



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 [2677 \(2023\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 March 2024 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 between 1 June and 31 August 2023.

II. Political developments

2. The implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (Revitalized Agreement) remained limited during the reporting period. Celebrating the twelfth anniversary of the independence of the Republic of South Sudan, on 9 July, the President, Salva Kiir Mayardit, called for peace and stability as a prerequisite for the return of South Sudanese refugees. On 30 July, during the commemoration of Martyrs' Day, the President emphasized that there would be no return to war and that elections were the only way forward for the country.

3. Following the inaugural meeting on 1 June, of the joint taskforce for advancing the constitution-making and electoral processes, co-chaired by the Government and UNMISS, on 13 July, the joint taskforce nominated the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) as co-chairs. On 27 July, the joint taskforce was renamed Government-trilateral (African Union, IGAD, United Nations) joint taskforce for the implementation of the constitution-making and electoral processes. In this meeting, the National Bureau of Statistics, the National Elections Commission and the National Constitutional Review Committee presented their draft action plans and estimated budgets to the joint taskforce. Also at that meeting, and at the request of the Government, UNMISS, the African Union, IGAD and the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission presented a non-paper highlighting priority issues and decisions that needed to be agreed upon by the parties to the Revitalized Agreement in order to move forward with the preparations for the elections. Those included passing the necessary legislation, reconstituting the relevant electoral bodies, determining the type and number of



elections and deciding on the timeline for voter registration and options related to the inclusion of the displaced population.

4. On 5 June, the national elections act 2012 (amendment) bill, 2023, the South Sudan Anti-Corruption Commission (amendment) Bill 2023 and the National Revenue Authority (amendment) bill, 2023, were presented to parliament. The bills were sent to relevant committees for review but no further progress was made towards their adoption. On 22 and 23 June, the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice of the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly, with support from UNMISS and UNDP, organized a two-day public consultation workshop on the unresolved issues related to the electoral system and quotas for women, youth and persons with disabilities in the elections bill. On 21 August, the Specialized Committee submitted its report to parliament in the second reading with observations and recommendations. On 24 August, the Committee held additional consultations with the National Elections Commission on the operational aspects of the elections bill in preparations for the third reading. UNMISS and UNDP continued to provide technical support to the Specialized Committee and to the National Elections Commission on the review of the electoral legal framework, including how to address unresolved issues and potential technical and operational challenges.

5. On 6 June, the High-Level Standing Committee on the implementation of the road map, comprised of the parties to the Revitalized Agreement, convened the inaugural stakeholders' consultative meeting with the non-party stakeholders. The meeting nominated 25 representatives to the Reconstituted National Constitutional Review Committee to participate in the constitution-making process. The reconstitution of the Committee is still six months behind schedule. On 22 June, another meeting of the same Committee decided that Political Parties Council should be a non-partisan entity, and agreed that the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the seven members of the Council shall not be subjected to the power-sharing ratio contained in the Revitalized Agreement, and that it shall be approved by a resolution adopted by two thirds of the members of the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly.

6. On 7 June, the President received General Johnson Olony to discuss the integration of the Agwelek forces into the South Sudan People's Defence Forces under the Khartoum Peace Agreement of January 2022. General Olony also submitted to the President his power-sharing proposal for governance of the Upper Nile State and military command structures.

7. On 12 June, the South Sudan National Police Service established an Election Security Committee and appointed focal points for election security planning. The Committee is discussing support options with UNMISS and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), including training on the role of security forces in elections, and is currently drafting an election security plan.

8. The reconstitution of the Political Parties Council is now 11 months behind schedule. On 24 June, the National Democratic Movement opened its office in Juba and announced plans to prepare for elections. Its Chair, Lam Akol, returned to Juba from the Sudan on 31 July to take part in the elections. On 2 July, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO) opened an office in Malakal, Upper Nile State. On 4 July, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) organized a mass political rally in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, to endorse the President as the party's candidate for the elections. Accepting the endorsement, the President assured there would be no further extension of the transitional period. The SPLM Secretary-General, Peter Lam Both, announced that the party had registered 4.9 million members in the last two years. Political parties and civil society organizations criticized this event as premature and unlawful, as other parties were

deprived of similar opportunities, and called upon the Government to ensure civic and political space for all. On 23 July, a new political party, the People's United Front was announced in Juba and claimed to have registered 50,000 members. On 5 August, the National Patriotic Party launched its manifesto in Torit, Eastern Equatoria State.

