speaking contingents in peacekeeping operations. This collaboration covers the training of personnel and the provision of operational and training manuals in French. More broadly, OIF supports the Secretariat in defending and promoting multilingualism within the Secretariat and within peacekeeping operations;
- Peacebuilding: the International Organization of la Francophonie participates in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission devoted to Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. It is also active on the ground, particularly in the Sahel, where it supports the countries of the region in preventing radicalization and violent extremism;
- Support for networks of women and youth involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

3. Aims of the meeting

- To take stock of cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie
- To assess the importance of multilingualism in the conduct of peacekeeping operations and methods of making it a reality
- To identify areas for progress in strengthening cooperation between the two institutions in the fields of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding

4. Format of the meeting

Open debate to be chaired by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations.

Member States and observers are invited to submit, if they wish, a written statement of approximately 500 words to the Security Council Affairs Division (dppa-scsb3@un.org). Statements sent by 9 September 2020 will be included in a compilation.

5. Keynote speakers:

- The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations
- The Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie
- A representative of civil society (to be confirmed)