

Briefing by Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu on the Program of Work Of the Security Council in November

Welcome to this press briefing. It gives me great pleasure to brief you on the Council's work for this month.

During China's Presidency, upholding multilateralism is our priority. It echos the voice of the majority at the General Debate in September. It is the shared desire of the Member States to resolve disputes and tackle the global challenges by reaching consensus through consultations. We look forward to forging a stronger partnership for maintaining international peace and security.

Open Debates

In November, the Council will hold two open debates.

— The first is on the maintenance of international peace and security: strengthening multilateralism and the role of the UN.

More than seven decades ago, the international community established a collective security mechanism with the UN at its core. It is based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the vision and practice of multilateralism. As a result, the world has maintained peace in general. However, the recent years have witnessed interwoven traditional and non-traditional security threats and prolonged regional conflicts. We are facing severe challenges in the international security situation. At the same time, international rules and multilateral mechanisms are being undermined. The world situation is filled with uncertainties and destabilizing factors.

Under the UN Charter, the Security Council has the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. The Council, in fulfilling its duty, must play a leading role in strengthening multilateralism and the collective security mechanism. In light of the new problems and challenges, it is important that the UN Member States jointly uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. We need to find ways to strengthen multilateralism and the role of the UN, consolidate the collective security mechanism, and increase cooperation between the UN and regional

organizations. It is upon the Member States to resolve disputes peacefully through dialogue and effectively address global and regional security challenges in order to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

— The second open debate is on peace and security of Africa, focused on strengthening peacekeeping operations in Africa.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of UN peacekeeping. Over the past 70 years, Africa has been a major partner for UN peacekeeping operations. Among the leading troop contributors, more than half are African countries, and the five biggest UN peacekeeping operations are in Africa. Peacekeeping operations of Africa and those of the UN are mutually supportive and complementary, and together serve as effective tools for maintaining peace and security in Africa. Africa needs the support of the international community in its effort to uphold peace and security. As the largest developing country and a permanent member of the Security Council, China supports closer cooperation among the UN, AU and African members. Peace and Security of Africa is a traditional agenda item during China's Presidency of the Security Council. We hope that what we do in November will help set the stage and create a sound atmosphere for further discussion on this topic by the Member States. We hope that this will lead to more attention and input from the international community to strengthen the capacity building of the AU and African countries in safeguarding peace and security.

Agenda Items

The Security Council will hold more than 20 meetings. It will take up regional hot-spot issues like Libya, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, the Middle East, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Yemen and Burundi. The Council will also discuss the report by Somalia and Eritrea Sanctions Committee, and the work of G5 Sahel Joint Force and UN Peacekeeping Police.

On Libya, the Council follows the situation of Libya closely, and supports all efforts of stabilizing the situation and promoting a political settlement. We support implementing the UN Action Plan proposed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and stepping up the mediation efforts. Despite the challenges facing Libya, including a fragile security situation, rampant terrorist activities and the issue of refugees and migrants, Libya continues to achieve difficult but steady progress in political

transition. The Council will increase its support and keep to the direction of political settlement.

On Syria, Syria is an important issue on the Council's agenda. It has major impact on the regional situation. The situation in Syria is at a critical juncture with an important opportunity for political settlement. The Council members support the political settlement of the Syrian issue and support the UN as the main mediation channel and the work of Special Envoy Staffan De Mistura. Based on relevant resolutions such as 2254 and 2401, the Council will continue to promote dialogue and negotiation among the parties in Syria to reduce conflicts and find a solution acceptable to all.

— The priority is the establishment of Syrian Constitutional Committee and to make substantive progress in the political process. The Council members hope that the Memorandum on Stabilization of the Situation in the Idlib De-escalation Area by Russia and Turkey will be implemented by the relevant parties. It will create favorable conditions for Syrian political process.

On Somalia and Eritrea Sanctions Committee, recently, the situation in the Horn of Africa has shown positive developments: progress in nation building of Somalia, the improvement of relations among regional countries such as Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Somalia. The Council welcomes such developments. The Council encourages countries in the region to increase dialogue, build mutual understanding, and seize the opportunity and the positive momentum to find solutions in good faith.

On Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina is an important country in the Balkans. To maintain security and stability and promote social and economic development and ethnic harmony in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the common interest of the international community and the countries in the region. We believe the Council's discussion will make a positive contribution to this end.

On UN Peacekeeping Police, over the past 70 years since its founding, UN peacekeeping has made important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. The members of the Security Council pay tribute to all the peacekeepers who made sacrifice to the cause of peace. Police is an important component of UN peacekeeping. With more complex circumstances and mandates in recent years, UN peacekeeping police is

shouldering a more important role. The Security Council will be briefed by the peacekeeping police commissioners, and the police-contributing countries will make joint efforts, adhere to the basic principles regarding peacekeeping, and pay more attention to the role of UN peacekeeping police, to contribute more to international peace and security.

On Iraq and UNAMI, I would like to thank Mr. Kubis for the great efforts he has made as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Iraq and Head of UNAMI. I welcome Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNAMI. Iraq's peace, stability and reconstruction are at a critical stage. Inclusive political solution is the only way towards lasting peace and security in Iraq.

On Kosovo, the Council members hope that Belgrade and Pristina will seize the opportunity of resumed dialogue to demonstrate political will, carry out sincere dialogue, and implement the agreement they have reached. We hope that UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force will work in close collaboration to play a positive role in achieving a proper settlement to the Kosovo issue.

On G5 Sahel Joint Force, the security situation in the Sahel is severe with rampant terrorism and transnational organized crime. The G5 Sahel joint force demonstrates the determination of the regional countries in leading the efforts to address the regional security challenges. It also showcases the African countries' unity and cooperation. It has made significant contribution to peace and security of Africa and beyond, and deserves support from the international community. MINUSMA is authorized by Council resolutions 2359 and 2391 to provide logistic support to the force through a technical agreement. Now, the joint force is facing financial difficulties. The briefing on 15 November will provide a platform for the parties to discuss ways to support the force.

On Yemen, the relaunch of political talks is the shared desire of Yemeni people and the international community and is fully supported by the Council. The Council members are concerned about the worsening humanitarian crisis in Yemen. We hope that the Council will remain united and play a constructive role for the political settlement of the issue.

On the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), the Council members are concerned about the current situation between Palestine and Israel and the

deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. The Council members will express their views on pushing the relevant parties to have continued dialogue for the solution of the issue.

On Lebanon, we hope that Lebanon will form a new government as soon as possible, deliver on the guidelines of governance, uphold stability and security, and promote economic development. UNIFIL has played an important role in keeping the operation field calm and the region generally stable. The international community should continue to support Lebanon, help strengthen the capability of Lebanon Armed Force for Lebanon's stability and security, and ease the pressure on Lebanon in receiving refugees from Syria and Palestine.

On Burundi, the situation in Burundi is generally calm. The African regional organizations are still making effort for a peaceful solution of the political situation in Burundi. We hope that the briefing will play a constructive role in promoting lasting peace and sustainable development in Burundi.

The Council will also consider adoption of six resolutions on extending mandates for the following: forces fighting piracy off the Somali Coast, the EUFOR/Althea, sanctions on Libya, MINUSCA, Somalia and Eritrea Sanctions Committee Monitoring Group(SEMG), and UNISFA.

Side Events

As the President of the Security Council, China will invite Permanent Representatives of Council members, including newly-elected members, and officials of the Secretariat to a trip to China from 24 to 27 November. The group will visit China's peacekeeping standby force in Beijing. On 6 November, China will host a cultural performance by Chinese artists with disabilities at Lincoln Center.

Working Methods

To ensure quality and efficient work of the Council this month, a just, transparent, efficient and practical approach will be followed in making meeting arrangement. China will work closely with other Council members and the Secretariat to contribute our part to the improvement of the working methods of the Council. We will draw up Suggestions for the Elements of

briefing in meetings and consultations and circulate the document to the briefers to make Council meetings more effective and efficient.