



# Security Council

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## Situation in South Sudan

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2625 \(2022\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to 15 March 2023 and requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the Mission's mandate every 90 days. The report covers political and security developments, the humanitarian and human rights situation and progress towards the implementation of the Mission's mandate since the previous report, dated 25 February 2022 ([S/2022/156](#)).

#### II. Major political developments

2. During the period under review, the formation of the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly was completed. On 28 March, the leader of the National Alliance of Political Parties, Kornelio Kon Ngu, was sworn in as the Third Deputy Speaker of the parliament, representing the Other Political Parties. On 13 April, the Speaker of the parliament, Jemma Nunu Kumba, named the heads of specialized committees from the Other Political Parties and the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA).

3. On 28 March, the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ruben Madol Arol, tabled the security bills and the Political Parties Act. The bills were referred to the relevant specialized committees for deliberations. The constitution-making process bill was tabled on 11 April.

4. On 22 March, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) suspended its participation in the meetings of the security mechanisms, the National Transitional Committee and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. SPLM/A-IO explained its withdrawal by citing attacks against its positions in Unity and Upper Nile, government-induced defections, and a lack of progress in implementing the transitional security arrangements.

5. On 25 March, the President, Salva Kiir Mayardit, issued a decree assigning three command positions in the necessary unified forces to SPLM/A-IO and one each in the South Sudan National Police Service to SPLM/A-IO and SSOA. SPLM/A-IO rejected the decree as a unilateral decision taken without consultation that did not conform with the ratio under consideration for the necessary unified forces.



6. On 26 March, SPLM/A-IO requested the guarantors of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan to intervene over the deteriorating security in the country. On 27 March, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces deployed armed forces and surrounded the residence of the First Vice-President, Riek Machar. The security deployment, which, the Government explained, had been intended to protect Mr. Machar, was withdrawn on 28 March. Mr. Machar issued a statement deplored the security operation, but reaffirmed his commitment to the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.

7. On 28 March, the President directed the National Security Service to declassify and release to the public a report about the origins of the conflicts in 2013 and 2016, which attributes their root causes to attempted coups. In the report, the findings of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan, led by the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, in 2014, are characterized as inaccurate.

8. On 5 April, the President officially launched public consultations for the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing. He emphasized that South Sudan needed reconciliation before pursuing punitive justice and called for inclusive consultations towards a genuine reconciliation. The First Vice-President urged the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to establish the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and the Compensation and Reparation Authority concurrently. In early May, technical committees began to hold public consultations on the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing in the states.

### **Transitional security arrangements**

9. On 3 April, the Government, SPLM/A-IO and SSOA signed an agreement on the implementation of the transitional security arrangements. This followed a series of meetings with the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council of the Sudan, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and his deputy, Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. The parties agreed on the following: the opposition parties would identify personnel for the command structure of the necessary unified forces, which would graduate within two months; SPLM/A-IO would continue to participate in the Revitalized Agreement mechanisms; the parties would adhere to the cessation of hostilities agreement; no party would encourage and facilitate defections; the parties would cease to engage in negative media campaigns; and efforts would be undertaken to build trust between the President and the Vice-Presidents. Following the signing of the agreement, SPLM/A-IO resumed its participation in the meetings. On 8 and 11 April, SPLM/A-IO and SSOA submitted their nominations for the command structure of the necessary unified forces.

10. On 12 and 13 April, the President issued decrees forming the command structure of the necessary unified forces and appointed 32 military personnel, all men. On 13 April, SPLM/A-IO formally complained about some omissions and appointments that it claimed were not in conformity with the agreement of 3 April, which it described as violations.

### **Other political developments**

11. On 15 March, SPLM/A-IO published a position paper addressed to the Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), suggesting that the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement should be fast-tracked, failing which the parties, stakeholders and guarantors must deliberate and decide on the future of the peace process.

12. On the same day, the Interim Chairperson of SSOA and Minister of Agriculture, Josephine Lagu, stated that it would be premature to hold elections in 2023, unless

key benchmarks were met. On 25 April, the acting Secretary-General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), Peter Lam Both, began a series of visits to the states to prepare and mobilize local SPLM party structures for elections in 2023.

13. On 22 March, the SPLM/A-IO Political Bureau reconstituted the leadership of its National Liberation Council. Twenty-eight national committees were also reconstituted, with women occupying 25 per cent of the positions. On 28 March, the SPLM/A-IO Chair, the First Vice-President, Mr. Machar, appointed Nathaniel Oyet Pierino, the First Deputy Speaker of the parliament, as his deputy. The position had remained vacant since August 2021.

14. On 24 March, the Interim Chairperson of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, Major General Charles Tai Gituai, expressed concern about the pace of implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, given the short time left in the transition period. He urged the Transitional National Legislative Assembly to commit to passing the critical pending legislation.

### **Economic situation**

15. The macroeconomic situation remained relatively stable, with the gross domestic product expected to grow by 1.2 per cent in 2022, according to the World Bank. The South Sudanese pound, which in early 2022 had appreciated relative to 2021 thanks to the monetary and exchange-rate policy reforms implemented, slowly depreciated again in June 2022. Given the country's dependence on revenues from oil exports and that almost everything else is imported, it is likely that such currency depreciation will aggravate the negative effects of the rise in global commodity prices – particularly food prices. The national budget for 2021/22 was approved on 17 March after a nine-month delay, with the allocated amount 9.7 per cent higher than initially tabled in parliament owing to an increase in international oil prices. Structural weaknesses in the public financial system remain, particularly regarding the transparency and accountability of oil revenue.

