



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8453rd meeting

Wednesday, 30 January 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic)

Members:

Belgium	Mrs. Van Vlierberge
China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
France	Mr. Delattre
Germany	Mr. Heusgen
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus
(S/2019/37)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2019/37)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2019/89, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/37, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I should like to inform the Council that the presidency of the Council has met with the representatives of the parties, who have confirmed that they maintain their well-known positions vis-à-vis the item on the Council's agenda. On the basis of those meetings, with the consent of the members of the Council, the presidency has drawn the conclusion that the Council can proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution before it.

If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, France, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2453 (2019).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation expects that the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2453 (2019) will facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus to create security conditions conducive to a settlement on the island.

A Cyprus settlement is one of the few issues on the agenda of the Security Council where the united position of its members provides for solid international support for the efforts of the Cypriot parties to reach an agreement on a comprehensive settlement on the basis of United Nations resolutions. The key to this consensus is the balanced position of the Council and the attention it pays to the concerns of the Cypriots themselves.

However, we regret the fact that one delegation has attempted to use the sensitive situation on the island to promote its own position on issues that are not directly related to a settlement, which is beginning to hamper the search for consensus and the effectiveness of the Council's work. We recall that general peacekeeping issues that affect all United Nations peacekeeping missions should be discussed in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, with the participation of troop-contributing countries. Such issues also pertain to the Secretariat's unfinished strategy to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping, which has not yet been settled. We support the need for such work, but the decision on how such comprehensive documents are applied should be made by the Special Committee after it has reviewed the documents. Bypassing that body is unacceptable, especially since the Secretariat has not yet completed its work on the document.

We recall that the Secretary-General's instruction to apply the unfinished document to the missions in Cyprus, Abyei and the Syrian Golan does not supersede current practice. Established procedures must be followed, including respecting the expertise of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. That body is

“the only United Nations forum mandated to comprehensively review the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects, including measures aimed at enhancing the capacity of the Organization to conduct United Nations peacekeeping operations” (A/72/19, para. 19).

For our part, we will ensure that this issue is given priority attention at the next session of the Special Committee. However, this applies to all documents that require the approval of States Members of the United Nations, including the collection and analysis of information for peacekeeping purposes. We trust that Council members will take a more responsible approach to discussing sensitive country issues and show greater respect for the prerogatives of specialized intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations. That will also help us to improve the effectiveness of the Security Council's work.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2453 (2019) today and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). I would just like to thank all members of the Security Council for their support in bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion. We continue to be strong supporters of a just and lasting settlement to reunite Cyprus based on the internationally accepted model of a bicomunal, bizonal federation, and we endorse the Secretary-General's view that prospects remain alive for a comprehensive settlement. Through the unanimous adoption of this resolution today we are sending a clear message to all sides to work towards the resumption of talks through constructive engagement with the United Nations consultant, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, and her work to reach agreement on terms of reference for resuming talks within a foreseeable horizon.

UNFICYP plays an important role in supporting the settlement process, through its contribution to peace and stability on the island and in creating the conditions for settlement talks. At the same time, it should also support a return to normal conditions on the island. We therefore welcome the emphasis in resolution 2453 (2019) on enhanced dialogue and cooperation to build trust and mutual understanding between the communities, including our collective call for the sides and relevant parties to develop new mechanisms to achieve that end. We also support the continued focus on the important contribution of women, youth and civil society in the role of education in promoting a culture of peace and reconciliation.

I took note of the Russian representative's views on the language in paragraph 18 of the resolution, on cross-cutting peacekeeping issues. We tried very hard throughout this process to take all delegations' views into consideration and find a way through. As Council

members are aware, the language that we have used in this resolution is an exact replica of the language agreed upon by the Council in other peacekeeping mandates, including resolution 2445 (2018) on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, which we adopted unanimously in November 2018 (see S/PV.8400).

The language in today's resolution needed updating since our last discussion six months ago to reflect the important developments on the integrated performance-policy framework for all peacekeeping operations, including resolution 2436 (2018) on peacekeeping performance, which was adopted unanimously by the Council in September 2018 (see S/PV.8360). Our language closely mirrors that of resolution 2450 (2018) on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on under which was also adopted unanimously in December 2018 (see S/PV.8436), and on which the Russian delegation jointly led negotiations.