9. On 9 June, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism reported that a donation of \$498,574 from Japan had enabled the national monitors of the Mechanism to resume their work. The monitors had been on strike since March 2023 owing to non-payment of salaries since April 2022. Norway donated \$1.8 million to the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission on 9 June and \$1.4 million to the Mechanism on 22 June.

10. On 27 June, the Chief of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, General Santino Deng Wol, presented the South Sudan People's Defence Forces' plan to distribute 350 military posts, including 211 for SPLM/ South Sudan People's Defence Forces, 106 for SPLA-IO and 33 for South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA), based on the power-sharing ratio in the Revitalized Agreement. These include directorate and administration positions within the South Sudan People's Defence Forces headquarters and the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs. While SSOA has submitted its list of nominees, SPLA-IO is yet to submit theirs. On 29 June, SPLA-IO claimed that the South Sudan People's Defence Forces structures favoured the SPLM Army providing it greater command over the SPLA-IO and the SSOA officers. The deployment of phase I and the training of phase II of the necessary unified forces, scheduled to start in September and November 2022, respectively, have not started despite repeated announcements from the Government to do so.

11. The impasse over the swapping of the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs with the Ministry of Interior, and the removal of the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs on 3 March has led to contradictory reports over its resolution. On 22 June, the Office of the First Vice President released a statement refuting media reports that the deadlock over the swapping had been addressed by the President and the First Vice President.

12. On 10 August, at the thirty-first plenary meeting of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, interim Chairperson, Major General (retired) Charles Tai Gituai, stated that critical milestones in the peace agreement had not been accomplished. He stressed the need for concerted efforts to fast-track the implementation process.

Regional engagements and developments

13. From 11 to 13 June, the President attended the Fourteenth Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government on regional peace and security, convened by IGAD and held in Djibouti. At the Summit, Djibouti was confirmed as Chair and South Sudan as Deputy Chair of IGAD. While Kenya replaced South Sudan as the lead of the mediation process in the Sudan, the decision was rejected by the Sudan. The communiqué of the Summit urged the Government to expedite the implementation of tasks critical for conducting elections in South Sudan.

14. On 10 July, South Sudan participated in the first IGAD quartet meeting in Addis Ababa, and discussed the implementation of the IGAD road map for peace in the Sudan as set out in the IGAD Summit on 13 June. The Sudan boycotted the meeting to object to the chairmanship of Kenya. On 13 July, the President attended the Sudan's Neighbouring States Summit in Cairo and called for a national Sudanese-led mediation process to end the conflict.

Economic situation

15. As a result of the conflict in the Sudan imports to South Sudan have decreased, resulting in higher inflation of market prices. As at 31 August, the South Sudanese pound (SSP) had depreciated against the United States dollar by about 50 per cent since the beginning of 2023 owing to depletion of Central Bank reserves. The Bank continued to auction United States dollars and restrict the Government's borrowing to stabilize the economy.

16. On 20 June, the Minister for Finance and Economic Planning tabled the budget for fiscal year 2023/2024 before the National Assembly, with an estimated SSP 2.11 trillion (\$2.06 billion) in expenditures and SSP 1.84 trillion (\$1.80 billion) in revenue, with a deficit of SSP 267 billion (\$261 million). The Government plans to finance the deficit from domestic non-oil revenue mobilization and domestic borrowing. On 17 July, at a public hearing on the proposed budget criticisms and dissatisfaction were voiced from different quarters. On 22 July, the SPLM-IO parliamentary caucus cautioned that the insufficient allocation of funds to critical tasks outlined in the Revitalized Agreement would put both the 2022 road map and the 2024 elections at risk. On 11 August, the budget was passed despite opposition from the SPLM-IO which disagreed with the SPLM over the salary increases for civil servants and security forces. The President signed the budget into law on 14 August.

III. Security situation

17. The conflict in the Sudan has also exacerbated the security and humanitarian situation in South Sudan, largely owing to the influx of returnees and refugees, the reduction of available resources and weak infrastructure to meet the needs of arrivals. These factors have contributed to rising intercommunal tensions. Meanwhile, cross-border cattle raids and competition over grazing lands have led to communal fighting in various States, including Warrap, Lakes and Unity.