## **III. Security situation**

16. The security context in South Sudan continued to be defined by tensions and violence driven by clashes between government forces, opposition-aligned forces and other non-signatory armed groups, competition over land and other resources, as well as grazing rights, and economic and climate-related livelihood pressures.

### **Greater Upper Nile region**

17. Upper Nile State saw an uptick in fighting between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLM/A-IO forces in Maiwut County. The clashes, which occurred on 6, 19 and 20 March and on 11 and 12 April, were concentrated in SPLM/A-IO-controlled areas, including Jikou, from where SPLM/A-IO was dislodged. Fighting spread north-east to the SPLM/A-IO-controlled area of Longochuk. Several rounds of clashes also erupted between Takala militia (armed youth from Maban County, reportedly aligned with the South Sudan People's Defence Forces) and SPLM/A-IO at Tukchacha fishing ground, Dangaji Bridge and the Liang cantonment site, which led to the capturing of the SPLM/A-IO Liang cantonment site.

18. The situation in Unity State was dominated by spates of attacks in Leer County by armed youth from Koch and Mayendit Counties. Some civilians were killed and others fell victim to attacks, the burning of villages, looting, and sexual and gender-based violence. Seasonal migration and extreme climate events, such as floods, also precipitated insecurity, driven by a scarcity of resources, as witnessed in Panakuac,

where, on 6 March, 18 Misseriya pastoralists migrating southward were killed during a clash with Nuer cattle keepers moving northward from flooded areas in Rubkona to find grazing land.

19. Several cattle raids and attacks were reported in the greater Jonglei area, attributed to the Murle against Lou Nuer, Gawaar Nuer, Jie, Toposa and Dinka communities. Amid reports of mobilization by various communities to attack the Murle, UNMISS conducted key leadership engagements in Jonglei State, the Greater Pibor Administrative Area and Juba. UNMISS facilitated the visit of a delegation of influential Juba-based Dinka Bor leaders to Gadiang in Jonglei State from 25 to 28 March. On 6 April, UNMISS also supported a team led by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs to Duk Padiet and Bor. From 30 March to 1 April, UNMISS joined three ministers and two parliamentarians representing SPLM and SPLM/A-IO on a visit to Lankien, Nyerol County to engage with the Lou Nuer to prevent mobilization. After reports of tensions between the Murle, Jie and Toposa communities along the borders between the Greater Pibor Administrative Area and Eastern Equatoria, UNMISS supported the Chief Administrator of the Greater Pibor Administrative Area in carrying out engagements in Marwo hills in support of the peace agreements signed in 2019.

### **Greater Equatoria region**

20. Reports of continuing violence involving Dinka Bor cattle herders and host communities were received from Magwi County of Eastern Equatoria State. On 21 March, youth from Eastern Equatoria State attacked a cattle camp near South Sudan People's Defence Forces barracks in Magwi, killing eight soldiers, including a colonel, and looting their cattle. Following these developments, many Dinka Bor herders moved to Central Equatoria State, causing further violence and displacement of civilians. In response, UNMISS engaged with Dinka Bor leaders in Juba and Jonglei and senior government officials in Central Equatoria and Eastern Equatoria States to address the situation. Subsequently, a team of five Dinka Bor chiefs from Bor County, Jonglei, assisted by the state authorities, visited 16 cattle camps to persuade the cattle keepers to return to Jonglei, in accordance with the presidential decrees issued in 2015 and 2017, ordering the cattle keepers to return to their place of origin. On 19 April, UNMISS, together with the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and a representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees visited Magwi County to reassure the host community, mostly returnees from Uganda, and to promote intercommunal reconciliation and facilitate the return of the Dinka Bor cattle herders to their places of origin.

21. On 11 and 12 May, a group of armed youth from the Madi community attacked Dinka Bor cattle herders in Magwi County, killing 20 Dinka civilians, including women and children. In retaliation, on 12 May, armed Dinka youth stormed Nimule market and town, beat civilians and looted properties. Two police officers who had been deployed to respond to the situation were killed. The violence spilled over to Olekwi, Nimule. The South Sudan People's Defence Forces were deployed from Juba to Nimule.

22. There was a notable increase in reported National Salvation Front (NAS) activities in the greater Mundri area, Western Equatoria. NAS attacked South Sudan People's Defence Forces barracks at Gulu on the Mundri West-Mvolo road on 19 March, and ambushed two South Sudan People's Defence Forces vehicles on 21 March. These clashes were often compounded by abductions, arbitrary arrests and the beating of civilians attributed to both NAS and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces.

### **Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region**

23. An uptick in isolated intercommunal violence cases was reported from some hotspot areas in the region. Cattle-related incidents, land disputes and competition over natural resources were the main drivers. Despite a notable reduction in intra-Dinka Rek violence in the greater Tonj area, on 14 April, violence erupted in Akop *payam* of Tonj North County in Warrap State between the Apuk Padoc host community and the flood-displaced Nuer community from Mayom County of Unity State. The ensuing fight left 26 people dead (19 Nuer and 7 Apuk Padoc) and 12 others injured, including one woman. An integrated team from the UNMISS temporary operating base in Marial Lou visited the area on 18 April to engage with the communities and local authorities. On the same day, the Commissioner of Tonj North County, along with the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, reached the area to address the situation and assist the victims.

