

Table 6

**Videoconference: the situation in the Middle East – United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
28 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/853</a>	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution <a href="#">2539 (2020)</a> 15-0-0 <a href="#">S/2020/857</a>

## 21. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings in connection with the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”. No decisions were adopted during the period under review. In 2020, during the meetings under the item, the Council continued its practice of holding monthly briefings and quarterly open debates.<sup>582</sup> More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of nine open videoconferences in connection with the item.<sup>583</sup> More information on the open videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole.<sup>584</sup> Under the item, whether in the context of meetings or videoconferences, Council members also considered developments in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and the Middle East region, including the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.<sup>585</sup>

In 2020, in most meetings and videoconferences in connection with the item Council members heard briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. Council members also heard one briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and one briefing by the Assistant Secretary-

General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator,<sup>586</sup> and twice heard remarks by the Secretary-General, in February and June.<sup>587</sup> In January, Council members also heard a briefing by the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and one by the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations.<sup>588</sup> In addition, in a videoconference held on 21 July, Council members heard briefings by a Professor of Political Science and Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research and the President of the US/Middle East Project.<sup>589</sup>

On 11 February, in an extraordinary meeting<sup>590</sup> following the release by the United States of its “Peace to Prosperity” vision for Israelis and Palestinians, the Secretary-General affirmed the full commitment of the United Nations to a just and comprehensive peace between Palestinians and Israelis. At that meeting, the Special Coordinator briefed the Council and reported that in the days since the United States’ proposal was unveiled, sporadic violent incidents in the Palestinian territory had been witnessed, including in East Jerusalem. He also mentioned that the United States had announced that it would establish a joint committee with Israel to produce a more detailed version of the conceptual maps included in the proposal, which would allow it to recognize an Israeli decision to apply its laws in specified areas in the West Bank. The Special Coordinator cautioned that the possible annexation of territory in the West Bank would have a devastating impact on the prospects for a

<sup>582</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>583</sup> For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

<sup>584</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 2. See also [S/2020/1142](#).

<sup>585</sup> See also part I, sect. 20.

<sup>586</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>587</sup> See [S/PV.8717](#) and [S/2020/596](#).

<sup>588</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>589</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

<sup>590</sup> See [S/PV.8717](#).

two-State solution and would severely undermine opportunities for normalization and regional peace.

During the period under review, the Special Coordinator provided regular briefings to the Council, either in person or by videoconference. In the context of his monthly briefings held in February, May, August and November, the Special Coordinator reported to Council members on the political situation, including the process of intra-Palestinian reconciliation, coordination between the two parties, the violence in the occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem, and on the status of the negotiations, including the meetings of the Middle East Quartet. The Special Coordinator also reported on the deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions in Gaza, further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and on the threat of annexation by Israel of areas of the West Bank. He urged Member States to provide additional resources for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which was facing a historical funding shortage. In his monthly briefings, the Special Coordinator also covered developments in Lebanon and the Golan. During the discussions, Council members condemned the continued occupation of the Palestinian territory and called for the resumption of negotiations based on a two-State solution. While cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians in fighting COVID-19 was welcomed, several Council members called for that effort, as well as the international community's support for Palestine, to be intensified.<sup>591</sup> On 25 August,<sup>592</sup> the Special Coordinator reported on the agreement reached between Israel and the United Arab Emirates stopping Israeli annexation plans over parts of the occupied West Bank and including the normalization of relations between the two countries. He said that the agreement had the potential to change dynamics across the region and created new opportunities for cooperation. The Special Coordinator also focused on the situation in Lebanon, and in particular on the 4 August 2020 explosion in the Port of Beirut, which had left over 180 people dead, with 30 persons still missing and several thousand injured, as well as on the situation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon area of operation and in the Golan. At the videoconference, most Council members welcomed the agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates to normalize their relations, which also included the suspension of

Israel's plan to annex part of the West Bank.<sup>593</sup> Some Council members called on Israel to abandon the annexation plan indefinitely<sup>594</sup> and others urged the Palestinian Authority and Israel to take the opportunity provided by the suspension of the annexation plan to resume peace negotiations.<sup>595</sup> Council members also addressed the response of the Council to the 20 August 2020 notification by the United States concerning paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015) concerning the lifting of the arms embargo on the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>596</sup> At the videoconference,<sup>597</sup> most Council members agreed that the notification by the United States to invoke the "snapback mechanism" provided for in the resolution was ineffective, given that the United States had ceased to participate in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.<sup>598</sup> The representative of Indonesia, who was the President of the Council for the month, responded to the question from the representatives of various Council members concerning the position of the Presidency on the letter of the United States.<sup>599</sup> He said that after having consulted with members and receiving letters from many Member States, it was clear that one member had a particular position on the issue, while a significant number of members had differing views. He added that, in his view, there was no consensus in the Council and the President was therefore not in a position to take further action.<sup>600</sup> At a videoconference held on 18 November,<sup>601</sup> the Special Coordinator reported on the signing of bilateral agreements between Bahrain and Israel, and urged the Middle East Quartet, Arab partners and Israeli and Palestinian leaders to use the progress to resume peace negotiations. Council members also welcomed the normalization agreements between Israel and several Arab states and urged that the agreements be used as a springboard for the resumption of peace negotiations.