We do not accept the argument that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) must approve, endorse or authorize any new developments in peacekeeping policy before the Secretariat can implement it. The C-34 plays a vital role in scrutinizing peacekeeping policy and making informed, strategic and balanced recommendations on a range of policy issues in its reports. However, as our Russian colleagues have rightly pointed out, the C-34 is mandated to "comprehensively review" all aspects of cross-cutting peacekeeping policy. That does not imply that the C-34 has a right of veto over policy implementation or that it can obstruct the Security Council's ability to make decisions on matters of international peace and security. We would not want to see the C-34's functions exceeding the terms of the powers prescribed in Chapter IV, Article 10 of the United Nations Charter.

Let me take the opportunity to express our thanks to Special Representative Spehar and her team for their work on the island during the last six months, to the Secretary-General for keeping his good offices at disposal of the parties, and to Jane Holl Lute for her ongoing consultations. The United Kingdom will continue to support the sides in their efforts to achieve a settlement, and we stand ready to play our part in any future talks.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): We thank the United Kingdom delegation for its efforts to strengthen the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping

Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to ensure that it conveys the strong sentiment of the Security Council and the international community that peacekeeping operations must support political solutions and the urgency we see for the leaders of both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to come together. We appreciate the United Kingdom's commitment both as the penholder and as a troop-contributing country to peace and stability in Cyprus.

We join the Council's unanimous urging to the leaders of both Cypriot communities that they take immediate steps to rebuild trust, improve the public atmosphere and resume talks towards a settlement. The United States continues to support a comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bicomunal, bizonal federation to benefit all Cypriots and the wider region, and we want to underscore the following.

First, while the United Nations has a critical role to play the political process towards a settlement must be Cypriot-led. For a durable lasting peace to take hold, the leaders must demonstrate the political courage and will to negotiate in good faith and with a sense of urgency. We urge the leaders to proactively engage United Nations consultant Jane Holl Lute to negotiate the terms of reference for resuming negotiations.

The leaders must also pursue their own lines of effort to prepare their respective communities for a comprehensive settlement. This mandate makes clear the Security Council's strong urging that the leaders fulfil their previously agreed 2015 confidence-building measures, particularly on mobile-phone interoperability, and complete the integration of electricity grids, as soon as possible. We also welcome the Council's call for the establishment of mechanisms and enhancing existing initiatives to alleviate tensions. These mechanisms should provide for direct contact between the sides without prejudice to recognition, which also allows for top-to-bottom communication across the communities.

The second point is that, on principle, perpetual peacekeeping missions are unacceptable. We are pleased that the new mandate reflects this view and that the Secretary-General will examine how the many United Nations activities on Cyprus can best be configured in the current environment. UNFICYP and the overall United Nations presence in Cyprus cannot be a substitute for or part of a landscape that lacks a path towards a political solution. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report, particularly with

regard to this point. We are hopeful that the leaders will quickly reach agreement on terms of reference. We will be prepared to exert all efforts to reach a comprehensive settlement. The United States has made clear, in reviewing all peacekeeping missions, that we will not support the status quo for missions where political processes are stalled.

Finally, we want to recall that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. One of the main ways it exercises that responsibility is through setting peacekeeping mandates and policies. We cannot, and should not, accept the view that the Security Council should cede its leadership and responsibilities to the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. We will continue to defend the Security Council's primacy on peacekeeping matters and the tremendous progress the Council has made in recent years in reforming and strengthening peacekeeping by putting peacekeeper performance improvement at the heart of our efforts. Implementing the Secretariat's performance policy framework is essential to our shared goal of making United Nations peacekeeping as effective and efficient as it can be. Building on the accomplishments of resolution 2436 (2018), on peacekeeper performance, we are pleased that the Council reaffirmed in that resolution its support for the development of a comprehensive and integrated performance policy framework that identifies clear standards of performance for evaluating all United Nations personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Yao Shaojun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China voted in favour of resolution 2453 (2019), which the Council just adopted. China upholds the objective and fair position on the issue of Cyprus and respects the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus. China believes that the issue of Cyprus should be settled based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and dialogue and negotiations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots so as to gradually narrow the differences and reach a lasting, comprehensive, fair and reasonable solution acceptable to both sides that is in line with the common interests of the two communities and the countries of the region.

China appreciates the work of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus in maintaining security and stability in the buffer zone, enhancing exchanges between the two communities and supporting the

negotiations process. We support the mission in its continued efforts to implement the mandate.

China has always advocated that the Council should listen carefully to the concerns of all parties during the

consultations on the draft resolution in order to reach broad consensus. We hope that the Security Council will continue to maintain unity on the issue of Cyprus.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.