accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

Most Council members commended the efforts of regional organizations, such as the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative, in dealing with the challenges of illicit small arms and light weapons and called for strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations. In that connection, the representative of Indonesia emphasized the important role of other regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the implementation of the programme of action to address arms smuggling and related issues.

Meeting: small arms

Meeting record and date	Sub-item	Other documents	Rule 37 invitations	Rule 39 and other invitations	Speakers	Decision and vote (for-against- abstaining)
S/PV.8713 5 February 2020	Report of the Secretary- General on small arms and light weapons (S/2019/1011)			High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Deputy Director of Operations, Conflict	All Council members, all invitees	
				Armament Research		

28. Women and peace and security

In 2020, the Council held no public meeting in relation to the item entitled "Women and peace and security". However, Council members held two open videoconferences in connection with the item.⁷⁵⁵ More information on the videoconferences is given in table 1 below.

On 17 July, at the initiative of Germany, which held the Presidency for the month,⁷⁵⁶ the Council held a high-level open videoconference on the theme "Conflictrelated sexual violence: turning commitments into compliance".⁷⁵⁷ At the videoconference,⁷⁵⁸ the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Special Envoy of the United Nations High

⁷⁵⁸ See S/2020/727.

Commissioner for Refugees, the Founder and Chair of Progressive Voice, on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and the Executive President of the Association des femmes juristes de Centrafrique. In her briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General noted that the report of the Secretary-General featured, for the first time, an assessment of compliance gaps, which found prevailing disregard for international norms and obligations by parties to armed conflict as well as a lack of meaningful commitment to curbing violations by the majority of persistent perpetrators. In that connection, she expressed the urgent need for greater coherence between the practice of listing and the practice of imposing targeted and graduated measures to leverage behavioural change. She stated that 2020 had begun with the anticipation of a "jubilee year" for the women and peace and security agenda, but had become a fight to prevent the rollback of women's rights, which was evident in reprisals against women's human rights defenders, physical and financial risks to women's civil society organizations and shrinking civic space. The Special Representative mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had dramatically affected the work of the United Nations, including her mandate, but that the virus had not changed the needs of survivors or the right to physical integrity and bodily autonomy. In that regard,

⁷⁵⁵ For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

⁷⁵⁶ The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 8 July 2020 (S/2020/665). See also S/2020/487.

⁷⁵⁷ Belgium was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence, Germany was represented by its Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, South Africa was represented by its Minister for International Relations and Cooperation and the Niger was represented by its Minister for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection.

she said that it was time to silence the guns and to amplify and unmute the voices of women and clarified that the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire meant that all parties had to cease the use of sexual and other violence. The Special Envoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees urged the Council to move beyond rhetoric and implement decisions and called on the Council to hold perpetrators to account, address the root, structural causes of gender-based violence and discrimination and urgently provide funding for programmes that addressed the needs of all survivors. The Founder and Chair of Progressive Voice, on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, focused her briefing on the situation in Myanmar, while the Executive President of the Association des femmes juristes de Centrafrique focused on the Central African Republic. They both called on the Council to support local civil society organizations and actions to bring perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence to justice.

Council members and other Member States addressed a variety of issues, including the importance of a survivor-centred approach, the need for converting commitments into compliance by strengthening the full and effective implementation of all Council decisions and the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Many Member States also stressed the importance of the meaningful participation of women at all levels of the decision-making process, including with regard to peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding, to address the issue of sexual violence. Participants expressed concern over the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings and reiterated the Secretary-General's call to address gender-based violence as an integral part of COVID-19 responses.⁷⁵⁹ In their statements, some participants explicitly referred to conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security.760

