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Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9527th meeting
Wednesday, 10 January 2024, 5.10 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. De Rivière	(France)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
	China	Mr. Zhang Jun
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Japan	Mr. Yamazaki
	Malta	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone	Mr. Kanu
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2024/37, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Japan and the United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a statement.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our country attaches the utmost importance to the question of safe international navigation. In that regard, we cannot be unconcerned about the current situation in the Red Sea, given that many countries are heavily dependent on the delivery of essential goods through Red Sea routes.

We have repeatedly condemned attacks on civilian vessels and other actions that jeopardize the freedom and safety of navigation and the lives and health of crews on board the ships. We have warned about further risks of regional escalation that may result from such steps and have called for respect for the principles of safety of navigation.

At the same time, we are concerned that the United States and its allies prefer, as has happened many times in the past, the path of resolving the problem unilaterally by force. They have assembled a so-called international coalition which consists, as is often the case, primarily of ships from the United States and which allegedly is to ensure security, although in reality the legitimacy of its actions raises the most serious questions in terms of international law. We should not have any illusions about the true goals of the authors of draft resolution S/2024/37. This is not about ensuring the safety of navigation in the Red Sea, but an attempt to retroactively legitimize the actions of the coalition with the Security Council's indefinite blessing.

That conclusion is clear in the current language of operative paragraph 3, which includes a right of States to defend their vessels from attacks, which does not exist in international law. That innovation looks seriously dubious from both a legal and a political point of view.

To remedy that distortion, we suggest the following oral amendments, the texts of which were distributed to delegations.

First, we suggest adding a new ninth preambular paragraph to the draft resolution, which underscores that all its provisions should not be seen as setting precedents or creating new norms of international law,

(*spoke in English*)

> "Stressing that all provisions contained in this resolution should not be considered as setting precedents or new norms of international law".

(*spoke in Russian*)

With regard to the non-existent norms on the right to defend one's vessels, we suggest deleting that reference and replacing it with a reference to the applicable rights of Member States in accordance with international law, which is more relevant in this context. Our proposal is to replace the language of operative paragraph 3,

(*spoke in English*)

> "takes note of the right of Member States, in accordance with international law, to defend their vessels from attacks, including those that undermine navigational rights and freedoms"

(*spoke in Russian*)

with the following phrase,

(*spoke in English*)

> "and in that regard takes note of applicable rights of Member States in accordance with international law".

(*spoke in Russian*)

Finally, as we have stated on many occasions, to address the situation in the Red Sea, we must take an honest look at what happened and recognize that it is a regional projection of the violence in which the Gaza Strip has been drowning for more than three months as a result of Israel's unprecedentedly cruel military operation. In order for the waters of the Red Sea to become calm again, there is a need to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to put an end to the massacre in

Gaza and to seriously address the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The escalation in Gaza is the root cause of the current situation in the Red Sea. Without mentioning that in the draft resolution, the causal connection will be lost and the main context, distorted.

That is why we propose adding to operative paragraph 7, after the words

(*spoke in English*)

> "including the conflicts contributing to regional tensions",

(*spoke in Russian*)

the phrase

(*spoke in English*)

> "in particular the conflict in the Gaza Strip".

We call on delegations to vote in support of our proposed amendments.

The President (*spoke in French*): Rule 36 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure states the following:

> "If two or more amendments to a motion or draft resolution are proposed, the President shall rule on the order in which they are to be voted upon. Ordinarily, the Security Council shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed until all amendments have been put to the vote, but when an amendment adds to or deletes from the text of a motion or draft resolution, that amendment shall be voted on first."

Accordingly, I shall now put to the vote the first proposed amendment.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
Algeria, China, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone

Against:
United Kingdom, United States of America

Abstaining:
Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Switzerland

The President (*spoke in French*): The amendment received 4 votes in favour, 2 against and 9 abstentions. The proposed amendment has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

I shall now put to the vote the second proposed amendment.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
Algeria, China, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone

Against:
United Kingdom, United States of America

Abstaining:
Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Switzerland

The President (*spoke in French*): The amendment received 4 votes in favour, 2 against and 9 abstentions. The proposed amendment has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

I shall now put to the vote the third proposed amendment.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
Algeria, China, Guyana, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone

Against:
United Kingdom, United States of America

Abstaining:
Ecuador, France, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Switzerland

The President (*spoke in French*): The amendment received 5 votes in favour, 2 against and 8 abstentions. The proposed amendment has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I wish a happy new year to colleagues, as this is my first meeting of the year.