<sup>593</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>594</sup> Belgium, France, Germany, Indonesia and Russian Federation.

<sup>595</sup> Belgium, Dominican Republic, France and United Kingdom.

<sup>596</sup> See [S/2020/815](#).

<sup>597</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

<sup>598</sup> Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and United Kingdom. For further details on the discussion, see part V, sect. II.B.

<sup>599</sup> Russian Federation, China and South Africa.

<sup>600</sup> For further details on the role of the presidency, see part II, sect. IV.

<sup>601</sup> [S/2020/1128](#).

<sup>591</sup> See [S/2020/430](#) (China, France, Germany, Indonesia, Russian Federation and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/596](#) (Belgium, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia).

<sup>592</sup> See [S/2020/837](#).

Every three months, the monthly briefings, whether in the form of a meeting or a videoconference, were also used to report on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016). During the briefings that took place in March, June, September and December, the Special Coordinator continued to report on the lack of progress in the implementation of the main provisions of the resolution, namely, with regard to Israeli settlement activities, violence against civilians including acts of terror, incitement, provocation and inflammatory rhetoric, steps and efforts to advance the peace process and actions by all States to distinguish in their relevant dealings between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. At a videoconference held on 30 March,<sup>602</sup> the Special Coordinator praised the far-reaching measures that both Israel and the Palestinian Authority had taken to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. He noted that the coordination put in place and the joint commitment to tackle the threat to both populations was exemplary. At those briefings, most Council members expressed concern at the lack of progress with respect to the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) and reaffirmed their commitment to a two-State solution. Council members viewed the coordination concerning COVID-19 among Israelis and Palestinians as an opportunity for relaunching peace negotiations. Some Council members reminded Israel of its obligations as the occupying power under international law to protect the lives and safety of the Palestinian population, including by providing them with vaccines for COVID-19.<sup>603</sup> Other Council members expressed concern at the violence against children and emphasized the need for accountability through thorough and transparent investigations.<sup>604</sup> In 2020, as also happened in 2019, the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) were twice submitted in writing, namely, the fourteenth report in June and the sixteenth report in December.<sup>605</sup> During a videoconference held on 24 June,<sup>606</sup> with six Council members participating at the ministerial level, the Secretary-General delivered remarks in which he expressed concern about the continuing threat of annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory. The Secretary-General affirmed that, if implemented, annexation would constitute a most serious violation of international law, grievously harm the prospect of a two-State solution and undercut the

possibilities of a renewal of negotiations. He called on the Government of Israel to abandon its annexation plans and encouraged regional and international supporters of the two-State solution to help bring the parties back to a path towards a negotiated, peaceful settlement. He called on the Middle East Quartet to take up its mandated mediation role and find a mutually agreeable framework for the parties to re-engage with the Quartet and other key States, without preconditions. The Special Coordinator also focused on the threat posed by annexation to a future viable Palestinian state and provided a briefing on the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). He highlighted the widespread opposition to the annexation plan among the international and regional communities, as well as among civil society in both Israel and Palestine. He also shared his concerns over the impact on the welfare of the Palestinian people of the recent decision by the Palestinian Authority to stop accepting the clearance revenue collected by Israel. Council members shared the Secretary-General's concerns and opposition to Israel's annexation plan and called for a restart of the peace negotiations.<sup>607</sup> On 29 September, the Council held a meeting<sup>608</sup> in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, which was the first meeting under the item since February 2020. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Coordinator, who presented the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016), covering the period from 5 June to 20 September. The Special Coordinator noted the recent agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The Secretary-General welcomed those agreements, which suspended Israeli annexation plans over parts of the occupied West Bank, and reiterated that only a two-State solution that realized the legitimate national aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis could lead to sustainable peace between the two peoples and contribute to broader peace in the region. The Secretary-General's report covered the various provisions of resolution 2334 (2016), including settlement activity and demolition of Palestinian structures in the West Bank; acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror; acts of provocation, incitement or inflammatory rhetoric; and affirmative steps taken to reverse the negative trends imperilling the two-State solution. The Special Coordinator addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ground, which was having a devastating effect. In closing, he

<sup>602</sup> S/2020/263.