On 29 October, at the initiative of the Russian Federation, which held the Presidency for the month,⁷⁶¹ and on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Council held a high-level open videoconference under the item, with a focus on better implementation of the resolution.⁷⁶² At the videoconference, Council members heard briefings by the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Women (UN-Women), Empowerment of the UN-Women Goodwill Ambassador, the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Adviser for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and a representative of the Women and Children Legal Research Foundation. The Secretary-General stated that 20 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), despite some progress, power structures remained dominated by men, with women leading only 7 per cent of countries, men making up three quarters of the members of COVID-19 task forces and men still overwhelmingly making decisions about international peace and security. He emphasized that ensuring women's full participation in peace processes required stronger partnerships among the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and civil society and the full use of tools and innovative solutions to have a rapid and decisive impact on women's representation. He reported that at the beginning of 2020, gender parity had been achieved among the United Nations leadership, including among resident coordinators in countries affected by conflict, and reaffirmed his determination to push for parity at all levels, including in field and special political missions. The Executive Director of UN-Women addressed women's meaningful participation in peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping and the use of violence against women in conflict. The UN-Women Goodwill Ambassador highlighted the importance of providing more support to women's organizations. The Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Adviser for UNISFA focused on the participation of women in peacekeeping. The representative of the Women and Children Legal Research Foundation spoke on the importance of ensuring women's progress in Afghanistan and protecting the safety of women's rights defenders.

⁷⁵⁹ Germany, South Africa, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada (in its national capacity and on behalf of 62 Member States and the European Union), Denmark, European External Action Service of the European Union, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Myanmar, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

⁷⁶⁰ South Africa, Georgia, Iraq, Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security of the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Peru and Slovenia. For information on threats to international peace and security considered by the Council in 2020, see part VII, sect. I.

 ⁷⁶¹ The Council had before it a concept note annexed to a letter dated 14 October 2020 (S/2020/1014). See also S/2020/946.

⁷⁶² See S/2020/1084. The United Kingdom was represented by its Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa, and Germany was represented by its Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office. See also the statement to the press dated 29 October 2020 (SC/14341).

Participants at the videoconference celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) as an important framework for the women and peace and security agenda, along with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and echoed the pledge to amplify the voices of women. In their statements, participants also underlined the gaps in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and pointed out the widespread underrepresentation of women in peace and security decision-making and processes and the need for the global community to live up to its commitment by supporting the work of women peacebuilders and decision-makers.⁷⁶³ Speakers echoed the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing the added challenges and impact of the pandemic on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Some participants acknowledged the need to bridge the commitments with resources and called for more sustainable and robust funding for women's organizations aimed at supporting civil society and women peacebuilders and protecting female human rights' defenders.⁷⁶⁴ Participants also emphasized the importance of following the recommendations of the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security to better monitor and coordinate implementation.⁷⁶⁵

Following the open videoconference of 29 October, the Council voted on a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation. 766 The draft resolution failed to obtain the required number of votes, with 5 votes in favour, none against and 10 abstentions. 767 In explaining their abstentions, 768 several Council members stated that the text did not address key aspects of the normative framework of the women and peace and security agenda concerning the meaningful participation of women in peace processes, the involvement of civil society or the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). ⁷⁶⁹ Specifically, the representative of Belgium noted that the draft resolution inadequately reflected the normative

⁷⁶⁸ See S/2020/1076.

framework and was nearly devoid of meaningful language on the implementation of or accountability for the women and peace and security agenda. The representative of the Dominican Republic considered that the adoption of the draft resolution would have compromised progress made over the past 20 years. The representative of Estonia highlighted that given the serious threats and reprisals against women human rights defenders, the exclusion of key aspects with respect to civil society involvement was a stark omission of the role of the key partners in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The representative of Germany pointed out that had the draft resolution been adopted, it would have eroded the hard-won gains with regard to the women and peace and security agenda and watered down previous achievements on the occasion of the twentieth resolution anniversary of 1325 (2000).The representative of the United States noted that the draft resolution had diluted the long-standing United Nations commitments to women and weakened the consensus about the role of women in conflict situations. By contrast, those who voted in favour of the draft resolution considered that the text reaffirmed the commitment of the Council with regard to the women and peace and security agenda and supported it to mark the anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The representative of China emphasized that the Council members should remain open-minded and be inclusive of new perspectives and elements and avoid "clinging only to existing language and refusing improvement". The representative of Indonesia stated that the draft resolution had a distinct potential to advance the women and peace and security agenda constructively. The representative of South Africa clarified that while the draft resolution did not adequately address emerging issues that affected the women and peace and security agenda, the draft reaffirmed, and did not negate, all previous resolutions, in particular resolution 2493 (2019), adopted unanimously by the Council a year ago.