We voted against all three of Russia's amendments, which were put forward, we believe, in bad faith — at the

last minute — and, as is often the case, were divorced from reality.

We voted against Russia's amendment that falsely suggested the conflict in Gaza is the cause of the Houthis' brazenly opportunistic attacks. The Houthis are simply intoxicated with power. That amendment would have further emboldened the Houthis and established a dangerous precedent for the Council to legitimize those violations of international law. As draft resolution S/2024/37 acknowledges, regional dynamics, including Iran's provision of advanced weapons, which enable the Houthis to target merchant and commercial vessels, have contributed to this situation. The facts are indisputable: the Houthis are targeting a range of vessels, few of which are owned or operated by Israelis. Therefore, what is at issue here is not any particular conflict, but rather the simple principle of upholding freedom of navigation and a waterway vital to the free flow of global commerce. The Council should never legitimize brazen violations of international law.

We also voted against the Russian amendment that removed a reference to States' rights of self-defence. It is long established that States have a right to defend merchant and commercial vessels from attacks. That is what the United States and the United Kingdom did yesterday when our ships came under attack by the Houthis. If the Houthi attacks continue, there will be consequences. The bottom line is this. Our Russian colleagues had ample time and opportunity to offer up edits during the negotiations, and we consulted closely with all Council members throughout this process. Once again, Russia tried to play politics with the Council, and we were glad to see a majority of Member States stand against the gamesmanship.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Council is now ready to proceed to the vote on draft resolution S/2024/37, submitted by the United States of America and Japan.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): During last week's Council meeting (see S/PV.9525), Member States demanded that the Houthis immediately cease maritime attacks in the Red Sea. Since then, the United States has worked closely with Japan to forge consensus around a strong resolution that amplifies this very message and, if adopted, would show that the Council is united on this critical issue and the text we will soon vote on reflects the ideas put forward by numerous members of the Council.

The draft resolution unequivocally demands that the Houthis cease their brazen attacks, which violate international law. It underscores the Council's support for navigational rights and freedoms of vessels of all States in the Red Sea, including for merchant and commercial vessels transiting the Bab Al-Mandeb Strait, in accordance with international law. And it makes clear that the transit passage of merchants and commercial vessels through the Red Sea must not be impeded.

There have been dozens of attacks since November on shipping in the Red Sea, which have affected more than 40 countries. The Houthis have also taken more than 25 hostages from ships they have seized this fall. And, less than 24 hours ago, in their most complex attacks yet against numerous vessels in the Red Sea, the Houthis once again attempted to interfere with safe transit.

It is therefore clear that the Council must speak now with a unified voice and adopt this draft resolution. Repeated Houthi attacks on international shipping are a security threat. They are an economic threat, increasing the prices people pay for food, medicine and energy. And as the draft resolution before us emphasizes, they are a humanitarian threat, undermining the ability of the international community to deliver assistance to more than 21 million Yemeni people in need. For all those reasons, it is vital that the Security Council speak up on the need to uphold international law, as well as navigational rights and freedom.

Even as we continue to demand that the Houthis stop these attacks, we also must not overlook the fact that Iran has long enabled Houthi attacks. Without Iranian support, the Houthis would struggle to effectively track and strike commercial vessels navigating shipping lanes through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Specifically, Iran has transferred advanced weapons systems to the Houthis, including unmanned aerial systems, land attack cruise missiles and ballistic missiles used in attacks against maritime vessels. Let me be 100 per cent clear here. The provision of arms and related materiel of all types to the Houthis is a violation of resolution 2216 (2015). And adopting the draft resolution today will reaffirm that all Member States, including Iran, must adhere to their obligations.