24. Tensions also persisted between the Dinka Ngok from the Abyei Administrative Area and the Dinka Twic from Twic County of Warrap State over the ownership of the Aneet area. Some of the violence was a spillover from Abyei. A series of consultations in Abyei Administrative Area and Warrap by a high-level fact-finding committee, appointed by the President in February and led by the Vice-President for the Services Cluster, Hussein Abdelbagi Akol, culminated in the signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement on 4 April between the Twic chiefs and the Ngok chiefs in Aweil town, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal. Despite this agreement, tensions resurged in early May. The estimated total casualties for the two communities between March and May were 32 killed and 14 injured.

25. Tensions persisted along the Aweil East border area following clashes between Misseriya herders and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces on 7 March and 25 March, resulting in the killing of six Misseriya herders and five South Sudan People's Defence Forces officers.

## **IV. Humanitarian situation**

26. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis released in April, food insecurity is expected to increase by 7 per cent across South Sudan, compared with 2021. Climatic shocks, including floods and droughts, conflict, economic downturn, displacement and disrupted livelihoods are driving the worsening trend. Between April and July 2022, an estimated 7.74 million people across the country will face being classified as in "crisis" (phase 3). The nutrition outlook in the country is alarming: admission to nutrition programmes for acute malnutrition increased by 36 per cent in the first quarter of 2022 as compared with the same period in 2020 and 2021. Over one third of counties have global acute malnutrition prevalence above the emergency 15 per cent threshold, and over 2 million children, pregnant women and lactating mothers are expected to suffer acute malnutrition, requiring life-saving treatment for survival. The most affected states are Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Unity, Upper Nile and Warrap, accounting for more than 80 per cent of the entire food-insecure population. Concomitantly, funding constraints on United Nations humanitarian agencies have resulted in a drop in the provision of food distributions and the number of people targeted.

27. In March, in Eastern Equatoria, attacks by armed cattle keepers displaced an estimated 19,350 people in Magwi County. Armed attacks by cattle keepers in several locations in Juba County, Central Equatoria, displaced 3,000 households in Langabur, Liryia *payam* and some 7,000 people in Gumbo. Conflict between armed factions in Maiwut County in Upper Nile displaced some 14,000 people to Ethiopia in March. Measles outbreaks have been reported in Tambura County, Western Equatoria.

28. In Leer County, an estimated 25,000 persons have been reported displaced into at least 11 displacement sites. The displaced people, predominantly women and children, are in dire need of humanitarian assistance, including food, health care, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene services. The stock of humanitarian supplies in the region is low, partly owing to the recent looting of humanitarian warehouses and the destruction of health and nutrition facilities in Mirmir, Koch County, Unity.

29. Intercommunal tensions in the Abyei Administrative Area led to an estimated 100,000 people leaving the area. An estimated 41,200 people were displaced into Twic and Gogrial West Counties in Warrap across 21 displacement sites.

30. On 31 March, the humanitarian community launched the South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan for 2022. An estimated 8.9 million people – more than two thirds of the South Sudanese people, including 2 million women, have significant humanitarian needs. Humanitarian organizations plan to target 6.8 million of those in need with humanitarian assistance and protection services. Over 2 million people have been displaced in South Sudan, some of them for years. In March alone, an additional 61,010 individuals, including 33,304 children (54 per cent female), were newly displaced, a majority owing to violence.

31. In parts of the country, such as Bentiu and Rubkona town, flood waters have not receded, resulting in a dire situation for the population. With the onset of the rainy season, heavy rains have the potential to displace an estimated 300,000 civilians in just these two towns. The Humanitarian Coordinator has set up a humanitarian response team in Bentiu to prepare for potential flooding and ensure adequate levels of humanitarian operational readiness. In addition, the UNMISS force is working to ensure that the berms and dykes constructed to mitigate the impact of floods are not compromised by providing engineering support.

32. Between 1 February and 31 May, 143 incidents related to humanitarian access constraints were reported, of which 74 involved violence against humanitarian personnel and assets. During that period, 4 humanitarian workers were killed and 133 humanitarian staff were relocated. These relocations were caused by national and subnational violence between armed actors. Incidents of looting and theft of humanitarian assets were reported. In March, there were three incidents in which nutritional items destined for malnourished children were looted. The lack of a conducive environment for humanitarian workers and the continued violence targeting humanitarians and their assets had a significant impact on the vital life-saving humanitarian support.

33. On 28 April, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management issued a ministerial order requiring the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to provide additional documents, including academic certificates authenticated by the Ministry of Higher Education. This resulted in the impediment of critical operations.

## V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks

### A. Supporting the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and the peace process

34. Amid implementation delays and heightened tensions between the parties, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS, the IGAD Special Envoy to South Sudan, the head of the African Union Mission in South Sudan and the Interim Chairperson of the reconstituted Joint

Monitoring and Evaluation Commission jointly undertook extensive good offices engagements with the President and the Vice-Presidents to encourage rapprochement and mitigate tensions.

35. On 30 and 31 March, the delegation met the President, Mr. Kiir, the First Vice-President, Mr. Machar, and the Vice-Presidents, Rebecca Garang, Wani Igga and Taban Deng Gai, to discuss the peace process and political and security concerns. Subsequently, on 1 April, UNMISS, the African Union, IGAD and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission issued a joint statement expressing concern over the surge in intercommunal violence, appealing for calm and urging the parties to refocus on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. Noting the limited time remaining in the transitional period, they called upon the parties to develop a road map on the way forward to address outstanding issues in preparation for elections.

36. As a follow-up to the decision of 25 January of the African Union Peace and Security Council, the trilateral African Union-IGAD-United Nations evaluation process was carried out from 21 to 26 March to ascertain the electoral and constitution-making needs of South Sudan. The evaluation was intended to complement the United Nations electoral needs assessment mission conducted in 2021, with an emphasis on the constitution-making process. This should enable the stakeholders to prepare a joint support framework in preparation for a possible request for support by the Government of South Sudan.