Greater Upper Nile region

18. Tensions escalated at the Malakal protection of civilians site following clashes between Shilluk and Nuer internally displaced persons over access to a water point on 28 May, resulting in the killing of a Nuer person. On 8 June, a Shilluk community member and a security guard were killed leading to intercommunal violence within the Malakal site, culminating in 14 people killed, 25 injured (one woman), and over 8,000 internally displaced persons forced to relocate. Between 9 and 12 June, UNMISS and humanitarian partners coordinated the extraction of at least 56 Nuer internally displaced persons from the Malakal site to Malakal town at their request. Subsequently, the Nuer community egressed from the Malakal site to Malakal town. Government forces and UNMISS continued to strengthen security in and around the Malakal site. The Government identified various locations in Malakal town to host people arriving from the Malakal site. Since the first incident, the UNMISS force has maintained a robust presence in and around the Site.

19. High tensions were reported in Wunkur town, Unity State, after a peace mission delegation led by the Peace and Reconciliation Commission of Ruweng Administrative Area was attacked on 1 July. The attack resulted in the injury of the Chair of the Commission and the death of seven delegates. Wunkur borders Jonglei and Upper Nile States and is contested among various communities. SPLA-IO forces have been in the area since the fighting broke out between Agwelek and SPLA-IO in the second half of 2022.

20. The security situation in Jonglei remains largely unchanged. The number of Murle-led attacks, although persistent, reduced during this period, with 25 incidents, 36 killings (30 men, 2 women, 2 boys, 2 girls), 15 injuries (14 men, 1 boy), and 29 abductions (4 women, 12 boys, 13 girls) reported since June.

Greater Equatoria region

21. In Central Equatoria State, National Salvation Front (NAS) elements conducted attacks on civilians and South Sudan People's Defence Forces personnel in June, after the collapse of the local peace initiative signed between South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS in Yei River. Reports of skirmishes, attacks and ambushes between the two groups persisted. Disarmament operations in Juba County, that later expanded to other areas of the State, created tensions between security forces and cattle keepers in the area and raised concerns about the protection of civilians.

22. The security situation in Western Equatoria State is unpredictable, with ongoing tensions between host communities and cattle keepers in Mundri, Mvolo and Maridi counties. Incidents of farmland and crop destruction associated to the movement of cattle have resulted in heightened tensions and the risk of retaliatory attacks. Dinka cattle keepers from Bor remain in the area despite various ultimatums issued by the State authorities to vacate the area. South Sudan People's Defence Forces' attempts to drive pastoralists out of the counties have also been unsuccessful. The situation along the border with the Central African Republic remains tense, despite the reopening of the border between both countries after the clashes between Azande and Ex-Seleka youths in Source Yubu (South Sudan) and Bambouti (Central African Republic) in April had led to its temporary closure. The security situation in Tambura County remains fragile, with ongoing efforts to reignite the Tambura peace conferences.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

23. Cyclical violence related to cross-border cattle raiding persisted among the tri-state borders of Warrap, Unity and Lakes States. The security situation along the Twic (Warrap State) – Mayom (Unity State) corridor worsened as cattle raids launched by suspected Bul Nuer elements from Unity into Warrap resulted in the displacement of civilians away from areas prone to clashes. Economic activities along the border have decreased. In response, South Sudan People's Defence Forces were deployed along the border area. In early July, Dinka Twic armed youths blocked the road linking Ajakuach Payam in Warrap to Mayom County in Unity State over allegations of persistent attacks and robberies targeting the community.

24. Cyclical revenge attacks between Misseriya from the Sudan and South Sudan People's Defence Forces elements since April resulted in the killing of 141 persons, including 47 South Sudan People's Defence Forces, in Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State. The host community said that Misseriya cattle herders had not respected the resolutions adopted during the pre-migration peace conferences, leading to tensions.

IV. Humanitarian situation

25. As at 31 August, 249,403 people have been registered crossing the border from the Sudan into South Sudan since the fighting erupted in the Sudan on 15 April. Over 91 per cent of arrivals are South Sudanese nationals. There are growing concerns of congestion and overcrowding in Renk, Upper Nile State. Many arrivals have reported that they had experienced grave trauma, with some suffering chronic illnesses with no access to regular medical treatment or support.

26. Measles outbreaks were confirmed by the Ministry of Health in Upper Nile (6 June) and Central Equatoria (20 July) States, and by health partners in Warrap (20 July). In collaboration with the World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, the Ministry conducted measles mop-up campaigns in Upper Nile State. Health partners have scaled up their response through mobile clinic services for consultations, immunization and referrals and delivery of medical emergency kits.