The threat to navigational rights and freedoms in the Red Sea is a global challenge that necessitates a global response. The basic principle of freedom of navigation is at stake, and the Houthis and anyone who enables them need to hear a clear message from the Council: these attacks must stop. Let us fulfil our responsibility, as Council members, to deter those threats by unanimously adopting this timely draft resolution.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:
None

Abstaining:
Algeria, China, Mozambique, Russian Federation

The President (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution received 11 votes in favour, none against and 4 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2722 (2024).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): The Red Sea is vitally important for global maritime transportation. Currently, that critical shipping lane is in a state of crisis. The Houthis have repeatedly attacked commercial vessels with advanced weaponry, such as anti-ship ballistic missiles, drones and small boats. The Houthis have also seized the Japanese-operated *MV Galaxy Leader* and have continued to hold the ship and its crew for nearly 50 days. We once again strongly demand that the Houthis release the vessel and its crew immediately and unconditionally.

The actions taken by the Houthis cannot be justified. The alarming incidents in the Red Sea have already caused serious repercussions for the supply chain and the global economy.

As a maritime nation and as a responsible member of the Security Council, Japan cannot let this continue, and we strongly believe that the Council must speak in a unified voice on this matter in order to protect maritime security and navigational rights in the Red Sea.

Japan has therefore decided to become a co-penholder, together with the United States and has engaged in serious negotiations with the other Council members. In that connection, we welcome that the Council has just adopted resolution 2722 (2023) today. On behalf of the United States and Japan, I would like to express our utmost appreciation for the support and constructive engagement of Council members.

This resolution will be a strong pronouncement that the Security Council cannot accept the Houthis' irresponsible actions in the Red Sea. It also encourages Member States to cooperate internationally or regionally in order to ensure navigational rights and freedoms.

It is also important that this resolution encourages the Security Council to continue to support Yemen's peace process under the auspices of the United Nations. We hope that the resolution will provide common ground among the Member States to address the current critical situation regarding the Red Sea and beyond.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to those delegations that voted in favour of our proposed amendments to address the politicized nature of resolution 2722 (2024). We regret that the rest of the Security Council did not take that step, preferring to turn a blind eye to the dangerous flaws in the text. We could not support the resolution prepared by the United States and Japan on the safety navigation in the Red Sea in its current form, and we therefore abstained in the voting.

I would like to once again underscore that this resolution cannot be seen as legitimizing the actions in the Red Sea of the so-called coalition consisting of the United States and its satellites. We note that operative paragraph 3 does not establish a right of States to defend their ships from attacks — that does not exist. All activities under that paragraph, as stated in the paragraph itself, must be carried out strictly within the framework of existing international law.

The hastily drafted resolution contains other serious flaws from an international law perspective, including an inappropriate reference to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which, as we know, governs peacetime navigation and has nothing to do with what is happening in the Red Sea right now.

We also regret that, despite the insistent requests of a number of delegations, including representatives of the Arab world, the resolution failed to mention the real root cause of the instability in the Red Sea: the plight of the Gaza Strip. That approach by the co-penholders grossly distorts the cause-and-effect relationship of those issues, making the document highly politicized and unbalanced.

Today the Permanent Representative of the United States accused us of playing politics. I hardly need to remind members of the many misinterpretations of the Council's resolutions that Washington has indulged in. Under the pretext of protecting civilians, American-led NATO troops destroyed Libyan statehood. By distorting the provisions of the Council's sanctions resolutions on Yemen, they intercepted weapons in the Arabian Sea, which were then sent to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

According to the Permanent Representative of the United States, it turns out that her country equates the protection of commercial vessels with self-defence. In voting together with Britain against the proposed amendment to the ninth preambular paragraph — the one about not creating a precedent — and against our proposed amendments to operative paragraph 3, the United States has in fact revealed its hand clearly. It showed that their aim behind advancing the resolution was precisely to give themselves a free hand at loosely interpreting the right to defend their ships for the purpose of self-defence. We would caution our American colleagues to refrain from that type of conduct in this context.

For our part, we firmly believe that the resolution will be applied strictly within the geographical framework of the Red Sea, without projecting its provisions onto other areas of the world's oceans, in full compliance with international law.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): We thank the United States and Japan for presenting resolution 2722 (2024).

