

**Security Council**

Distr.: General  
26 February 2020  
English  
Original: French

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**Letter dated 24 February 2020 from the Secretary-General  
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

In accordance with Security Council resolutions [1575 \(2004\)](#), [1639 \(2005\)](#), [1722 \(2006\)](#), [1785 \(2007\)](#), [1845 \(2008\)](#), [1895 \(2009\)](#), [1948 \(2010\)](#), [2019 \(2011\)](#), [2074 \(2012\)](#), [2123 \(2013\)](#), [2183 \(2014\)](#), [2247 \(2015\)](#), [2315 \(2016\)](#), [2384 \(2017\)](#), [2443 \(2018\)](#) and [2496 \(2019\)](#), I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 7 February 2020 from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell Fontelles, transmitting the forty-ninth report on the activities of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see annex). The report covers the period from 1 March to 31 August 2019.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* António **Guterres**



## Annex

[Original: English]

In accordance with Security Council resolution [1575 \(2004\)](#) and subsequent resolutions in which the Council requested that Member States acting through or in cooperation with the European Union report to the Council on the activities of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, please find enclosed the forty-ninth such report (see enclosure).

*(Signed)* Josep Borrell **Fontelles**

## Enclosure

### **Report of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the activities of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present report on the activities of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR-Althea) covers the period from 1 March to 31 August 2019.
2. The Security Council, in its resolutions [1575 \(2004\)](#), [1639 \(2005\)](#), [1722 \(2006\)](#), [1785 \(2007\)](#), [1845 \(2008\)](#), [1895 \(2009\)](#), [1948 \(2010\)](#), [2019 \(2011\)](#), [2074 \(2012\)](#), [2123 \(2013\)](#), [2183 \(2014\)](#), [2247 \(2015\)](#), [2315 \(2016\)](#), [2384 \(2017\)](#) and [2443 \(2018\)](#), requested that Member States acting through or in cooperation with the European Union report to the Council on the activities of EUFOR at six-monthly intervals. This is the forty-ninth such report.

## **II. Security situation**

3. The security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained calm and stable overall, and there was no immediate threat to the safe and secure environment during the reporting period. Stability, however, was not entrenched owing to several remaining internal and external factors of concern. The factors are potentially related to security and include persistent divisive rhetoric, political instability, radicalization, endemic socioeconomic weaknesses, risk of terrorism, returning foreign fighters, organized crime, irregular migration and external influences. During the reporting period, the risks of protracted political crisis were the main concern with regard to a safe and secure environment. Although the lengthy formation of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the general elections held in October 2018 increased the risk of tension, there was no indication of a threat to public order. While law enforcement agencies are technically capable of addressing threats to law and order and maintaining a safe and secure environment in their own areas of responsibility, they continue to be weakened by a lack of inter-agency and inter-entity coordination and cooperation.

## **III. 2019 strategic review of Operation Althea**

4. The 2019 strategic review of Operation Althea was presented to the States members of the European Union on 25 June 2019. On the basis of its recommendations, the European Union member States agreed to do the following in the next two years:

- To fully implement and consolidate Operation Althea's refocusing on its core mandate of supporting the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in maintaining a safe and secure environment
- To include more European Gendarmerie Force personnel in EUFOR because they are better placed to liaise with the law enforcement agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina that are responsible for maintaining a safe and secure environment
- To review the liaison and observation team concept with the aim of increasing the teams' effectiveness and efficiency

- To continue to maintain the EUFOR task of observing, monitoring and inspecting the disposal of Bosnia and Herzegovina-owned ammunition, weapons and explosives surpluses
- To continue the EUFOR task of monitoring Bosnia and Herzegovina-owned humanitarian demining
- To continue the collective training of the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- To conduct the next strategic review of Operation Althea, in mid-2021

#### **IV. Activities of the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

5. During the reporting period, EUFOR continued the process of refocusing on its core task.

6. EUFOR continued the collective training of the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, supporting the development of those forces. Notwithstanding the support and advice, however, the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to be slow in fulfilling their responsibilities with regard to demining and, to a certain extent, disposing of ammunition, weapons and explosives surpluses. It remains a major challenge for Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a mine-free country by 2025, a goal that Bosnia and Herzegovina committed itself to achieving in the recently adopted Bosnia and Herzegovina mine action strategy. In the area of ammunition, weapons and explosives surplus disposal, the original target of Bosnia and Herzegovina of holding less than 10,000 tons of ammunition by the end of 2019 was assessed as unrealistic. On a more positive note, the 2019 targets for the disposal of small arms and light weapons, as well as for their marking and registration, are likely to be reached.

#### **V. Outlook**

7. Operation Althea continues to adapt and evolve in view of the fact that stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not entrenched owing to several remaining internal and external factors of concern. In the period ahead, EUFOR will continue to implement the outcomes of the 2017 and 2019 strategic reviews, namely, fully implementing and consolidating its refocusing on its core mandate, that of supporting authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in maintaining a safe and secure environment. EUFOR tasks will remain under regular review by the Council of the European Union.

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