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Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

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Thursday, 27 June 2024, 10.10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Hwang	(Republic of Korea)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Japan	Mrs. Shino
	Malta	Mr. Camilleri
	Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
	Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Sierra Leone	Mr. Sowa
	Slovenia	Ms. Jurečko
	Switzerland	Mrs. Chanda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2024/500, 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. 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, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:
None

Abstaining:
Algeria, China, Russian Federation

The President: The draft resolution received 12 votes in favour, none against and 3 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2739 (2024).

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

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the United States and Japan.

In January, the Security Council adopted resolution 2722 (2024), which underscored the importance of the exercise of navigational rights and freedoms of vessels of all States in the Red Sea and unequivocally demanded the Houthis immediately cease their attacks on merchant and commercial vessels. The Houthis have not heeded that resolution, and in recent weeks have launched additional complex attacks against vessels in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and surrounding waterways. These attacks threaten international peace and security, with negative implications for global commerce and the flows of humanitarian assistance.

In addition to extending the requirement for reporting by the Secretary-General under resolution 2722 (2024), today's resolution (resolution 2739 (2024)) reaffirms our condemnation of Houthi actions and reiterates the Council's demand that the Houthis cease these unacceptable and increasingly sophisticated attacks. Extending this reporting will help to ensure that the Security Council has accurate and timely information to inform its deliberations on how best to address Houthi actions going forward. The resolution also reaffirms the importance of all Member States adhering to the arms embargo under resolution 2216 (2015), including to deprive the Houthis of the weapons they need to carry out these attacks, and it calls on the Houthis to release the crew of the *MV Galaxy Leader*, who continue to be held against their will.

Attacks on any vessels in the Red Sea, regardless of origin or ownership, are entirely unacceptable. Arguing otherwise risks legitimizing clear violations of international law. We must continue to uphold the free flow of commerce in one of the world's most critical waterways, in accordance with international law. That was the charge before us when we adopted resolution 2722 (2024) in January, and the resolution before us today will help to reinforce those efforts. The threat to navigational rights and freedoms in the Red Sea is a global challenge and necessitates a global response. With this resolution, the Council will once again send a clear message to the Houthis: cease these attacks immediately.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): We thank the United States and Japan for presenting this resolution (resolution 2739 (2024)).

This resolution will ensure that the Security Council continues to receive regular reporting on the Houthi threats to shipping. The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms the illegal and unjustified attacks on maritime shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden by the Houthis. As a Council, through our adoption of this resolution, we have reiterated unequivocally that we condemn the Houthi attacks. These dangerous and reckless acts must end.

The United Kingdom is committed to ensuring freedom of navigation and trade in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on the resolution just adopted (resolution 2739 (2024)). I would like to explain China's voting position.

First, the Red Sea is an important transport corridor of goods and energy products. Since the end of last year, the Houthis have repeatedly attacked commercial ships in the Red Sea and nearby waters, disrupting the normal order of international trade and negatively affecting regional stability. China has on multiple occasions called on the Houthis to respect the right of commercial vessels from all countries to navigate in the Red Sea and international law, heed the call of the international community and comply with the requirements of Council resolutions by ceasing the attacks on civilian vessels and ensuring the safety of Red Sea shipping lanes.

Secondly, in January, when the Council adopted resolution 2722 (2024), China abstained in the voting. Our main concern was that the resolution's ambiguity on some key elements could have negative consequences and lead to a further escalation of regional tensions. We observe that, following the adoption of resolution 2722 (2024), certain countries have taken military action against Yemen, which has not only resulted in infrastructure damage and civilian casualties, but also heightened security risks in the Red Sea waters. The resolution just adopted is a technical extension of resolution 2722 (2024). Considering the continuity of China's position and the developments in the situation since the adoption of resolution 2722 (2024), we had to abstain in voting once again. We call on all the parties concerned to strictly abide by the Charter of the United Nations and avoid misinterpretation and misuse of international law and Council resolutions or the creation of new tensions in the Red Sea waters.

