

Council members also commended the work of UNMIK on several fronts, from its role in promoting security, stability and respect for human rights to its efforts to confront the COVID-19 pandemic in Kosovo, with some stressing the need for a review of the Mission, including an option for a drawdown.<sup>510</sup> In that regard, the representative of the United States reiterated that while the United Nations could play an

important role in furthering the development of democratic norms and institutions in the region, it did not require a Chapter VII-mandated mission to advance recognition, integration and normalization. She urged Council members to begin taking the steps needed for a responsible drawdown to ensure a more relevant and effective role for the United Nations in helping Kosovo and the rest of the Western Balkans realize their full potential.

<sup>510</sup> United Kingdom and United States.

**Videoconferences: Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
24 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/339</a>	Letter dated 28 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1040</a>	Letter dated 23 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	

## 19. Items relating to Ukraine

**Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)**

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in connection with the item entitled “Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)”. The meeting took the form of a briefing.<sup>511</sup> More information on the meeting, including on participants and speakers, is given in the table below.

On 18 February, Council members held a meeting at the request of the Russian Federation.<sup>512</sup> At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the

Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs said at the outset that the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk arrangements, together with the Minsk Protocol and the Minsk Memorandum, remained the only agreed framework for a negotiated, peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In her briefing, she updated the Council on progress in the implementation of the Minsk provisions since her last briefing in July 2019. She said that a number of important developments had since given rise to hope for long-elusive progress in the implementation of the Minsk provisions, including key security and political aspects. She highlighted that on 9 December 2019, after a three-year hiatus, the leaders of France, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine had met in Paris under the so-called Normandy format and called for immediate measures to stabilize the situation in the conflict area, measures to implement the political provisions of the Minsk agreements and follow-up steps. The leaders committed to a full and comprehensive implementation of the ceasefire, strengthened by the implementation of all the necessary ceasefire support measures, as well as to supporting the development and implementation of an updated demining plan and an

<sup>511</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>512</sup> See [S/PV.8726](#).

agreement within the Trilateral Contact Group on three additional disengagement areas, with the aim of disengaging forces and equipment. The Under-Secretary-General also highlighted that she had used the opportunity of her first visit to Ukraine in December 2019 to reiterate the Secretary-General's support for the ongoing peace efforts and critical reforms in Ukraine, noting that her interlocutors were clear in their desire to see tangible progress in the negotiations, with many stressing the need for greater involvement by women in the ongoing peace efforts. She also noted from her visit that the conflict continued to exact an unacceptable humanitarian toll on the Ukrainian population. It destabilized overall peace and security in Ukraine, but also potentially in the region as a whole. She added that the positive momentum and the stated commitment of the four countries working within the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group participants to address the conflict with renewed impetus and a sense of urgency needed encouragement and full support.

The Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office briefed the Council on the recent discussions and efforts by the Trilateral Contact Group to reach a sustainable solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. She provided updates on the exchange of detainees, opening of additional crossing points and disengagement of forces and hardware in pilot areas that had taken place during the reporting period. She also noted that on 1 October 2019 the parties to the conflict had accepted the so-called Steinmeier formula, which detailed the sequence of steps to be taken with regard to local elections in the non-Government-controlled territories and the entry into force of the special status for those territories. The Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine reported on the general security situation on the ground, noting that while there had been an overall decrease in the average number of ceasefire violations, isolated spikes in violence had continued to occur, including a major ceasefire violation in the Luhansk region, which had occurred on the same day as the Council meeting. He provided additional details on the implementation of the measures agreed upon by the four countries under the Normandy format during the meeting in December 2019.

During the discussion, Council members welcomed the meeting of the quartet in the Normandy format in December 2019 and called on the parties to comply with the Minsk agreements, as endorsed by the Council in resolution [2202 \(2015\)](#). Speakers expressed differing views on the responsibilities for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Some speakers accused the Russian Federation of violating the Minsk agreements.<sup>513</sup> More specifically, the representative of

<sup>513</sup> United States, Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia and Belgium.

France called on the parties, in particular the separatist armed groups, to refrain from any provocation in order to avoid any military escalation on the ground and for the Russian Federation to use its influence on the separatists for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The representative of the Russian Federation cautioned that every time Council members said that the Russian Federation was failing to comply with the Minsk agreements, they were deliberately misleading their own people and the international community. The representative of the Russian Federation recalled that the Normandy format had been created specifically to support the implementation of the Minsk agreements and reiterated that the efforts made under that format would be effective only if they were rooted in unconditional implementation of the package of measures and agreements reached under the Normandy format. He added that its implementation by all parties, primarily Ukraine, would become a decisive factor for the Russian Federation in assessing the viability of a new meeting in the Normandy format.

While recognizing the progress achieved on various fronts, including prisoner exchanges, the establishment of new disengagement areas and the opening of new crossing points along the line of contact, several Council members also noted the continuing violations of the ceasefire, as indicated in the reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and called for the immediate cessation of hostilities in eastern Ukraine. In that connection, several delegations condemned the attacks that had been carried out on that same day near the Zolote disengagement area and had resulted in Ukrainian casualties.<sup>514</sup> Speakers also stressed the need for safe access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for ensuring effective monitoring and verification of the Minsk agreements ceasefire regime,<sup>515</sup> and called for full and unconditional access of international human rights and humanitarian mechanisms to all areas of Ukraine.<sup>516</sup>

On the holding of local elections, the representative of the Dominican Republic believed it appropriate to convene a future Normandy format meeting to ensure that local elections were held in the best conditions and guarantee the continuity of the negotiations within the framework of the implementation of the peace agreements. The representative of the United Kingdom agreed with the Russian Federation that local elections would pave the way for special status to be granted in parts of the Donbass region. She noted, however, that the local elections could take place only under proper

<sup>514</sup> United States, Germany, Estonia and France.

<sup>515</sup> Germany, United Kingdom, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Estonia, France, Belgium and Ukraine.

<sup>516</sup> Germany, United Kingdom, Estonia, France, Belgium and Ukraine.

conditions, and those conditions included a comprehensive ceasefire, unfettered access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Also participating in the meeting, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine said that his Government looked forward to holding local elections

throughout the territory of Ukraine, including its temporarily occupied parts, once the security and political conditions allowed in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of OSCE and under Ukraine's control of its internationally recognized borders.

**Meeting: letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)**

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8726 18 February 2020			Ukraine <sup>a</sup>	Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Special Representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission	All Council members, <sup>b</sup> all invitees <sup>c</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Ukraine was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>b</sup> The representatives of Germany and the Russian Federation took the floor more than once in order to make further statements.

<sup>c</sup> The Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission participated in the meeting by videoconference from Kyiv. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine took the floor more than once in order to make a further statement.

## Middle East

### 20. The situation in the Middle East

During the period under review, the Council held 17 meetings in relation to the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. Consistent with prior practice, most meetings held under the item took the form of briefings.<sup>517</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in tables 1 and 3 below. In addition, the Council held a total of 31 open videoconferences in connection

with the item.<sup>518</sup> More information on the videoconferences is given in tables 2 and 4 to 6 below. Under the item, both at the meetings and the videoconferences, Council members considered a variety of topics, principally the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic; the conflict in Yemen; the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF); and the mandate of the United Nations

<sup>517</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>518</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.