During the period under review, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security continued to convene in accordance with resolution 2242 (2015),⁷⁷⁰ including to address the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷⁷¹

The Council referred to issues related to women and peace and security under multiple items on its agenda in 2020. As summarized in table 2 below, the Council addressed in its decisions a wide variety of measures in

⁷⁶³ United Kingdom, Belgium, Niger, South Africa, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Iraq, Ireland, Netherlands and Thailand.

⁷⁶⁴ Germany, Belgium, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Canada (on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security), El Salvador, European Union, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Sierra Leone and United Arab Emirates.

⁷⁶⁵ Dominican Republic, Estonia, Ireland and Mexico.

⁷⁶⁶ See S/2020/1054.

⁷⁶⁷ See S/2020/1066.

⁷⁶⁹ Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom and United States.

⁷⁷⁰ See resolution 2242 (2015), para. 5 (a).

⁷⁷¹ See S/2020/282, S/2020/283, S/2020/439, S/2020/899, S/2020/1297 and S/2020/1319.

connection with the women and peace and security agenda in particular relating to: (a) the representation and participation of women in public affairs and governance and in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution; (b) the participation of women in peacekeeping operations, ⁷⁷² including through the appointment of women's protection and gender advisers; (c) the development and inclusion of gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity by Member States and United Nations entities; and (d) combating sexual violence, including through the monitoring of, analysis of and reporting on conflict-related sexual violence and genderbased violence, as well as the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence. The Council continued to call on Member States to adopt a survivor-centred approach in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In addition, during the period under review, the Council placed an emphasis on the socioeconomic environment for the meaningful participation and empowerment of women in the context of very diverse conflict-specific items. Consistent with previous years, the Council included provisions in a few of its decisions focusing on the role of women in countering terrorism and violent extremism.

Table 1Videoconferences: women and peace and security

Videoconference date	Videoconference record	Title	Decision, vote (for-against- abstaining) and record of written procedure
17 July 2020	S/2020/727	Letter dated 21 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 October 2020	S/2020/1084	Letter dated 31 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
30 October 2020	S/2020/1066	Letter dated 30 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Draft resolution S/2020/1054 (not adopted) 5-0-10 ^{<i>a</i>} S/2020/1076

^a For: China, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam; *against*: none; *abstaining*: Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States.

Table 2

Selection of provisions relevant to women and peace and security, by theme and agenda item

	Agenda item	Decision	Paragraph		
Representation and participation of women in political processes at all levels, including decision-making					
Country- and region-specific	Peace and security in Africa	S/PRST/2020/5	twelfth		
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	S/PRST/2020/7	fourteenth, Seventeenth		
	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2513 (2020)	3		
		Resolution 2543 (2020)	6 (f)		
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	7, 9, 44		

⁷⁷² In 2020, the Council adopted resolution 2538 (2020), which specifically focused on the participation of women in peacekeeping operations. For more information, see part I, sect. 23.

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	Agenda item	Decision	Paragraph
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	5 (d), 10
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution 2522 (2020)	2 (e)
	The situation in Libya	Resolution 2542 (2020)	8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	4, 28 (a) (v)
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution 2539 (2020)	26
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	31
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the	Resolution 2514 (2020)	31
	Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2524 (2020)	8
		Resolution 2550 (2020)	27
Participation of	women in peacebuilding and in conflict pre	vention and resolution	
Country- and	Peace consolidation in West Africa	S/PRST/2020/7	twelfth
egion-specific	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2513 (2020)	4
		Resolution 2543 (2020)	6 (f)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	7, 31 (b) (iii)–(iv), 44
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	20, 29 (ii) (c), 32
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution 2506 (2020)	5 (f)
		Resolution 2537 (2020)	5 (g)
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	5 (d), 18
	The situation in Libya	Resolution 2542 (2020)	8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	3, 54
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	31
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2514 (2020)	5
		Resolution 2524 (2020)	2 (ii) (a), 8
		Resolution 2550 (2020)	17, 18
Thematic	Cooperation between the United Nations	S/PRST/2020/11	sixteenth
	and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security		