27. On 16 June, over 150 cases, including 23 deaths, were reported owing to an unknown disease in Darjo Primary Health Care Unit in Darjo Payam, Longochuk County, Upper Nile State. The Ministry of Health and the health cluster partners continue to monitor the situation.

28. On 25 June, approximately 1,800 people were displaced following armed clashes in Mathiang, Longochuk County, Upper Nile State. People fled to the bush around Mathiang, while some sought refuge in other locations. Looting and damage of property, shelter and material losses have been reported. Fear remains that fighting will resume in Mathiang.

29. During the reporting period, 104 incidents related to humanitarian-access restrictions were reported, of which 53 involved violence against humanitarian personnel and assets. 34 incidents of looting and theft of humanitarian assets were reported. Nine attacks on convoys and commercially contracted vehicles took place between 1 June to 31 August in Jonglei (4) Upper Nile (1), Eastern Equatoria (3) and Warrap (1). Since the beginning of 2023, three humanitarian workers have been killed while on duty.

V. Implementation of the Mission's mandate

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

30. UNMISS continued to exercise its good offices by engaging with the parties, partners and stakeholders of the Revitalized Agreement. The leadership of UNMISS held meetings with the President, the First Vice-President and Cabinet Ministers, to take stock of the peace implementation and explore ways to address intercommunal violence.

31. In collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), UNDP and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, UNMISS organized three consultations for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons in Wau (13 and 14 June), Raja (15 June) and Juba (4 and 5 July), on constitution-making and electoral processes in South Sudan. A total of 281 participants (137 women) attended the sessions and discussed their roles and rights in both processes. They stressed the need for equal opportunity for women and improved security across the country.

32. UNMISS provided technical support for induction trainings for members of state parliaments organized by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs in Bor, Jonglei State (30 May to 1 June); Bentiu, Unity State (14 to 16 June); and Juba, Central Equatoria State (8 to 10 August). 215 parliamentarians (88 women) learned about the Revitalized Agreement, the implementation of the 2022 road map and their roles and responsibilities in the legislative process.

33. On 20 June, in a meeting convened by the African Union in Juba, UNMISS briefed members of the African diplomatic corps on the implementation of the constitution-making and electoral processes, and the United Nations' assistance to the

Government in this regard. The meeting was attended by Ambassadors from Ethiopia, the Sudan, Uganda, Eritrea and Djibouti.

34. UNMISS continued roundtable discussions on Radio Miraya to widen civic and political space. The Mission organized twelve discussions attended by representatives from academia, ministers, senior government officials, political party leaders and civil society organizations. On 19 June, UNMISS organized a radio programme “Democracy in Action”, that discussed participation of women in politics, constitution-making and election processes. On the same day, Radio Miraya hosted a talk-show with Christian and Muslim religious leaders reflecting on their respective roles in preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence to commemorate the International Day of the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. On 8 July, UNMISS facilitated a roundtable discussion on the twelfth anniversary of South Sudan’s independence which considered lessons learned during the past 12 years and ways forward.

35. From 19 to 30 June, UNMISS, together with UNDP, UN-Women and IGAD, supported the Judicial Reforms Committee in conducting public consultations in Pibor, Malakal, Yambio and Wau. 919 participants (315 women) attended the consultations, including state government officials, members of the judiciary, police, prison officials, practicing lawyers, customary authorities and civil society organizations. Key discussion themes included judicial independence, the promotion and welfare of judges and the interface between the formal and customary justice systems.

36. On 27 June and 11 and 12 July, UNMISS and the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission supported the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board to hold its eleventh technical workshop attended by 40 participants (five women). The workshop reviewed the draft white paper on defence and security, which, upon approval, would set the long-term development framework for security sector transformation.

37. To promote democratic governance, sustainable peacebuilding, peaceful co-existence and to expand political and civic space, UNMISS, in collaboration with the African Union, the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Verification Mechanism and the Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, conducted a political parties forum from 16 to 18 August in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State. Sixty-one participants (20 women) from the various political parties and organizations signed a Political Parties Forum memorandum of understanding on “Building Synergies for Democratic Governance and Sustainable Peacebuilding”. Similarly, on 14 and 15 June, in Raja, UNMISS and Community Empowerment Progress Organization facilitated a political stakeholders’ dialogue for 41 participants (15 women), to support the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement at the subnational level.

