



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
29 April 2020

Original: English

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## Statement by the President of the Security Council

On 29 April 2020, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Protection of civilians in armed conflict", in accordance with the procedure agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and set out in [S/2020/273](#), the President of the Security Council issued the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its resolution [2417 \(2018\)](#) and its Presidential Statement of 9 August 2017 ([S/PRST/2017/14](#)).

"The Security Council recalls its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and, in this regard, reiterates its commitment to address conflict-induced food insecurity, including famine, in situations of armed conflict.

"The Security Council reaffirms the full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council recalls the link between armed conflict, violence and conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine, and calls on all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law regarding respecting and protecting civilians and civilian objects, including objects necessary for food production and distribution such as farms, markets, water systems, mills, food processing and storage sites, and hubs and means for food transportation, and refraining from attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, crops, livestock, agricultural assets, drinking water installations and supplies, and irrigation works, and respecting and protecting humanitarian personnel and consignments used for humanitarian relief operations; and underlines the importance of safe and unimpeded access of humanitarian personnel to civilians in armed conflicts.

"The Security Council notes with deep concern that over the last two years, armed conflicts continued to be one of the major factors causing or aggravating food insecurity and undernutrition in different geographic areas all over the globe with an increased number of people requiring urgent food aid, nutrition and livelihood assistance.

"The Security Council reaffirms the need for all parties to armed conflict to respect the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence in the provision of humanitarian assistance, including medical



assistance, and reaffirms the need for all actors engaged in the provision of such assistance to promote and fully adhere to these principles.

“The Security Council reaffirms the primary responsibility of States to protect the population throughout their whole territory.

“The Security Council stresses the particular impact that armed conflicts have on civilians and in particular women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, refugees and internally displaced persons and stresses the protection and assistance needs of all affected civilian populations.

“The Security Council notes that many conflict-induced food crises around the world can also be compounded by factors such as economic crises, increasingly frequent and severe weather events and natural disasters.

“The Security Council strongly condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, and of the unlawful denial of access to humanitarian assistance and humanitarian personnel to the civilian population in armed conflict. In this regard, the Security Council calls upon all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and take all feasible steps to protect civilians and civilian objects. The Security Council recalls the importance of ensuring compliance with international human rights law, as applicable, and international humanitarian law, ending impunity for violations and abuses and ensuring accountability.

“The Security Council stresses in this regard that armed conflict, violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and food insecurity can be drivers of forced displacement, and, conversely, forced displacement in countries in armed conflict situations can have a devastating impact on agricultural production, food security and livelihoods of displaced communities and their hosting communities, recalls the relevant prohibition on the displacement of civilians in armed conflict, and stresses the importance of fully complying with international humanitarian law and other applicable international law in this context.

“The Security Council reiterates its commitment to work with the Secretary-General to pursue all possible avenues to prevent and end armed conflicts, including through addressing their underlying root causes in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable manner by promoting dialogue, mediation, consultations, political negotiations and other peaceful means while enhancing humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts.

“The Security Council stresses the need for humanitarian assistance to be gender- and age-sensitive and to remain responsive to the different needs of the population, ensuring that these needs are integrated in the humanitarian response; including adequate, timely and reliable life-saving support as well as UN humanitarian response plans and related humanitarian appeals designed to assist people most in need in those countries facing complex emergencies in situations of armed conflict.

“The Security Council encourages the United Nations and all relevant stakeholders, including by ensuring the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, to work together in support of countries affected by armed conflict to reduce needs, enhance long-term recovery, protect livelihoods, improve access to basic services and build resilience of affected populations, in particular those in vulnerable situations, thereby contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including eradicating poverty and reducing the risk of food insecurity in situations of armed conflict.

“The Security Council encourages Member States to support relevant early warning systems to provide governments and humanitarian actors with timely, reliable, accurate and verifiable information regarding food security and allowing for anticipation and early action to prevent and mitigate the effects of a food crisis in the context of armed conflicts while respecting the ownership of countries concerned.

“The Security Council encourages the Secretary General to include in his reporting on country specific situations analysis including information disaggregated by sex and age when the risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity in armed conflict occurs and expresses its intention to continue to give such information its due attention, including relevant recommendations to avert such risks.”

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