The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms the illegal and unjustified attacks in the Red Sea by Houthi militants. Yesterday the Houthis attempted their largest attack yet, launching at least 21 missiles and drones towards international shipping lanes. Fifteen per cent of all global seaborne trade passes through the Red Sea. Those attacks threaten to spike food and energy prices and limit their availability, which would inevitably hit the world's poorest the hardest. Yesterday's was the twenty-sixth such attack since 19 November. That was despite the Security Council's demand on 1 December for the Houthis to stop all such attacks immediately. On 3 January, the United Kingdom joined 11 countries in a statement warning against further attacks. We are therefore using all diplomatic means possible to deter those attacks, and that is why we voted in favour of the resolution.

United States and United Kingdom military assets in the Red Sea successfully repelled yesterday's attack. We will not stand by and allow the Houthis to threaten civilian vessels and hold global food and energy supplies hostage. If necessary, and as previously stated by the Defence Secretary of the United Kingdom, we will not hesitate to take further action to deter threats to the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea. The United Kingdom is committed to ensuring the freedom of navigation and trade in the Red Sea.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea voted in favour of resolution 2722 (2024), proposed by the United States and Japan, considering the vital importance of ensuring free and safe navigation in the Red Sea. As the Security Council discussed last week (see S/PV.9525), the Red Sea is one of the most important global sea routes, and the free flow of lawful transit through the Red Sea must continue unimpeded.

Attacks on commercial vessels are unjustifiable and unacceptable under any circumstances. The resolution rightfully condemns the attacks by the Houthis and demands the immediate release of the *MV Galaxy Leader* and its crew. It also takes note of the right of Member States to defend their vessels from attacks in accordance with international law. In addition, the resolution also condemns violations of the arms embargo under resolution 2216 (2015) and calls for Member States to adhere to their obligations vis-à-vis the arms embargo. The Republic of Korea welcomes the adoption of this timely and important resolution and hopes that today's adoption will lead to a cessation of all military provocation in the Red Sea.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): For some time now, the Houthis have been conducting multiple attacks on, and seizures of, commercial vessels in the Red Sea, leading to widespread concern in the international community. The Security Council issued a press statement (SC/15513) in that regard on 1 December 2023.

The Red Sea is an important shipping route for goods and energy products. Ensuring safe and unimpeded access through its waters contributes not only to peace and stability in the region, but also to maintaining a stable and smooth global supply chain and international trade order. It is in line with the common interests of the international community. Based on that position, China is open to the Council's response with regard to taking further appropriate actions and safeguarding the navigational rights of merchant ships of various countries in the Red Sea under international law.

China participated constructively in the consultations on the resolution and proposed changes on relevant issues, together with Russia, Algeria and other countries. The co-penholders made improvements to the draft text of resolution 2722 (2024), which we acknowledge, but some of the proposed revisions were not incorporated into the resolution. The resolution remains ambiguous on several key issues, which makes us worry that it may not achieve the desired results, or that it could even bring about negative consequences, leading to a further escalation of tensions in the region. We therefore felt compelled to abstain in the voting on the resolution.

We call on the Houthis to abide by the provisions of the resolution, to immediately stop attacking and harassing civilian vessels and to respect the freedom of navigation of all countries in the waters of the Red Sea. We call on the relevant parties to strictly abide by the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to play a constructive and responsible role in easing tensions in the Red Sea.

No country should misinterpret or abuse the relevant provisions of the resolution to create new tensions in the Red Sea. It must be noted that the current tensions in the Red Sea are one of the manifestations of the spillover effects of the conflict in Gaza. That is a fact that cannot be ignored.

China has repeatedly stressed the urgency of achieving an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. It is the overriding prerequisite for everything else and a top priority of international diplomatic efforts. We regret that the resolution just adopted by the Council fails to explicitly call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

China will continue to work with the Council and the international community to make unremitting efforts to promote the cessation of hostilities in Gaza, de-escalation in the Red Sea, a political settlement of the Yemeni issue and the realization of peace and stability in the Middle East.

