



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council meeting on the Report of the Secretary-General
on the activities of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel
14 July 2026**

Greece's Statement delivered
by H.E. Ambassador Aglaia Balta
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

Merci, Monsieur le Président, d'avoir convoqué cette réunion.

Je tiens à remercier le Représentant Spécial Leonardo Santos Simão pour son exposé très détaillé et à saluer l'UNOWAS pour son travail inlassable dans un contexte régional particulièrement difficile.

[Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I would like to thank the Special Representative Leonardo Santos Simão for his comprehensive briefing and commend UNOWAS for its tireless work in a particularly challenging regional environment.]

Mr. President, allow me to highlight three points:

First, the security situation remains deeply concerning.

The coordinated terrorist attacks in Mali last April marked a dangerous escalation, while continued attacks by JNIM, ISGS and Boko Haram across Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Benin reflect the growing operational capabilities of terrorist groups across the region.

The attempted coup in Benin last December further underscored the fragility of the regional security environment.

No country can confront these threats alone.

Greece therefore welcomes the renewed momentum towards dialogue between ECOWAS & the Confederation of Sahel States, and the appointment of Mr. Lansana Kouyaté as Chief Negotiator.

We also commend the progress towards operationalizing regional counter-terrorism arrangements, including the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Force, as well as ECOWAS' decision to provide financial support to coastal States facing increasing terrorist spillover.

We fully endorse the communiqué adopted by the ECOWAS Authority last December, calling for renewed security cooperation with the Central Sahel and continued implementation of Security Council Resolution 2719, as a key framework for predictable and sustainable support to African Union-led peace support operations.

Strengthened maritime security cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea, including through the Yaoundé Architecture, should complement these efforts, as security in the Central Sahel and the coastal States is increasingly interconnected.

Second, on the political front.

Greece welcomes the peaceful conclusion of the electoral processes in Benin and Cabo Verde. We particularly commend Cabo Verde for the election of the first woman to lead its Parliament, an important milestone for inclusive governance. We also encourage continued preparations for the upcoming elections in Nigeria and The Gambia.

Across the region, political transitions should remain anchored in transparent, inclusive and peaceful electoral processes, conducted in accordance with agreed timelines and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

This remains particularly important in countries undergoing political transitions, including Guinea-Bissau, where dialogue and broad national ownership will be essential for restoring constitutional order and lasting stability.

My third point is on human rights, humanitarian assistance and climate resilience.

Greece remains deeply concerned by the disproportionate impact of conflict on children, including attacks on schools, abductions and recruitment and use of children by armed groups, and reiterates the importance of ensuring their protection and safe access to education.

We remain equally concerned that women continue to face insecurity, sexual and gender-based violence and barriers to political participation. While we welcome regional efforts to strengthen women's leadership, including ECOWAS' commitment to increase women's representation in elected bodies to 50% by 2035, much more remains to be done.

Addressing these challenges also requires adequate humanitarian support. Yet, the Secretary-General reports that only 14% of the funding required for the 2026 humanitarian response has been received by the end of April. Bridging this funding gap is essential to assist the millions affected by conflict, displacement and food insecurity.

At the same time, greater investment in climate resilience is essential to addressing the underlying drivers of instability that compound existing security and humanitarian challenges.

In closing, Mr. President,

Greece remains committed to supporting the region through effective multilateralism and close partnership with the United Nations, the African Union, ECOWAS and all regional stakeholders, firmly grounded in African-ownership and African-led solutions, in pursuit of lasting peace, security and sustainable development.

I thank you.