38. On 30 and 31 August, UNMISS supported parliament’s Specialized Committee on Defence and Veterans’ Affairs workshop on trauma healing and mental health for defence personnel and veterans, in accordance with priorities set out in the Committee’s action plan for 2023–2024.

39. UNMISS provided technical support to the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly Specialized Committee for National Security and Public Order to develop its first annual action plan which was approved on 25 August.

40. From 21 to 25 August, UNMISS provided technical support and assistance to the National Prison Service in the review of the Prisons Regulations 2016, to align them with the newly amended prisons act.

B. Protection of civilians and mitigating intercommunal conflict

41. UNMISS continued to use a whole-of-mission approach to maintain a proactive and mobile posture responding to existing and emerging threats, utilizing its early warning mechanism to inform operational priorities related to the protection of civilians. To strengthen collective early warning information-sharing and analysis, as well as planning and response, the Mission established coordination structures that bring all components together to focus on protection of civilians in an integrated and coordinated way.

42. UNMISS also continued to promote inclusive dialogue, peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and social cohesion at the subnational level to enhance the protection of civilians and create favourable conditions for implementing the Revitalized Agreement. UNMISS closely monitored the impact of the influx of refugees and returnees fleeing the conflict in the Sudan on intercommunal tensions and competition over resources at the redesignated internally displaced persons camps to monitor early warning signals.

43. UNMISS facilitated 18 capacity-building peace initiatives, workshops and vocational training sessions to strengthen protection of civilians by subnational and local authorities and to enhance community resilience and sustainable development. A total of 1,792 persons (356 women) participated in the events, including representatives of the South Sudan National Police Service, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, civil society organizations, traditional leaders, community members and internally displaced persons in Jonglei and Greater Pibor Administrative Area; Warrap; Lakes; Central, Eastern and Western Equatoria; Western Bahr el-Ghazal; Upper Nile; and Unity States.

44. UNMISS leveraged its programmatic funding to strengthen community resilience by enhancing vocational skills of 270 internally displaced persons, refugee and host community beneficiaries (172 women) in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Western Equatoria States, in turn promoting livelihood opportunities and advancing durable solutions. UNMISS also completed 26 quick impact projects in Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal, and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States to enhance protection in areas with high prevalence of intercommunal violence and to foster conditions conducive to return and reintegration benefiting 120,149 individuals (52,335 women).

45. On 24 and 25 June, UNMISS, the Jonglei State government and local authorities convened an intra-Dinka dialogue in Bor to address cyclic intercommunal violence in the State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area for 72 participants (13 women, 20 youth). The community leaders agreed on joint efforts to sustain peace in Greater Jonglei region. Community representatives discussed ways to ensure the immediate cessation of hostilities and end recurring attacks. The youth were cautioned against hostilities towards neighbours. A unified community stance was reached to hold a comprehensive dialogue soon among conflicting communities to restore trust and resolve intercommunal conflicts in the Greater Jonglei region.