	Agenda item	Decision	Paragraph
Socioeconomic e programmes	environment for the meaningful participation	n and empowerment of wo	omen and funding of national
Country- and region-specific	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2543 (2020)	6 (f)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	18
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2524 (2020)	8
Conflict-related	sexual violence and gender-based violence		
Country- and	Peace and security in Africa	S/PRST/2020/5	thirteenth
region-specific	Peace consolidation in West Africa	S/PRST/2020/7	eighth
	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2543 (2020)	6 (f)
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	23, 24, 31 (a) (iii), 31 (b) (iii)– (v), 32 (d) (ii), 32 (e) (vii), 44
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution 2537 (2020)	17
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 29 (i) (c) and (h), 29 (ii) (g) and (k), 32, 33, 34, 54 (c)
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	22
	The situation in Libya	Resolution 2542 (2020)	1 (ix), 8
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	8, 28 (c) (iii), 28 (e) (ii), 51, 55 56, 57
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution 2511 (2020)	6
		Resolution 2530 (2020)	14
		Resolution 2539 (2020)	24, 26
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	19, 32, 33
		Resolution 2551 (2020)	4, 20, 21
		Resolution 2554 (2020)	20
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2514 (2020)	5, 8 (a) (v)–(vii), 8 (d) (ii), 18, 19, 22, 28, 32, 35
		Resolution 2521 (2020)	15 (e), 21
		Resolution 2524 (2020)	2 (ii) (b), 2 (iii) (d), 10
		Resolution 2550 (2020)	26
Fhematic	Children and armed conflict	S/PRST/2020/8	fifth, ninth, tenth
	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	S/PRST/2020/11	thirteenth, eighteenth

security

	Agenda item	Decision	Paragraph
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution 2553 (2020)	24
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution 2538 (2020)	7
Gender mainstr	eaming, gender expertise and gender-sensit	ive responses	
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	32 (c) (ii), 44
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution 2537 (2020)	15
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	17, 29 (ii) (c), 55
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	5 (d), 18
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution 2522 (2020)	2 (e)
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	19, 20
		Resolution 2551 (2020)	30
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2514 (2020)	18
		Resolution 2521 (2020)	19
		Resolution 2524 (2020)	8
		Resolution 2550 (2020)	27
Thematic	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution 2532 (2020)	7
		Resolution 2553 (2020)	5, 20 (b)
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution 2518 (2020)	6
Women's protec	tion and gender advisers		
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	31 (a) (iii)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	32, 33
	The situation in Libya	Resolution 2542 (2020)	1 (ix)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	28 (c) (iii), 54
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	17
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the	Resolution 2514 (2020)	8 (a) (i) and (vi)
	Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2524 (2020)	2 (iii) (c) and (d), 8
		Resolution 2550 (2020)	27
Thematic	Protection of civilians in armed conflict	S/PRST/2020/6	eighth
	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution 2553 (2020)	24
	-		

	Agenda item	Decision	Paragraph
Participation of	women in peacekeeping operations		
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	39
	The situation in Cyprus	Resolution 2506 (2020)	14
		Resolution 2537 (2020)	15
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	43
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	45
	The situation in the Middle East	Resolution 2530 (2020)	13
		Resolution 2539 (2020)	25
		Resolution 2555 (2020)	13
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2520 (2020)	20
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2514 (2020)	21
		Resolution 2525 (2020)	9
	The situation concerning Western Sahara	Resolution 2548 (2020)	11
Thematic	Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security	S/PRST/2020/11	thirteenth, fourteenth
	United Nations peacekeeping operations	Resolution 2518 (2020)	6
		Resolution 2538 (2020)	1, 2, 3–6, 9–13
Role of women i	n countering terrorism and violent extremis	m	
Country- and region-specific	Peace and security in Africa	S/PRST/2020/5	twelfth
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	S/PRST/2020/7	twelfth
Participation of	women in the security sector and in security	y sector reform	
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2552 (2020)	44
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2556 (2020)	20, 32
	The situation in Guinea-Bissau	Resolution 2512 (2020)	10
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2531 (2020)	28 (a) (iii), 54
Thematic	Maintenance of international peace and security	Resolution 2553 (2020)	5, 14, 20 (b), 23, 24