Mr. Kanu (Sierra Leone): Sierra Leone thanks the co-penholders on resolution 2722 (2024), Japan and the United States, for their timely proposal on a matter of international concern and for their constructive engagement and consultations during the negotiation process.

We believe that the Security Council should pronounce itself in a unified voice to protect maritime security, navigational rights and the freedom of all vessels of Member States in the Red Sea.

In our 3 January statement in the Council on this agenda item (see S/PV.9525), we condemned the Houthis' attacks on maritime vessels in the Red Sea. In the broader context, we also called for efforts to support the Yemeni peace process and expressed concern about the latest regional dimension and possible escalation.

Sierra Leone therefore voted in favour of resolution 2722 (2024) in view of the principle to protect the navigational rights and freedom of vessels of all Member States and the threat posed to seafarers owing to the current situation in the Red Sea.

Sierra Leone also voted in favour of the unsuccessful oral amendments proposed by the Russian Federation: the first, noting consistency in the practice of the Council; the second, on the consistent application of existing international law; and the third, because we believe that there is a serious link between the increased maritime attacks in the Red Sea and the situation in Gaza.

We acknowledge that the resolution could have been improved further. Perfection, however, should not be the enemy of good. In that regard, resolution 2722 (2024) ensures the Council's discharge of its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

Let me therefore conclude by reiterating our call on regional actors to refrain from provocative acts that would further escalate an already serious and dire situation in the region.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland voted in favour of resolution 2722 (2024) and welcomes its adoption.

As we begin 2024, the Security Council is sending a strong signal reaffirming the importance of strict

compliance with the rights and freedoms of navigation in the Red Sea in accordance with international law. We would like to thank the delegations of Japan and the United States for their efforts to seek consensus within the Council.

We share our appreciation of the inclusion of several elements submitted by Switzerland, notably the appeal for caution and restraint in order to avoid a further degradation of the situation in the Red Sea and throughout the region. We also welcome the inclusion of a reference to the threat that illicit acts against maritime navigation pose to the safety of seafarers, and of the protection of all civilians in general.

Regarding the language of operative paragraph 3 of the resolution, we would like to underscore that the rights mentioned in that article are strictly limited to military measures aimed at intercepting attacks against merchant ships, and warships to protect those ships.

Finally, faced with the growing risk of a regional escalation, we reaffirm the importance of Council unity in maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): We thank the United States and Japan for leading the efforts on the process, as well as for including several of our concerns in resolution 2722 (2024).

Slovenia voted in favour of the resolution today. As a maritime country, with the Port of Koper as a vital hub for the transit of goods to Europe, the freedom of navigation is of the utmost importance to us.

As we said during the Council's deliberations last week (see S/PV.9525), the deterioration of the situation in the Red Sea is deeply concerning. We unequivocally condemn the Houthis' attacks on commercial vessels in the region's crucial waterways. The attacks undermine international maritime security and jeopardize critical flows of food, fuel and humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, they risk dragging Yemen into a regional flare-up at a time when critical progress towards lasting peace appears within reach.

The Houthis' attacks must cease, and the Council had a responsibility to respond. At the same time, we regret that it was not possible to reach a consensual outcome on the text. We believe that certain elements of the resolution could have benefited from further clarification — our interpretation of operative paragraph 3 provides that any response to attacks in the Red Sea must be in line with international law, in particular international humanitarian and human rights law, and within the strict conditions of the exercise of self-defence.

Furthermore, while we took a common position by abstaining in the voting on all of the oral amendments proposed by the Russian Federation today, we do recognize that Council action on all threats to international peace and security is required.

The Middle East region is in turmoil. Over 23,000 people have lost their lives since October. Addressing some elements of the current devastating crisis and failing to comprehensively respond to the most pressing and deadly issue of all will bring neither peace nor security to the region, in our view. That is why Slovenia has been very clear in its continuous call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza. We believe that it is our best hope for a start to the restoration of calm in the region and preventing further bloodshed.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): The Security Council has a responsibility to respond with urgency to threats to international peace and security. Malta voted in favour of resolution 2722 (2024) and thanks the United States and Japan for presenting it.