<sup>603</sup> See S/2020/1275 (Indonesia, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>604</sup> Ibid. (Belgium, South Africa and United Kingdom).

<sup>605</sup> S/2020/555 and S/2020/1234.

<sup>606</sup> See S/2020/596.

<sup>607</sup> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Indonesia, Tunisia, United Kingdom, South Africa, Viet Nam, Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Niger and Russian Federation.

<sup>608</sup> See S/PV.8762.

reiterated the Secretary-General's call for the members of the Middle East Quartet, key Arab partners and the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to urgently re-engage and strengthen efforts to advance the goal of a negotiated two-State solution. During the discussion, Council members called for the resumption of negotiations between the parties, a halt to the expansion of Israeli settlements and the demolition of Palestinian houses in the West Bank and progress in intra-Palestinian reconciliation and elections. Some Council members welcomed President Abbas's call for an international conference with all concerned parties to engage in a peace process based on international law, United Nations resolutions and other internationally agreed parameters.<sup>609</sup>

In 2020, the practice of holding quarterly open debates was heavily affected by the pandemic and the inability to hold them in either the Security Council Chamber or the Economic and Social Council Chamber. As a result, following the first open debate, which took place on 21 and 22 January 2020, the members of the Council held videoconferences in connection with the item on 23 April, 21 July and 26 October.<sup>610</sup> In the context of those videoconferences, Council members delivered statements, as did the representatives of Israel and the State of Palestine. In addition, in accordance with the written understanding reached among Council members for the conduct of videoconferences, written statements were submitted by Member States and other entities and later compiled in letters from the President of the Council. In his briefings delivered during the quarterly videoconferences, the Special Coordinator focused on the prospect of annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory as a result of the political agreement that had opened the way to the formation of the national emergency government in Israel, the continued violence between Israelis and Palestinians, the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the dynamics created on the ground by the COVID-19 pandemic. He also touched on the situations in Lebanon and the Golan and on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. In January, during the first open debate of the year under the item, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.<sup>611</sup> At that meeting,<sup>612</sup> the

Council also heard briefings by the Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations. The Under-Secretary-General recalled the Secretary-General's call to all leaders to exercise maximum restraint and emphasized that the world could not afford another conflict. She stated that with the political process deadlocked, negative developments continued to undermine the prospects for a two-State solution, namely, the continued expansion of settlement activity and threat of annexation of parts of the West Bank, and the ongoing clashes and arrests in East Jerusalem. Regarding Gaza, while still extremely fragile, there had been a notable and welcome reduction in violence in and around Gaza. Despite the progress in some areas, humanitarian and economic steps would not resolve Gaza's immense challenges, since at their core these were political and required political solutions. She reported on the statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announcing that the preliminary examination by the Court had concluded with the determination that all the statutory criteria under the Rome Statute for the opening of an investigation had been met. In doing so, the Under-Secretary-General expressed the view that, among other things, war crimes had been or were being committed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. In closing, she emphasized the continued urgency of resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements. The Assistant Secretary-General briefed the Council on her six-day visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, where she had met representatives of Palestinians and Israelis, as well as representatives of the international community. She stated that the meetings conveyed hardships, challenges and opportunities for positive change. On 21 July, the members of the Council held a videoconference<sup>613</sup> in connection with the item at which Council members heard briefings by the Special Coordinator, by the Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research and by the President of the US/Middle East Project. In his briefing, the Special Coordinator warned the Council of the complex and destabilizing three-pronged crisis facing Palestinians and Israelis: an escalating health crisis as both struggled to contain the rapid spike of COVID-19 cases; a spiralling economic crisis as businesses closed, unemployment soared, protests increased and the economy suffered the financial impact of months of lockdowns and restrictions; and, finally, a mounting political confrontation, driven by the threat of Israeli annexation

<sup>609</sup> South Africa, China, Indonesia, Tunisia and Germany.

<sup>610</sup> See [S/2020/341](#), [S/2020/736](#) and [S/2020/1055](#).

<sup>611</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#). The first open debate of the year under this item took place over two days, on 21 and 22 January 2020, owing to the financial difficulties faced by the United Nations, which resulted in meetings of the Council being restricted to take place only from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

<sup>612</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#).