37. On 10 and 11 March, UNMISS and the African-European Parliamentary Initiative facilitated a workshop for the Assembly Business Committee of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly to validate the strategic plan of the legislature for the period 2021–2023. The workshop was attended by over 35 participants, including seven women, comprising members of the specialized standing committees, speakers and other senior personnel who constitute the Assembly Business Committee. The strategic plan outlines seven strategic objectives to strengthen the efficiency of the law-making capacity and ensure that the legislature delivers on its mandate through a fair, transparent, responsive, effective and gender-sensitive approach. On 11 March, Ms. Kumba signed the strategic plan.

38. On 22 March, UNMISS and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission supported the sixth workshop of the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board, chaired by the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, to complete the revised defence policy. The workshop was interrupted because of the withdrawal of SPLM/A-IO from the security mechanisms, including the Review Board, the same day. Once finalized, the document will identify the specific roles of the national army, the National Security Service and other organized forces, outlining a vision for their modernization.

39. On 7 April, UNMISS facilitated a meeting of the drafting group of the Joint Technical Working Group on Community Violence Reduction that resulted in consensus on the way forward regarding the pilot project design. The group is led by the South Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and is composed of representatives from the international diplomatic community, including the African diplomatic corps, as well as UNMISS, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. UNMISS also initiated support for an assessment of ex-combatants and communities of return to inform the design of the pilot project.

40. On 12 May, UNMISS led a delegation of the African Union, IGAD, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and the African diplomatic corps to Leer and Mirmir Counties of Unity State to meet with local authorities and communities. The purpose of the high-level visit was to draw attention

to cessation of hostilities violations as reported by the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism and to put pressure on the national and local authorities to uphold their primary responsibility to protect civilians.

## B. Protection of civilians and mitigating intercommunal conflict

41. UNMISS continued to provide physical protection to 34,390 persons (17,682 women) in the Malakal protection of civilians site. The Mission responded to threats through patrols and engagement with community leaders, which ensured the security and protection of the civilians in the camp.

42. UNMISS continued its support for the former protection of civilians sites and in hotspots through integrated planning, advocacy and rapid responses. The Mission continued to respond to protection priorities in line with its temporary operating base strategy, which enables sustained engagement with local populations and provides a protective umbrella to humanitarian partners through an extended presence. This strategy generates a greater security and assurance effect than routine patrolling in remote locations, often with prevailing insecurity.

43. The Mission conducted numerous short-duration patrols and long-duration patrols of up to four days for security and deterrence, or to support the needs and objectives of other Mission pillars and humanitarian partners. As at 26 May, the UNMISS force had conducted a total of 78 long-duration patrols, 1,508 short-duration patrols, 72 dynamic air patrols and 20 riverine patrols. Around 2,310 patrols had been conducted in and around the protection of civilians sites. Around 8 per cent of patrols included women uniformed peacekeepers. The inclusion of women peacekeepers in patrolling expands the access of the force to the most vulnerable in the local population.

44. In addition, as at 26 May, the United Nations police had completed a total of 2,425 patrols. Of these, 1,031 confidence- and trust-building patrols, 88 short-duration patrols, 36 long-duration patrols, 19 dynamic air patrols and 1,251 high-visibility patrols had been conducted, through which the United Nations police had projected a robust presence. Women officers participated in 1,058 patrols. The patrols resulted in improved delivery of humanitarian services, as well as increased protection for internally displaced people. The patrols fostered a secure environment, deterred violence against civilians and enhanced crime prevention. The expansion of the United Nations police operational footprint outside the protection of civilians site in Malakal and other redesignated sites enabled the effective targeting of sexual and gender-based violence and crime hotspots. More effective monitoring and reporting of human rights violations, as well as support to the Mission's information-gathering, situational awareness, early warning and response, was further enabled through operational co-locations to advise, mentor and monitor South Sudan National Police Service on site.

45. To promote inclusive dialogue, peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and social cohesion at the subnational level, UNMISS conducted 25 workshops, forums, community dialogues, capacity-building programmes and activities related to the protection of civilians for state and local authorities, communities, traditional leaders, women and youth. A total of 1,474 participants (331 women) were reached through these activities.

46. From 1 March to 31 May, UNMISS, in partnership with UNDP, the Local Government Board and the Ministry of Peacebuilding organized seven forums in Lakes, Western Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Upper Nile, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States to strengthen the role of

traditional authorities in promoting peace and stability, and the resolution of intercommunal violence. Participants discussed roles, strengths and challenges faced by the traditional authorities.

47. On 2 and 3 March, UNMISS facilitated a three-day conference in Morobo County, Central Equatoria, to strengthen the leadership structure of the County Youth Association, with 60 participants (12 women) drawn from all the *payams*. The Association elected their office bearers and drafted a two-year plan to promote effective and meaningful participation of youth in peacebuilding, conflict management, reconciliation and the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.

48. On 3 March, UNMISS organized an inter-clan peace dialogue in Akobo County, Jonglei. The six Nuer clans comprising 90 participants (20 women) agreed to resolve their differences peacefully, including through the sharing of natural resources.

49. From 5 to 7 April, UNMISS facilitated an inter-county peace forum comprising 70 participants (19 women) in Malakal, Upper Nile, featuring representation from Akoka, Baliet, Fashoda, Makal and Panyikang Counties, including state and county authorities, heads of independent commissions, members of the State Legislative Assembly and traditional and religious leaders. They expressed their commitment to promote social cohesion and reconciliation, and peaceful coexistence among the five counties and beyond, through inclusive dialogue.

