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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 73rd SESSION

Briefing by the Senior Political Affairs Officer of the Security Council Affairs Division, Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council

21 February 2019

1. **Esteemed Chairperson, distinguished members**, I am most grateful for this opportunity to provide the members of the Charter Committee with an update on the status of the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and related activities. By way of introduction, I wish to refer to the report of the Secretary-General on the *Repertory* and the *Repertoire* (A/73/190) of 19 July 2018. My remarks today will serve to summarise the progress achieved thus far and to provide you with relevant updates.
2. **Distinguished members**, the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch of the Security Council Affairs Division in the Department of Political and, now also, Peacebuilding Affairs last had the honour of briefing this Committee on 22 February 2018. Since then, we have achieved very significant progress in the updating of the *Repertoire*.
3. In the past year, we completed the 20th Supplement to the *Repertoire* covering the period 2016 to 2017. I am pleased to report that all parts of the Supplement are now available in its advance form on the newly revamped Security Council's website. Moreover, the editing process has

been finalised and we expect to issue the publication in hard copy no later than October 2019.

4. Our focus since September 2018 has therefore been the preparation of the 21st Supplement, covering the year 2018. At this stage, we have commenced the drafting of Parts I, III, V, VI, VII, IX and X and we are aiming at completing the entirety of the 21st Supplement (all ten parts) by October 2019. The aim of this ambitious schedule is to make the *Repertoire's* valuable information on the practice and procedures of the Security Council available to the broader membership as soon as possible. Despite the shortage of resources, let me assure you that we are investing extraordinary efforts to make this happen.
5. Thanks to the considerable progress achieved in the past few years, the Branch is now focusing on adapting its working methods for the elaboration of the *Repertoire* to a contemporary approach, a milestone in the 67 years of history of the publication. As a result, we have already commenced the preparation of the 22nd Supplement, covering the year 2019, in parallel to the drafting and completion of the 21st Supplement.
6. However, for these efforts and approach to be sustainable overtime, additional financial support from Member States is necessary. Indeed, the voluntary contributions of Member States have enabled us to use efficiency-enhancing initiatives and benefit from the availability of additional human resources. The Branch has also achieved progress by closely collaborating with other Secretariat departments, namely, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM), the Department of Public Information (DPI) and the Office of

Information and Communications Technology (OICT). In addition, we have mobilized resources to develop technological solutions for the progressive automation of data collection and the enhancement of data analysis, thereby significantly facilitating the research process and the drafting of the *Repertoire*.

7. **Esteemed Chair, distinguished members,** let me first address the publishing status of those Supplements of the *Repertoire* that cover the period from 1993 to 2017 and which are already available online in English. To date, all Supplements covering the period from 1993 to 2013 are available online in all six official languages. By June 2019, we expect to make also available all translated versions of the 19th Supplement, covering the period 2014 to 2015. Under current estimates, we are expecting to make all translated versions of the 20th Supplement, covering the period 2016 to 2017, by the beginning of 2020. Thanks to our enhanced collaboration with DGACM, we are succeeding in shortening the time lag between the completion of Supplements and their eventual publication in all six official languages.

8. In this regard, I invite you to explore the *Repertoire* online, available on the newly revamped Security Council website. The new website was launched in December 2018, in all six official languages, thanks to the generous support of the Netherlands. The *Repertoire's* section of the new website continues to offer up-to-date information regarding all current and past items of the agenda of the Council as well as on its past and current subsidiary organs. We are currently working on further enhancing the content, search functionalities, visualizations and structure commensurate with the new “look and feel” of the Security

Council website.

9. The *Repertoire's* section of the new Security Council's website continues to offer a broad range of other information resources including tables, graphs, and statistical data on the practice of the Council; the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions; as well as the cross-cutting agenda items, namely, children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, and the protection of civilians. These initiatives contribute to showcase the work of the Security Council and its critical contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

10. In this past year, we have continued to further explore the use of modern technologies with a view to enhancing these tools. In the year to come, we are hoping to improve the visualization and the interaction with the information available through these tools.

11. This last year we have also continued to benefit from the excellent collaboration with OICT to release the *2018 Highlights of the Security Council Practice* earlier than ever before. This publication provides an annual review of Security Council activities and contains statistical information on the evolving practice of the Security Council relating to its agenda, meetings, missions, decisions and voting patterns, as well as on its subsidiary bodies. Thanks to OICT, the past four editions of the *Highlights Paper* have relied on a new technological platform for the publication of the Council's data, which since September 2017, has also been used to showcase the Security Council monthly statistics.

12. Subject to the availability of resources, we will continue to strive to make more research products available in the coming year. These products are geared to enhance the ability of Member States and the public at large to become more acquainted with the practice and work of the Security Council and the central role it exercises in the maintenance of international peace and security.

13. While the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch continues to introduce new efficiency and quality measures, future progress on this front will be – as I mentioned – largely dependent on the provision of additional resources.

14. **Esteemed Chair, distinguished members,** the progress made in the preparation and publication of the *Repertoire* as well as the updating of the *Repertoire* section of the Council website would not have been possible without the contributions received to the Trust Fund for the Updating of the *Repertoire*. Thanks to the funds available in the Trust Fund, the Branch was able to hire the services of a consultant who has been instrumental in advancing the completion of the 20th Supplement and in creating the conditions necessary for the preparation of the 21st Supplement (2018) on a one-year cycle.

15. We continue to be thus, highly dependent on voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund established by the General Assembly in resolution 54/106 of 9 December 1999, to sustain the efforts and achievements of recent years. These funds have allowed the *Repertoire* team to significantly narrow the gap between coverage of past and contemporary Council practice. At this stage, unless the Trust Fund is replenished, and resources are secured to

reinforce the work of the Branch, the progress achieved so far may prove not sustainable. The continued increase of activity of the Security Council in the form of meetings and outcomes presents an ever-increasing challenge for the Branch in preparing the *Repertoire*. In this connection, I would like to highlight the renewed efforts to generate new funds, including through the letter transmitted to Member States by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on 28 September 2018.

16. In this regard, whilst extremely grateful to those Member States who have contributed over the years, we strongly appeal to all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund. In this connection, we are very thankful for the contributions made to the Trust Fund since our last briefing in 2017 by China, Poland and Argentina. We would also encourage Member States to consider the sponsorship of an Associate Expert for the Branch. In this respect, we are particularly grateful to Italy for its sponsorship of an Associate Expert since September 2017 whose contribution to advancing our work has been extremely valuable, as well as to the Republic of Korea for its sponsorship of an Associate Expert who will be joining the Branch in March.

17. **Esteemed Chairperson, distinguished members,** we welcome and look forward to your feedback on our work. As in the past, let me underscore that, beyond this briefing, the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch stands ready to support the wider membership with information and guidance on all procedural and constitutional aspects of the current as well as past practice of the Security Council.

Thank you.