<sup>613</sup> See [S/2020/736](#).

of parts of the occupied West Bank and the steps taken in response by the Palestinian leadership. The Special Coordinator also informed the Council of the challenge in confronting the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases in Gaza due to the ending of coordination between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. The President of the US/Middle East Project suggested that the Council, along with the Secretary-General, explore a mechanism to assess and evaluate its record and effectiveness on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that they examine convening a commission to appraise new approaches to resolve the long-standing conflict. The Director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research urged Council members to protect the legitimacy of the international system and reject the United States' "Peace to Prosperity" proposal, which would jeopardize a two-State solution.

During the open debate and videoconferences, Council members reiterated their opposition to the annexation, citing violation of international law and hindrance to the peace process. Council members also called on Israel to cease the building of new settlements and the demolition of Palestinian houses and property. A number of Council members urged the

international community to provide more support for Palestine, including through UNRWA, to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance, noting the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>614</sup> A majority of Council members also expressed support for an international peace conference as proposed by the President of the Palestinian Authority in an effort to restart negotiations.<sup>615</sup> Some Council members reminded the Council of its responsibility and mandate to ensure implementation of its resolutions.<sup>616</sup>

<sup>614</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#) (Belgium, Germany, Niger, Tunisia, Estonia, France, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, Russian Federation, Viet Nam and Peru); [S/2020/341](#) (Belgium and Germany); [S/2020/736](#) (China, France, Indonesia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tunisia); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Russian Federation, Viet Nam, China, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Niger and Tunisia).

<sup>615</sup> See [S/2020/736](#) (China, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Viet Nam); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Viet Nam, China, France, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa).

<sup>616</sup> See [S/PV.8706](#) (South Africa); [S/2020/736](#) (Tunisia); and [S/2020/1055](#) (Indonesia and South Africa). For more details on the discussion, see part V, sect. II.B.

Table 1

**Meetings: the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

<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>
<a href="#">S/PV.8706</a> 21 January 2020 and <a href="#">S/PV.8706 (Resumption 1)</a> 22 January 2020			32 Member States <sup>a</sup>	Six invitees <sup>b</sup>	All Council members, all invitees	
<a href="#">S/PV.8717</a> 11 February 2020			Israel	United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, President of the State of Palestine,	Secretary-General, 14 Council members, <sup>c</sup> all invitees	

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of  
the Security Council for the maintenance of  
international peace and security**

<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>
				Secretary-General of the League of Arab States		
<a href="#">S/PV.8730</a> 24 February 2020				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process <sup>d</sup>	Invitee	
<a href="#">S/PV.8762</a> 29 September 2020				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process <sup>d</sup>	All Council members, invitee	

<sup>a</sup> Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Bahrain, Bangladesh (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal (also on behalf of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sudan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>b</sup> Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations

<sup>c</sup> The meeting was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium. The representative of the Niger did not make a statement.

<sup>d</sup> The Special Coordinator joined the meeting by videoconference from Jerusalem.

**Table 2**  
**Videoconferences: the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
30 March 2020 <sup>a</sup>	<a href="#">S/2020/263</a>	Letter dated 31 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
23 April 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/341</a>	Letter dated 27 April 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General	
20 May 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/430</a>	Letter dated 22 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 June 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/596</a>	Letter dated 26 June 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
21 July 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/736</a>	Letter dated 23 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	
25 August 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/837</a>	Letter dated 27 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
26 October 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1055</a>	Letter dated 28 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	
18 November 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1128</a>	Letter dated 20 November 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 December 2020	<a href="#">S/2020/1275</a>	Letter dated 23 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

<sup>a</sup> Owing to technical difficulties, the videoconference was closed instead of open. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

## 22. The situation concerning Iraq

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in relation to the item entitled “The situation concerning Iraq”, which took the form of a briefing.<sup>617</sup> More information on that meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of four open videoconferences in connection with the item. The Council unanimously adopted resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2021.<sup>618</sup> More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the item.<sup>619</sup>

In 2020, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI on the situation concerning

Iraq. In her four briefings in connection with the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General,<sup>620</sup> she informed Council members about the progress with regard to the formation of a new Government and the preparations for elections in June 2021. She also spoke about the progress made regarding the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. The Special Representative also informed Council members about the vulnerable economic and security situation in Iraq, exacerbated by corruption, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued threat of terrorism by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh). The Special Representative reported on the ongoing mass protests, emphasizing the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. She also spoke about the serious human rights violations and abuses and the pressing need for accountability and justice. The Special Representative continued to inform the Council regarding the relations between Baghdad and Erbil and the status of

<sup>617</sup> For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

<sup>618</sup> For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, part X, sect. II.

<sup>619</sup> See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 29. See also [S/2020/344](#).

<sup>620</sup> [S/2020/140](#), [S/2020/363](#), [S/2020/792](#) and [S/2020/1099](#).