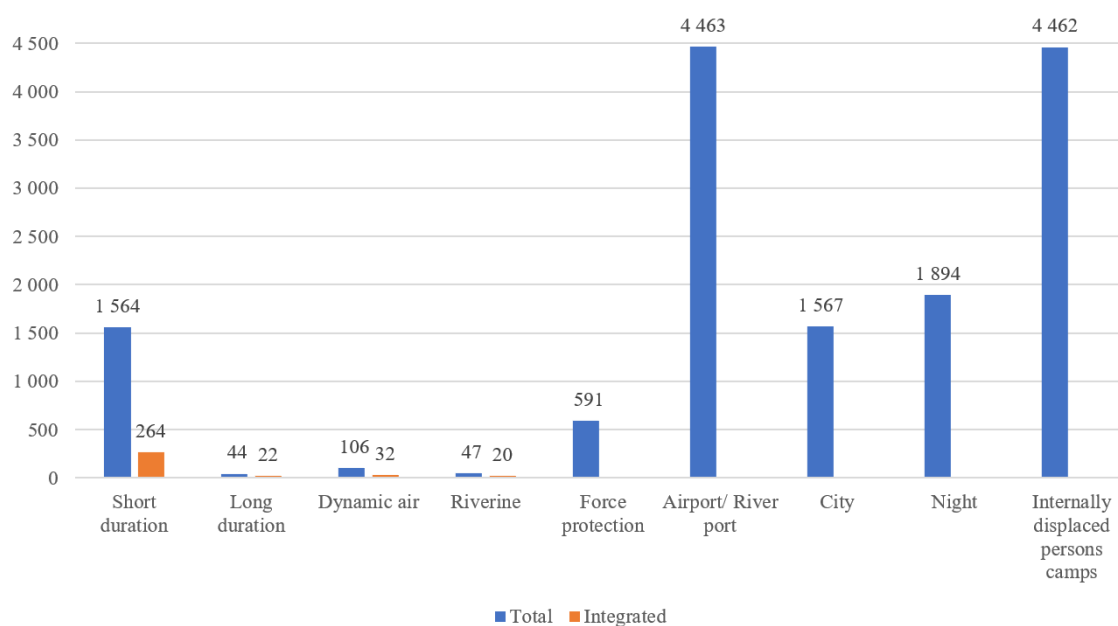
46. UNMISS continued coordination and interventions with State and local authorities of Rumbek North, Lakes State and Tonj East, Warrap State, to find sustainable solutions to cyclic intercommunal and cross-border violence between the Pakam (Rumbek North) and the Luanyjang (Tonj East) communities. On 27 and 28 June, UNMISS supported the communities, state and local authorities in organizing a peace dialogue to address cross-border conflicts between the Luanyjang and the Pakam communities in Tonj South, Warrap State, attended by 100 people (12 women). The forum provided a platform for representatives from the communities

to engage discussions and propose local solutions aimed at preventing recurring violence and promoting reconciliation.

47. UNMISS in partnership with the ministries of Livestock and Peacebuilding of Lakes, Warrap and Unity states facilitated a tri-state community violence reduction project between 16 and 27 June for 82 cattle camp youth (7 women) which resulted in the adoption of the recommendations to enhance peaceful coexistence among the neighbouring communities from the three states.

48. As at 31 August, the UNMISS force had conducted 14,738 patrols, including 338 integrated patrols, comprising United Nations police and civilian personnel for protection of civilian purposes (see figure I). Women peacekeepers participated in 8 per cent of the patrols. A total of 1,462 patrols were conducted by the Force in and around the Malakal protection of civilians site.

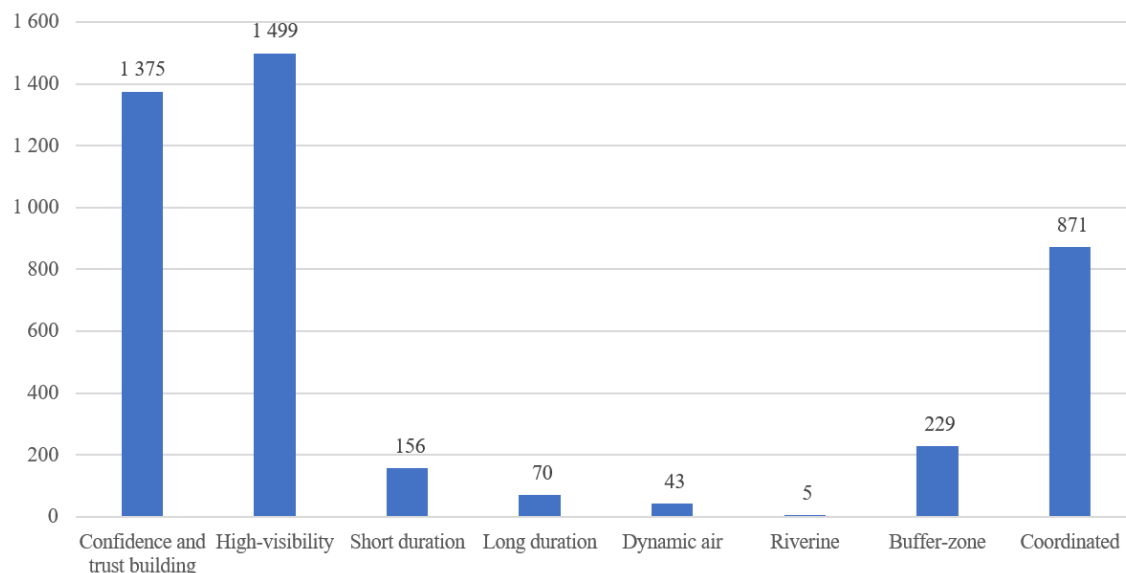
Figure I
Force patrols as at 31 August 2023



49. To increase operational reach, control hotspots to deter attacks against civilians and secure main supply routes, the UNMISS force maintained three extended duration temporary operating bases in Koch, Tambura and Jamjang. The Force is planning to establish 11 additional temporary bases in Nasser, Yuai, Manyobal, Mayom, Kapoeta, Mangalla, Kajo Keji, Mundri, Maper, Akop and Raja to protect civilians and assist in creating an environment conducive to elections.