50. UNMISS also facilitated the participation of 31 Juba-based influential community leaders and government officials (five women) in the greater Tonj peace conference organized in Tonj, Warrap State, from 5 to 9 April. The conference supported by the state government drew the participation of 400 delegates (100 women) and was aimed at addressing the peace and security challenges in the state. The participants signed resolutions outlining immediate, medium-term and long-term actions to sustain peace in the area.

51. From 12 to 14 April, UNMISS, in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, organized a forum for *payam* administrators, traditional chiefs and community leaders from Mayom County, Unity State, to enhance their understanding about roles and responsibilities in accordance with the Local Government Act of 2009. Meanwhile, in the wake of renewed violence in southern Unity, UNMISS conducted five focus group discussions on 28 April and 6 May with the affected communities to explore opportunities for a peace dialogue.

52. From 11 to 13 April, the United Nations police organized a workshop in Gumbo for 30 police community relations committee executive members (10 women) and members of the community to promote information-sharing on root causes of insecurity and early warning signals to prevent violence against civilians and ensure community safety and security. To strengthen community-based initiatives, the United Nations police conducted a three-day workshop for 30 police community relations committee members (15 national police officers, including two women, and 15 community members, including one woman) on sexual and gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence, community-oriented policing and human rights. Between March and April, five workshops on human rights and sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence targeting 147 South Sudan National Police Service officers (118 women) were conducted. From 29 to 31 March, the United Nations police organized a 10-day training of trainers in Wau on sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence for 15 local trainers (six women).

53. The Mine Action Service helped to enable humanitarian, development and peace initiatives, and supported the Mission through protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian assistance, and supporting the peace process. Activities included

119 explosive ordnance disposal tasks in communities across the country, which prevented injury and loss of life and enabled access to three schools, 23 agricultural areas, one hospital and six natural water sources. The Mine Action Service also conducted route assessment and clearance of 320 km of routes critical to ensuring freedom of movement for UNMISS, humanitarian actors and communities, which included 124 km of the Pibor-Akobo main supply route prioritized by UNMISS for rehabilitation in 2021/22. From March to April, the Service participated in eight UNMISS patrols in Unity, Upper Nile and Western Bahr el-Ghazal, to enhance Mission mobility, as well as provided explosive ordnance risk education to approximately 53,664 beneficiaries (7,432 men, 10,482 women, 18,647 boys and 16,103 girls) composed of internally displaced persons, returnees and refugees.

### C. Rule of law and accountability

54. To facilitate the creation of a protective environment for civilians, UNMISS continued to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to rule of law and justice actors at the national and subnational levels.

55. Between 7 and 25 March, UNMISS supported the South Sudan People's Defence Forces to deploy a General Court Martial, composed of eight military justice officials (seven men and one woman) to Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal. The Wau General Court Martial convicted nine persons of murder and acquitted two persons, including one woman. UNMISS also supported the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in undertaking assessment missions to identify and investigate cases for upcoming general court martials.

56. UNMISS continued to advance the programming of the South Sudan reconciliation, stabilization and resilience multi-partner trust fund to mitigate livestock-related violence in the border areas of Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Warrap. UNMISS provided logistical and technical assistance for the second deployment of the joint special mobile court, which began its work on 24 January and concluded on 11 March. During this time, the court adjudicated a total of 18 cases involving 22 individuals (one woman).

57. To enable increased coordination among rule of law actors to identify and reduce prolonged and arbitrary detention, UNMISS provided support to improve the records management capacity of the National Prison Service of South Sudan, including through the printing and distribution of key forms, such as admission and release registers and prisoner history sheets, to prisons throughout South Sudan. To complement this material support, in March, UNMISS organized trainings on records management for 50 National Prison Service of South Sudan officials (nine women) in Aweil and Kuajok.

58. To advance the legislative reform foreseen in the Revitalized Agreement, on 17–18 March, UNMISS supported the Law Review Commission to organize a consultative workshop to discuss its strategic plan for 2022–2026. The plan outlines the policy priorities and strategic objectives through which the Law Review Commission can discharge its statutory functions. The 40 participants (10 women) in the consultative workshop included senior practising lawyers, academics and representatives of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and independent commissions.

## **D. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance**

59. The UNMISS force established 14 temporary operating bases in support of humanitarian assistance in Aru Junction, Jemam, Kajo Keji, Lokiliri, Lokumarch, Lol, Madebe, Nesitu (Aru Junction), Nagdiar Bridge, Nangala, Terekeka, Tonj and Yirol, and maintained two protracted bases at Koch and Tambura. Fifteen United Nations police officers were deployed to temporary operating bases in high-risk locations for the protection of civilians and the creation of conducive conditions for humanitarian assistance, as well as to facilitate local conflict settlement.

60. In coordination with humanitarian partners, UNMISS conducted patrols to protect humanitarian workers and support the delivery of assistance to conflict-affected civilians in Tambura in Western Equatoria and in Pibor, Ayod and Baidit in Jonglei, and to resolve humanitarian access restrictions in Western Bahr el-Ghazal, including harassment of humanitarian personnel at various checkpoints. The UNMISS force conducted 75 such patrols at the request of humanitarian actors. UNMISS also stepped up night patrols in Leer County as a measure to deter increased incidents of sexual and gender-based violence.

## **E. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations**

61. The human rights situation in South Sudan remained concerning, as significant human rights incidents continued to be reported and documented. The Mission is currently investigating reported human rights violations in southern Unity.