Thirdly, the current tensions in the Red Sea are one of the spillover manifestations of the Gaza conflict. An immediate and lasting ceasefire in Gaza would help to cool down situation in Yemen and the Red Sea. We call on the relevant countries to make efforts to that end sincerely and responsibly. China stands ready to continue to work with the Council and international community to promote an immediate and lasting ceasefire in Gaza, search for a political solution to the Yemen issue and work together for peace and stability in the Middle East.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation abstained in the voting on the resolution on the situation in the Red Sea prepared by our Japanese and American colleagues (resolution 2739 (2024)).

The technical nature of the text does not negate the fact that it is a logical continuation of the "original" Security Council resolution, resolution 2722 (2024), with respect to which we had serious questions. In general, we support the essence of the resolution, which is to ensure safe navigation in the waters close to Yemen, including the Red Sea. However, its practical implementation leaves much to be desired. The hastily drawn-up text contained many serious flaws from the standpoint of international law, including a number of provisions that some Western countries subsequently attempted to interpret in their own way to justify attacks on Yemen.

In this regard, we should like to emphasize once again that Security Council resolution 2722 (2024) cannot legitimize either the aggressive actions by the so-called "coalition" of the United States and its satellites in the Red Sea or their missile and bomb attacks on the territory of a sovereign country. We call on our American colleagues and other members of the "coalition" to immediately cease their illegal attacks and move to political and diplomatic methods of reducing the tensions in the waters adjacent to Yemen.

We should like to recall that normalization in the Red Sea is impossible without a stabilization of the situation in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict zone. The demands of the international community remain unchanged: an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages and detainees, and the restoration of full and unimpeded humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip. Without this, the resolution remains disconnected from reality, to put it mildly.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria): We abstained in the voting on the resolution adopted today (resolution 2739 (2024)), and our vote was consistent with our vote in January on resolution 2722 (2024).

My delegation's position to abstain on this resolution should not be interpreted as a reservation with respect to the Secretary-General's monthly reporting on any attacks on merchant and commercial vessels in the Red Sea. We continue to value the importance of such reporting in keeping the Council informed. Rather, our abstention reflects our concerns

about the implementation of resolution 2722 (2024) and what we believe is a misuse or a misinterpretation of the right to self-defence through attacks on territories of sovereign countries. We believe it is crucial to uphold international law and ensure that actions taken in the name of navigational rights and freedoms do not infringe upon the sovereignty of countries and States. Moreover, we stress the absolute necessity of fully addressing the root causes of the current tensions in the Red Sea and in the entire region.

We cannot ignore the clear link between the devastating situation in Gaza the escalation of hostilities in the Red Sea. Today again, we cannot stress enough the urgent need for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

In conclusion, we urge maximum restraint and a prioritization of diplomacy to prevent violence and ensure regional stability. A Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned peace process, based on agreed political settlement references, is essential for lasting regional peace.

Mr. Sowa (Sierra Leone): Sierra Leone wishes to thank the United States and Japan for their efforts in extending the reporting mandate of the Secretary-General on the Houthi attacks on merchants and commercial vessels in the Red Sea, in line with paragraph 10 of resolution 2722 (2024).

We are gravely concerned about the continued disruption of maritime activities and global trade by these attacks and additional costs shippers have to incur to re-route their vessels. We strongly believe that the root causes of these attacks have to be urgently addressed. However, we underscore the merits of the Council being credibly informed of these attacks for our continued engagement on this file. For these reasons, we have voted in favour of the resolution just adopted (resolution 2739 (2024)).

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): Guyana thanks the co-penholders for their efforts in preparing the resolution (resolution 2739 (2024)) and for the efforts made to engage Council members.

Guyana voted in favor of the resolution renewing the reporting mandate established under resolution 2722 (2024), since we support the desire to maintain accurate and objective reporting on the situation in the Red Sea, as attacks are still being carried out on commercial and merchant vessels. We take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the timely updates.

Guyana maintains that the Security Council has the responsibility to respond to threats to international peace and security and must pronounce itself in the face of violations of international law. We once again call upon the Houthis to immediately release the *MV Galaxy Leader* crew and to cease all attacks against commercial and merchant vessels in the Red Sea. At the same time, we continue to emphasize the need for the Council and the international community to address the root causes of the increased regional tensions, including the conflict in Gaza. In this regard, we reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and for the parties to the conflict to fully comply with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.