Introduction to the Work of the Security Council

Security Council Affairs Division
Department of Political Affairs
United Nations

August 2013
• What is the Security Council?

• How does the Security Council operate?

• How does the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) support the work of the Security Council?
The Security Council

- Responsible for maintenance of international peace and security
- One of the six United Nations principal organs (Article 7)
- Organ of limited membership (Article 23)

For more information, visit the SC website: http://www.un.org/en/sc/
Composition

- **5 permanent members (P5) (China, France, Russian Federation, UK & US) and 10 non-permanent members (E10) (Article 23)**

- **Non-Permanent Members of the SC (Article 23)**
  - Elected by the GA for two-year term
  - Not eligible for immediate re-election
  - Due regard paid to “equitable geographical distribution” and “contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to other purposes of the Organization”

- **Distribution of Non-Permanent Seats among Regional Groups**
  - 5 from Africa and Asia
  - 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
  - 2 from Western Europe
  - 1 from Eastern Europe
  - With one Arab seat from either African or Asian Group

- **Presidency rotates every month in alphabetical order in English**
Voting and “Veto”

Article 27

- Each member of the Security Council has one vote.
- Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members.
- Decisions of the Security Council on all other matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members including the concurring votes of the permanent members.
- A party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.
Under Article 24 of the Charter:

- Conferred **primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security** under the UN Charter
- Acts on behalf of the members of the UN.
- Acts in accordance with the **purposes and principles** of the UN.
- Specific powers laid down in **Chapters VI, VII, and VIII** of the Charter.

Under Article 25 of the Charter:

- The members of the UN “agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council”.
Peaceful settlement of disputes

- To call upon parties to settle a dispute or situation which might lead to international friction through negotiations, mediations and other methods (Article 33)

- To investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction (Article 34)

- To recommend procedures and methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement (Articles 36-38)
1. Peacekeeping operations

- Currently **15 operations** deployed and authorized with over 116,151 personnel (incl. 97,369 uniformed) from 115 countries (as of July 2013)
  - 8 in Africa MINURSO (Western Sahara), MINUSMA (Mali), UNMIL (Liberia), UNOCI (Côte d’Ivoire), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNISFA (Abyei), UNAMID (Darfur) and MONUSCO (DRC))
  - 2 in Europe (UNFICYP (Cyprus), UNMIK (Kosovo))
  - 3 in Middle East (UNTSO, UNDOF, UNIFIL)
  - 2 in Asia (UNMOGIP (India/Pakistan); UNMIT (Timor-Leste))
  - 1 in Americas (MINUSTAH)

2. Political and Peacebuilding Offices

- Currently **13 missions** with approx. 3,809 int’l and local personnel (incl. 352 uniformed) in:
  - Afghanistan (UNAMA), Iraq (UNAMI), Middle East (UNSCO), Lebanon (UNSCOL), Central Asia (UNRCCA), Gabon (UNOCA), Libya (UNSMIL), West Africa (UNOWA), Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), CAR (BINUCA), Burundi (BNUB) and Somalia (UNSOM)
Threats to peace, breach of the peace or acts of aggression

• To determine the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression (Article 39) and to recommend what action should be taken

• To call on Member States to apply sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggressions (Article 41)

• To take collective military action (Article 42)
Regional Arrangements

- Recognition of the existence of regional arrangements for dealing with matters related to maintenance of int’l peace and security (Article 52 (1))

- SC’s encouragement of pacific settlement efforts of “local disputes,” by reg. arrangements before SC’s involvement (Article 52 (2) & (3))

- Utilization of reg. arrangements for enforcement action by SC; no enforcement action by reg. arrangements w/o SC authorization (Article 53)

- Obligation of reg. arrangements to inform SC of its activities for maintenance of int’l peace and security (Article 54)
In practice, the Council can meet in the format of:

- Public meetings
- Private meetings
- Informal consultations
- “Arria-formula” informal meetings
- Informal interactive dialogue
# Programme of Work

## Provisional Programme of Work of the Security Council – July 2013

(as of 29 July 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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| 1 Bilaterals
  (upon request) | 2 Consultations (A.M.)
  - Programme of work | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4:30 P.M.
  - Coordinators’ meeting | | | UN official holiday | | | |
| 8 Briefing (A.M.)
  - UNMISS Consultations (A.M.)
  UNMISS | 9 | 10 Adoption (A.M.)
  - Middle East Briefing (A.M.)
  - UNOWA Consultations (A.M.)
  - UNOWA | 11 Consultations (A.M.)
  - Sudan/South Sudan | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| | | Consultations (P.M.)
  - 1701 report | TCC meeting (P.M.)
  - UNOCI - UNFICYP | Adoption (P.M.)
  - UNMISS Consultations (P.M.)
  - MONUSCO UNAMI report due | Somalia 751 report due
  Eritrea 1907 report due | |
| | | Res. 1929 PoE mandate ends | | | | |
| 15 Consultations (A.M.)
  - Cyprus
  - UNRCCA | 16 Briefing (A.M.)
  - Middle East Consultations (A.M.)
  - Middle East (Syria) | 17 Open Debate (A.M.)
  Protection of civilians in armed conflict
  Protection of journalists | 18 Briefing (A.M.)
  - UNOCI
  Consultations (A.M.)
  - UNOCI
  - Somalia/Eritrea
  751/1907 Committee TCC meeting (P.M.)
  - UNAMID | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| | | Briefing (P.M.)
  - 1737 Committee Consultations (P.M.)
  - UNAMID UNAMID report due
  UNAMI mandate ends | Adoption (P.M.)
  - Peace and security in Africa Briefing (P.M.)
  - UNAMI
  Consultations (P.M.)
  - UNAMI | | | |
| 22 Briefing (A.M.)
  - BNUB Consultations (A.M.)
  BNUB | 23 Open Debate (A.M.)
  - Middle East | 24 Adoption (A.M.)
  - UNAMI
  - Somalia/Eritrea Sanctions Briefing (A.M.)
  - UNAMID Consultations (A.M.)
  - UNAMID Consultations (P.M.)
  - Sudan/South Sudan | 25 Debate (A.M.)
  The situation in the Great Lakes region:
  Supporting the Great Lakes Framework | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| | | | | UNAMI mandate ends | UNMIL report due | |
| 29 UNISFA report due
  End of presidency reception | 30 Adoption (A.M.)
  - UNOCI
  - UNAMID - UNFICYP | 31 BINUCA report due
  UNFICYP mandate ends
  UNOCI mandate ends
  UNAMID mandate ends | 1 August | 2 | 3 | 4 |

*Non-proliferation, Peace and security in Africa (Sahel), Central African Republic*
1. Volume
- Since its inception, the Council dealt with a total of approx. 500 agenda items relating to the maintenance of int’l peace and security

2. Nature
- From inter-State conflicts to intra-State conflicts
- Thematic, cross-cutting issues (e.g., women, children, protection of civilians, climate change, cooperation with regional organizations, WMD proliferation)
Breakdown of 2012 meetings on country-specific/regional situations

- Africa – 68% (90 meetings)
- Middle East – 15% (41 meetings)
- Asia – 7% (11 meetings)
- Europe – 6% (9 meetings)
- Americas – 3% (4 meetings)
The Security Council Affairs Division is the largest Division in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and consists of three Branches:

- Security Council Secretariat Branch (SCSB)
- Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch (SCSOB)
- Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch (SCPCRB)

A two-member team also supports the Military Staff Committee
Thank you!