62. UNMISS documented 159 incidents that had a negative impact on the human rights and protection situation, including arbitrary killings, extrajudicial executions, abductions, sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention/proxy detention, torture, and ill-treatment, forced military recruitment, looting and destruction of civilian property, resulting in 696 civilian casualties (434 killings, 131 injuries, 109 cases of sexual violence and 22 abductions), including 167 women and 59 children. Of these incidents, 617 cases (including 175 killings, 11 injuries and 72 cases of sexual violence) from the April spate of attacks in Leer, Unity, were attributed to community-based militias and armed elements, as well as to government-allied forces: 38 to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the National Security Service and the South Sudan National Police Service; 2 to SPLM/A-IO; 13 to NAS; and 15 to other armed groups. Attribution remained under verification for the 22 remaining incidents involving 48 victims, including five women and 10 children.

63. On 10 May, UNMISS published its brief on the human rights situation in South Sudan for the first quarter of 2022, with 173 incidents documented and verified, involving 754 civilians, including 101 women and 86 children, subjected to the four major forms of harm: killing, injury, abduction and sexual violence. In comparison with the same period in 2021, there was a 32 per cent decrease in the number of incidents, a 2 per cent decrease in the number of victims and a 36 per cent decline in killings. However, a 45 per cent increase in cases of injury, 34 per cent increase in abductions and a 125 per cent increase in victims of sexual violence was noted. Intercommunal violence accounted for 64 per cent (484) of civilian casualties.

64. UNMISS continued to monitor infringement of freedom of expression and freedom of association, assembly, and participation by the National Security Service. On 2 March, unidentified armed individuals abducted a journalist in Juba, transferred him to an undisclosed location, interrogated and forced him to confess his affiliation to the People's Coalition for Civil Action and NAS. On 15 March, the National Security Service censored the publication of articles by one prominent media house

and demanded a public apology for misquoting the Minister of Information as a condition to allow it to operate. Freedom of expression remains a critical aspect for creating an environment conducive to elections.

65. UNMISS conducted 47 capacity-building and sensitization activities for 1,490 persons (587 women). Participants included the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the South Sudan National Police Service, the National Prison Service of South Sudan, government officials, students, traditional leaders, the South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network, the South Sudan Human Rights Commission, people living with disabilities, community watch group members and representatives of women's associations and youth groups.

66. From 20 to 22 April, UNMISS conducted training on international human rights law for the Technical Committee instituted to spearhead the consultations and establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing at the state and local levels.

### **Children and armed conflict**

67. One hundred and thirty-two grave violations against 117 children (56 boys, 61 girls) were verified, including 13 children who suffered multiple violations. A total of 24 children (23 boys, 1 girl) were recruited and used, 34 children (30 boys, 4 girls) were killed (27) and maimed (7), 53 girls were raped, and 6 children (3 boys, 3 girls) were abducted. The violations were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (22 boys, 53 girls), SPLM/A-IO (13 boys), SPLM/A-IO Kitgwang faction (3 boys, 5 girls), forces loyal to General James Nando (6 boys, 1 girl), SSOA (2 boys), NAS (2 boys, 1 girl) and the South Sudan National Police Service (1 boy). Eight violations remained unattributed as they resulted from crossfire between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLM/A-IO (1 girl) and explosive remnants of war (7 boys).

68. These grave violations were verified in Unity (98), Western Equatoria (23), Jonglei (4), Central Equatoria (3), Upper Nile (2) and Eastern Equatoria (2).

69. Following sustained engagement by the country task force on monitoring and reporting with General James Nando and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, 11 boys aged between 15 and 17 years associated with forces loyal to Nando were released from Maridi Training Centre in Western Equatoria on 2 March. In addition, 11 other advocacy meetings were held with parties to the conflict to advocate for the greater protection of children.

70. From 24 to 26 May, UNMISS supported the Government in holding a national conference on the protection of children in armed conflict, with the participation of 150 stakeholders (60 women). The participants recommended that the Government increase budgetary allocations for child protection and hold perpetrators of child rights violations accountable. Before participating in the conference, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict engaged with the Presidency and the Council of Ministers to discuss the implementation of the Comprehensive Action Plan to End and Prevent All Grave Violations against Children.

71. In support of the implementation of the Comprehensive Action Plan, UNMISS delivered two child protection capacity-building trainings for 72 members of the government security forces, including six women. In addition, UNMISS supported the verification exercise for the necessary unified forces, resulting in the identification of children associated with government forces and groups.

72. UNMISS delivered 30 child protection awareness-raising sessions to 992 participants (368 women), including 455 members of the government forces (148

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women), 474 community members (210 women) and 63 government officials (10 women).

#### **Conflict-related sexual violence**

73. UNMISS verified a total of 19 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence. Of these 19 incidents, 9 incidents affecting 11 survivors occurred during the reporting period. Four incidents were reported in Unity State, two were reported and verified in Central Equatoria State and one each in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes. These nine incidents were attributed to the following: the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (5), the National Security Service (1), an unknown armed group (1) and community-based militias (2). The remaining 10 incidents, affecting 19 survivors, that were verified in March occurred in February.

74. UNMISS conducted five awareness-raising sessions on conflict-related sexual violence for the South Sudan National Police Service, SPLM/A-IO officers, youth and protection of civilians community watch group members. The total number of participants was 593, including 232 women. In the context of International Women's Day, the joint implementation committee of the action plan for the armed forces on addressing conflict-related sexual violence issued a press release calling upon the Joint Defence Board to reinforce the message of zero tolerance with regard to conflict-related sexual violence.