50. As at 31 August, the United Nations police had conducted 4,248 patrols, out of which 3, 790 included women and 269 were integrated (see figure II). Furthermore, 221 access control and three cordon and search operations were conducted in the Malakal protection of civilians site, as part of operational measures to prevent/mitigate security incidents, reduce fear of physical harm and enhance safety of internally displaced persons. A total of 422 quick response teams were on active standby to respond to security incidents in support of the South Sudan National Police Service in Juba, Malakal and Bentiu.

Figure II
United Nations police patrols as at 31 August 2023



51. The United Nations police conducted 2,010 short visits (duration of several hours) to police stations to monitor violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights and provided on-site sensitizations and trainings for 11,039 (1,613 women) South Sudan National Police Service officers.

52. The United Nations police organized 1,068 sensitization programmes for 28,883 (13,883 women) community members and leaders, including youth, to raise awareness on the importance of community-oriented policing and crime reduction strategies.

53. The Mine Action Service responded to 440 requests for identification, removal and disposal of suspected landmines and explosive ordnance from UNMISS and local communities. The overall activities contributed to preventing injury and loss of life by landmines and explosive ordnance, and enabling the communities' access to 82 agricultural areas, five medical facilities and 25 natural water sources. A total of 60,952 items of explosive ordnance were disposed of, and 733,596 m² of land were released. A total of 86,230 participants (12,447 men, 15,070 women, 30,638 boys and 28,075 girls) were provided with explosive ordnance risk education across the country, with 94 per cent of the recipients demonstrating an increase in knowledge of how to mitigate the threat posed by explosive hazards.

54. On 8 June, following a request from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the Mine Action Service responded to clear the site and surroundings of an unplanned ammunition explosion on a military base in Bentiu, Unity State. The explosion scattered explosive ordnance up to 5 km, including in residential areas and caused injuries to 19 people, including two children. A total of 2,298 items of explosive ordnance have been disposed of so far.

Climate, peace and security

55. The late arrival of the rainy season delayed crop cultivation activities, which is likely to impact food security and increase the need for humanitarian assistance. The United Nations Satellite Centre, which monitors the flood situation in South Sudan, reported over 10,921 km² of flood water extent, with over 202,000 people affected

during the reporting period, in Rubkona, Unity; Bor South and Peji, Jonglei; and Rumbek East, Lakes. In addition, changing climate patterns and competition for resources are affecting the movement of herders, exacerbating tensions in some regions. In the Greater Equatoria region, the continuous presence of Dinka cattle keepers from Bor displaced by the flood of 2021–2022 in Jonglei State, continued to cause tensions with the local communities owing to the risk of crop destruction.

56. In response, climate security has become an agenda item of communal dialogues, for instance in the intra-Dinka dialogue in Bor (24 and 25 June), to better understand climate impacts on local livelihoods and the risks of conflicts and to reflect on common actions in response.

C. Rule of law and accountability

57. UNMISS supported the deployment of a mobile court in Malakal from 2 July to 29 August to address serious crimes and promote accountability, resulting in 20 convictions. Nine cases involved sexual and gender-based violence with nine persons convicted. All complainants, victims, witnesses and accused received psychosocial support and legal assistance. UNMISS also conducted an assessment mission for a UNDP-supported mobile court in Ruweng Administrative Area from 31 May to 8 June.

58. From May to August, UNMISS supported the Unity State government to reduce arbitrary detention and continued its support to the National Prison Service and the judiciary to review pretrial detention warrants, including in Juba, Central Equatoria State, Rumbek, Lakes, and Bor central prisons, Jonglei State, contributing to the release of 11 pretrial detainees in Juba and 13 in Bor on 3 July.

59. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, on 25 and 26 July, UNMISS conducted a training on human rights of detained persons in Gedi and Bazia, for a total of 45 SPLA-IO military officers and civilian leaders (20 women) and a training for 20 police officers (3 women) on criminal investigations between 21 and 25 August, in Kuajena.

