



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8693rd meeting

Thursday, 19 December 2019, 10.40 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. Norman-Chalet (United States of America)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Trullols Yabra
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany	Mr. Licharz
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Kuwait	Mr. Mohammad
Peru	Mr. Popolizio Bardales
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
South Africa	Mr. Mabhongo
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. McDonald

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2019/923)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2019/923)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2019/956, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/923, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. 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: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2503 (2019).

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

Mr. Mohammad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the delegations of the Russian Federation and the United States of America for submitting the draft of today's resolution. We voted in favour of resolution 2503 (2019), which extends the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for an additional six months, because we are convinced that it contributes to stability and security in the region. In that context, we welcome

all the efforts made by UNDOF and the professionalism of its troops, who work under extremely sensitive and difficult conditions — especially given the presence of mines and improvised explosive devices.

We reiterate that the Golan is Syrian territory occupied by Israel, the occupying Power. We reject the seizing of territory by force, which is in contravention of Charter of the United Nations, principles of international law and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolution 497 (1981), which was unanimously adopted. Israel, the occupying Power, decided to impose its laws, authority and administration over the occupied Golan — a step that is null and void and does not have any legal impact. Given that the Security Council stresses the need to address root causes of the conflict, we reiterate that Israel's occupation of Arab territories, including occupied Syrian Arab Golan, is the root cause of this conflict and represents a constant threat to peace and security in the region.

The solution to achieving stability in the region does not lie in preserving the status quo and perpetuating the occupation, but rather starts with Israel's complete withdrawal from occupied Arab territory and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council, in particular resolutions 497 (1981), 338 (1973) and 242 (1967).

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Indonesia welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2503 (2019), which renews the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for a period of six months. We thank the co-penholders for their positive role in facilitating the discussion on the resolution and constructively addressing the proposals of Security Council members, including those of Indonesia.

My delegation wishes to highlight the importance of the safety and security of UNDOF peacekeepers. UNDOF remains an impartial entity. It is important for all parties to halt all activities that endanger United Nations peacekeepers on the ground and to accord United Nations personnel the freedom to carry out their mandates safely and securely.

We strongly support UNDOF's liaison functions with the parties concerned, in particular its key role in preventing any escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line. We urge all the relevant parties to fully

respect the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement and exercise maximum restraint.

In conclusion, my delegation would like once again to put on the record that Indonesia recognizes the Golan — occupied by Israel since 1967 — as an inalienable part of the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, and strongly rejects the recognition of the Golan Heights as part of Israel. This position is in accordance with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions. We urge all parties to maintain their commitment in respecting international law and the Charter and to work together to create an environment conducive for the ongoing peace process in the region.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

As co-penholder, the United States welcomes the today's unanimous decision to renew the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). We would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their constructive work in drafting the mandate.

The United States is pleased that the Council voiced its unified support for the resumption of inspections in the Bravo side area of limitation. The United States

believes UNDOF continues to have a vital role to play in preserving stability between Israel and Syria. We respect and recognize the mission's impartiality.

The Council should be under no illusion, however, that there is any equivalence between the noted violations on the Israeli and Syrian sides. On 19 November four rockets were fired towards Israel from inside Syria. They were all intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome system, likely saving the lives of civilian men, women and children. While UNDOF has flagged Iron Dome emplacements as technical violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, no comparison should be drawn between those defensive systems and Syrian violations.

Much has been said about President Trump's announcement earlier this year recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Today's renewal demonstrates that the United States is committed to the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement and that that announcement in no way undermines UNDOF's mandate.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.