### **F. Women and peace and security**

75. UNMISS continued to advocate for compliance with the 35 per cent women quota provision of the Revitalized Agreement at all levels of government, including by engaging women of influence. On 10 and 11 March, UNMISS assisted the South Sudan Women's Empowerment Network in organizing a workshop for women parliamentarians titled "Constitution-making process and priority legislation". The workshop addressed the roles of women in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and the challenges that they faced. The participants called upon women parliamentarians to leverage their positions to identify legal gaps, to raise awareness on gender equality and to create mechanisms for gender accountability, including the promotion of gender-responsive budgeting.

76. UNMISS held gender-responsive governance workshops in Yambio (16 and 17 March) and in Aweil (29 and 30 March). The 103 women participants included women leaders from state governments, newly nominated women parliamentarians and representatives of women's organizations. Training was provided on effective advocacy regarding gender mainstreaming in all aspects of governance, the work of the legislature and in appointments and elective positions.

77. From 24 to 25 March, UNMISS conducted a workshop in Aweil in Northern Bahr el-Ghazal as part of the "Men's engagement" series advocating for male champions to support the meaningful participation of women in government and other institutions, including customary institutions. Twenty-nine men engaged in extensive discussions on the role of culture as an impediment to and facilitator of the participation of women. Participants included members of the state Transitional Legislative Assembly, government officials, traditional leaders, religious leaders and civil society. The participants came from Aweil East, West, South and North Counties of Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State. Participants committed to accelerating measures on women's participation and removing structural impediments. A gender equality forum was constituted to implement their resolutions.

## **VI. Mission staffing, the status of deployments, and conduct and discipline**

78. As at 26 May, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,654, comprising 850 international staff members, including 246 women (28.9 per cent), 1,411 national staff members, of whom 219 were women (15.5 per cent), and 393 United Nations Volunteers, of whom 226 were women (57.5 per cent).

79. The police strength stood at 1,467 (of an authorized 2,101 personnel), comprising 593 individual police officers, including 252 women (42.5 per cent); 846 personnel in formed police units, of whom 212 were women (25.1 per cent); and 28 corrections officers, 15 of whom were women (53.6 per cent).

80. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, UNMISS troop strength stood at 13,808 military personnel: 193 military liaison officers, including 56 women (29 per cent); 381 military staff officers, including 72 women (18.9 per cent); and 13,234 military contingent personnel, including 772 women (5.8 per cent).

81. UNMISS completed its misconduct risk registers and misconduct prevention action plans for all states, with a special emphasis on sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This allows the Mission to focus on the identified risk areas and ensure maximum effectiveness in preventing misconduct. In addition, UNMISS continued efforts to further enhance the capacity of community-based complaint mechanisms to report misconduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse, in close collaboration with the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse Task Force in South Sudan. In accordance with the applicable policy, information on possible unsatisfactory conduct and/or misconduct was processed in a timely fashion.

82. Between 1 March and 31 May, 24 allegations of misconduct were recorded in the case management tracking system. UNMISS has not recorded any allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving the uniformed component of the Mission in more than two years. All identified victims of the previously reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse continued to receive support from the Senior Victims' Rights Officer in South Sudan.

## **VII. Violations of the status-of-forces agreement, international humanitarian law and security of United Nations personnel**

83. UNMISS and the Government continued to make efforts to improve overall communication on and coordination of the Mission's operations and freedom of movement for patrols. On 31 March, the seventh high-level coordination meeting between the Government and UNMISS leadership assessed the progress made thus far.

84. As at 31 May, UNMISS had recorded 26 violations of the status-of-forces agreement, significantly higher compared with 12 violations during the previous reporting period. Of these incidents, 1 occurred in February, 10 in March, 9 in April and 6 in May. Sixteen of the violations involved movement restrictions imposed by government authorities, affecting UNMISS patrols in Western Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Upper Nile, Unity, Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States.

85. On 30 March, SPLM/A-IO interfered with the implementation of UNMISS mandated activities by denying flight safety assurances for a dynamic air patrol to Mandeng in Upper Nile.

86. The status-of-forces agreement violations also included the imposition of undue taxes, fees and restrictions on UNMISS and its contractors for importing consignments for the Mission's exclusive use. On 18 March, the government officials at the Nimule border post forced an UNMISS international contractor to pay 1,193,700 South Sudanese pounds (approximately 9,200 United States dollars) as taxes to import food containers. Also in March, the Malakal City Council officials forced an UNMISS international contractor to pay undefined taxes. UNMISS continued to engage with the Government on the issue of taxation of the Mission and its contractors.

87. Of the two national staff members arrested in 2014, one has been declared dead by a national court. The whereabouts of the other staff member remain unknown. During the reporting period, the South Sudan National Police Service arrested two UNMISS national staff members over a private matter, one in Kuajok and one in Rumbek, without following the status-of-forces agreement arrest and detention procedure. Both have now been released.

## **VIII. Performance of uniformed components and safety and security of peacekeepers**

88. The UNMISS force evaluated 18 units, which included 10 infantry battalions in Malakal, Yambio, Rumbek, Juba, Bentiu and Wau and 8 enabling units in Wau, Juba and Malakal. Fourteen units exceeded the set standard, while four other units were rated satisfactory and operationally ready. Recommendations, which are being implemented, called for increasing exercises on casualty evacuation, medical evacuation and emergency response, and improvement of some administrative functions.

89. Four formed police units were evaluated. Three units were rated satisfactory, and one had a shortfall in contingent-owned equipment and was put on a performance improvement plan.