Malta remains gravely concerned by the deteriorating maritime security situation in the Red Sea. The worrisome escalation and attacks against commercial shipping in the Red Sea are in violation of international law. Such attacks, including yesterday's deeply concerning intensification of attacks by the Houthis, are unacceptable and must be strongly condemned. We call on the Houthis to immediately cease any attacks and actions against commercial shipping and immediately release the *MV Galaxy Leader* vessel and its crew.

Maritime security is of critical importance for the well-being of Yemen's civilian population, who rely heavily on humanitarian aid. Further escalation may disrupt the flow of aid into Yemen and could have devastating consequences for its population. The Houthis must act in the best interests of the Yemeni people.

We believe that the resolution as drafted lives up to the Council's responsibilities. We should make no allowances or excuses for egregious violations of international law. We call on all the parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint. They must refrain from

taking additional escalatory actions that could have a destabilizing effect on the region.

Let me emphasize the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the fundamental pillar for ocean governance, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. Ensuring full respect for UNCLOS is critical, as it lays down rules for the mutual benefit of all States. The free and peaceful use of the seas and oceans is vital for us all.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador believes in the need for the Security Council to have its voice heard on important issues, such as the exercise of the freedom of navigation, always in accordance with international law. Specifically in the case before us, Ecuador believes that stability and security in the Red Sea contributes to international peace and security and to ensuring that humanitarian, commercial and food security needs for the region and the world are met.

Resolution 2722 (2024), which was just adopted, urges for caution and restraint to avoid further escalation of the situation in the Red Sea and the region and encourages all parties to step up diplomatic efforts to that end, including continued support for dialogue and the peace process in Yemen under the auspices of the United Nations. For those reasons, Ecuador voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Algeria just voted for the first time during its current term on the Security Council, and I would have much preferred to have been part of a unified Security Council on an extremely important issue for maritime and economic security in the Red Sea. Undeniably, for Algeria, ensuring secure navigation in that maritime corridor is a critical goal that goes beyond national borders. And safeguarding such security should be supported by the entire international community to ensure the fluidity and safety of trade flows, in compliance with the well-understood norms of international law.

I thank the co-penholders for listening to us and including some of the inputs of the Algerian delegation in the resolution. Unfortunately, our delegation's major concerns about two important elements of the resolution that we just voted on were not taken into account, despite our urging.

First of all, we believe that any military intervention in the region, particularly in Yemen, must be approached with the utmost caution, especially against the Houthis in Yemen. Such an intervention, in and of itself, would risk complicating — and perhaps even irreversibly undermining — the efforts that have been painstakingly made by the United Nations, including all relevant agencies, in particular those by Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, to de-escalate tensions in the region. Indeed, recent negotiations between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis had given good reason for hope in our region, with emerging prospects for the resolution of the inter-Yemeni conflict and the advent of an era of peace and security for the Yemeni people, who have suffered greatly from the conflict.

Secondly, my delegation actively worked with the co-penholders so that, in its consideration of the issue of maritime security in the Red Sea, the Council would not turn a blind eye to the link, which is obvious to everyone, between the Houthi attacks against merchant vessels and the events of the past three months in Gaza. Whether justified or not, that is what the Houthis themselves are protesting, which we must take into account. Likewise, the Council cannot disregard the emotions that have been triggered in the Arab and Muslim world by the indiscriminate bombing of innocent civilians and the massacres of women and children, which have already led to more than 23,000 deaths among the Palestinian civilian population. In the past three months — and I do not like citing these statistics — we are up to 300 deaths a day. This is the deadliest conflict in the world.

Lastly, if the Council needed evidence between the link between the resolution that we just adopted and what is happening in Gaza, members should recall that, last Wednesday, there were 15 of us around this table — 15 members of the Security Council (see S/PV.9325). No, there was also another, a sixteenth member — he is the representative of the occupying Power. He is the representative of the executioners in Gaza.

That is why we preferred to abstain in the voting on resolution 2722 (2024), as we cannot associate ourselves with a text that ignores the 23,000 lives that have been lost over the past three months in Gaza.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.