## **IX. Observations and recommendations**

90. I am concerned about critical benchmarks of the Revitalized Agreement that are still outstanding with limited time remaining before the end of the transitional period in February 2023. In the absence of tangible progress, the peace agreement bears the risk of being afflicted by a cycle of extensions. I strongly believe that the only viable course of action is the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement in letter and spirit.

91. I commend the parties for overcoming the impasse on the command structure of the necessary unified forces with the conclusion of the agreement of 3 April. The timely and full implementation of this agreement, including the graduation of the forces, will provide assurances to the South Sudanese people that their leaders remain committed to the Revitalized Agreement. Progress in all other areas, including the holding of elections, hinges on the completion of the transitional security arrangements. I therefore urge the Government to prioritize this aspect and provide the necessary funds to the security mechanisms to enable, as soon as possible, the graduation, deployment and operationalization of the necessary unified forces.

92. I welcome Mr. Kiir's emphasis on reconciliation. The launch of the nationwide consultative process for the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing is an important implementation benchmark that holds the potential to bring healing to the South Sudanese people. I urge the Presidency to reach

a consensus on the implementation modalities of all three transitional justice mechanisms – the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing, the Hybrid Court, and the Compensation and Reparation Authority – as stipulated in the Revitalized Agreement.

93. I also take note of the efforts of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly. I am encouraged that the Revitalized Agreement has been integrated into the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011) and priority legislation related to the security services, political parties and constitution-making has been presented to parliament. The enactment of the constitution-making process bill, a key aspect of the peace process, is critical to elections. I call upon the Speaker and Members of Parliament to increase the pace of deliberation on the critical outstanding bills, including the Political Parties Act, to give the transitional period the urgency it deserves.

94. While remaining cognizant of the challenges ahead, it is concerning that the parties have not agreed on a date for elections. The parties should decide on an electoral timetable and avoid unilateral actions that may undermine the environment for elections. Noting the difficult terrain of South Sudan, the dearth of infrastructure, the complexity of electoral activities, the different public positions taken by key leaders on elections and – most critically – that only eight months remain of the transitional period, I call upon the parties to immediately engage in a broad-based discussion and agree as soon as possible on a clear road map for the end of the transitional period. With the agreement of 3 April, the South Sudanese leaders have shown that they can make real progress when there is a sense of urgency and determination. They should again show national leadership by completing the constitution and holding free, fair, credible and inclusive elections in the little time that is left.

95. While the conduct of elections should be led and owned by the South Sudanese people, the United Nations stands ready to provide necessary support to the process, should the Government request such assistance. I therefore urge the Government to create the necessary conducive political environment by fostering confidence, re-establishing the National Elections Commission and approving all the necessary legal requirements. I also request the international community and regional partners to support the parties to meet the objectives envisioned in the Revitalized Agreement.

96. Progress on peace agreement implementation will help mitigate the resurgence of the subnational violence that has resulted in the loss of lives, destruction of properties, and widespread displacement. This violence continues to take a heavy toll on the population, especially on women and children. Overall, a 32 per cent decrease in violent incidents was reported as compared with the same reporting period in 2021. The proportion of those killed compared with the same reporting period of 2021 also decreased by 36 per cent. This notwithstanding, I am distressed at the significant increase in gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence incidents. UNMISS continues to respond through training and capacity-building of security institutions and supporting the implementation of the Action Plan, including by engaging the military and police leadership. The Mission is also facilitating dialogue, promoting rule of law through mobile courts and enhancing protection through the deployment of temporary operating bases. The Government, however, should exercise its primary responsibility to protect its citizens and end the culture of impunity by holding perpetrators accountable.

97. The uptick in violence, along with the impact of climate change in the form of extreme weather patterns, has exacerbated the living conditions of the people. Displacements and food insecurity have reached unprecedented levels. I urge the international community to continue to support the people of South Sudan, many of

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whom are displaced internally or as refugees in neighbouring countries. I salute the efforts of our humanitarian colleagues who, unfazed by hardship, continue to advance the delivery of essential services. I am appalled at the trend of increased attacks on humanitarian workers and assets. It is unacceptable that we have lost four colleagues this year. It is disheartening that hundreds of tons of food and life-saving supplies have been looted, including with the intention to punish specific communities, adding to the vulnerability of those already in dire need of assistance. I therefore call upon the Government and South Sudanese leaders to do more to ensure the safety and security of our humanitarian colleagues and of the population.

98. The recent decision of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management requiring the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to provide additional documentation is a violation of existing agreements between the Government of South Sudan and the United Nations. The imposition of unwarranted preconditions has resulted in the harassment of personnel and has impeded critical operations. Moreover, it undermines the spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the Mission and the Government, as well as the achievements of the high-level coordination mechanism co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNMISS. I therefore call upon the Government to urgently rescind this decision so that the delivery of humanitarian assistance can continue unobstructed.

99. I thank the African Union, IGAD and its member States, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and members of the international community for their sustained support of the peace process. That continued partnership is fundamental in ensuring meaningful support for South Sudan. In this regard, I recognize and appreciate the role played by the Sudan in supporting the parties in coming to an agreement on the security arrangements. I also commend the Community of Sant'Egidio for continuing to lead mediation efforts between the Government and the non-signatory parties under the South Sudan Opposition Movements Alliance. I encourage the parties to recommit to these efforts.

100. Finally, I convey my deep appreciation to the troop- and police-contributing countries. I thank my Special Representative, Nicholas Haysom, the uniformed and civilian personnel of UNMISS and the United Nations country team, who have continued to work tirelessly towards peace in South Sudan under difficult conditions.