60. Between 21 and 27 June, UNMISS and the International Organization for Migration convened a training workshop for 50 judge advocates (4 women) to enhance the capacity of the South Sudan People's Defence Force's Military Justice Directorate to promote accountability for serious crimes. UNMISS also supported the deployment of a General Court Martial to Yei River County, Central Equatoria State, between 22 May and 16 June. A total of 14 cases were adjudicated, including four involving sexual violence, resulting in the conviction of 11 South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers and one SPLA-IO soldier (all men). Civilian victims' counsel participated in the proceedings and all victims and witnesses received psycho-social and other support from UNMISS.

61. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, on 6 June, UNMISS launched a pilot project at Thor Majak prison, to improve food security in prisons. UNMISS also delivered trainings on prison management, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners ("the Nelson Mandela Rules"), and sexual and gender related violence in prisons to 176 participants (51 women) in Aweil, Koch, Kuajok, Rumbek, Torit and Wau.

62. UNMISS supported the launch of an education programme at Aweil State Prison, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State for 56 male prisoners (22 juveniles) and a pilot training in soap making for 20 prisoners (five women) at Bentiu State Prison, Unity State on 20 June and 8 July, respectively.

63. Under the trust fund project for Koch County, UNMISS supported the delivery of training sessions on the laws of South Sudan to 45 customary court members and other justice actors (12 women) on the laws of South Sudan and to 45 investigators and police officers (four women) on investigations between 23 and 27 August.

64. As part of the trust fund project in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, UNMISS supported two round tables for 100 women on their role in enhancing access to justice and community security in Bor from 13 to 15 June and in Bilkey-Akobo Town on 21 and 22 August, respectively. From 1 May to 30 June, a similar project targeting youth trained 324 beneficiaries (100 women) in Wau to enhance sustainable livelihoods and peaceful resolution of conflict. From 18 to 21 July, UNMISS and partners supported the first meeting of the re-established Inter-Communal Governance Structures under the Pieri Agreement to discuss the establishment of intercommunal dispute resolution mechanisms.

D. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

65. As at 31 August, the UNMISS force conducted 44 long-duration patrols, 1,564 short-duration patrols and 591 force protection tasks to create conducive conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and/or in support of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to ensure the protection of humanitarian workers. In order to provide UNMISS Force protection to humanitarian hubs, Jam-Jang temporary operating base has been deployed in Pariang County since 16 July, and Turalei base (from 10 to 22 July) for the World Food Programme convoy from Turalei warehouse to Mankien.

66. UNMISS responded to 24 requests for force protection and logistics support from humanitarian partners, as well as to 539 protection requests for nine United Nations Humanitarian Air Service airfield sites.

67. As at 31 August, the United Nations police carried out 59 humanitarian assistance delivery assignments and 193 security escorts of engineers and high-level missions. In addition, the United Nations police continued the deployment of five integrated temporary operating bases and company operating base (Yei, Akobo, Pibor, Tambura and Kodok), which were used for confidence and trust building, key leadership engagements, capacity building for South Sudan National Police service delivery for communities, including internally displaced persons in camps and areas of return.

68. The Mine Action Service verified and cleared 521 km of road as prioritized by UNMISS and escorted 928 km of patrols, ensuring the mobility of peacekeepers and humanitarian partners, free from the threat of explosive ordnance.

E. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations

69. UNMISS verified and documented 199 incidents of violence that negatively impacted human rights and protection, comprising 123 incidents of killing, 28 incidents of injuring, 20 abductions, 20 incidents of arbitrary arrest and detention, eight cases of unlawful detention and ill-treatment and looting and destruction of civilian property. The incidents affected 733 civilians, including 99 women and 92 children (54 boys and 38 girls) (see figures III and IV). Out of 320 civilians killed, 33 were women and 18 were children (12 boys, six girls). Compared with the previous reporting period, this represents a 15 per cent decrease in the number of incidents (236 to 199) and a 26 per cent decrease in the number of victims (from 992 to 733).

In total, 133 incidents were attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defence groups; 35 to government security forces; 10 to NAS; 11 to SPLA-IO and splinter groups; two to foreign armed elements; and eight to unidentified and/or other armed elements.

Figure III
Number of victims by type of violence and perpetrator

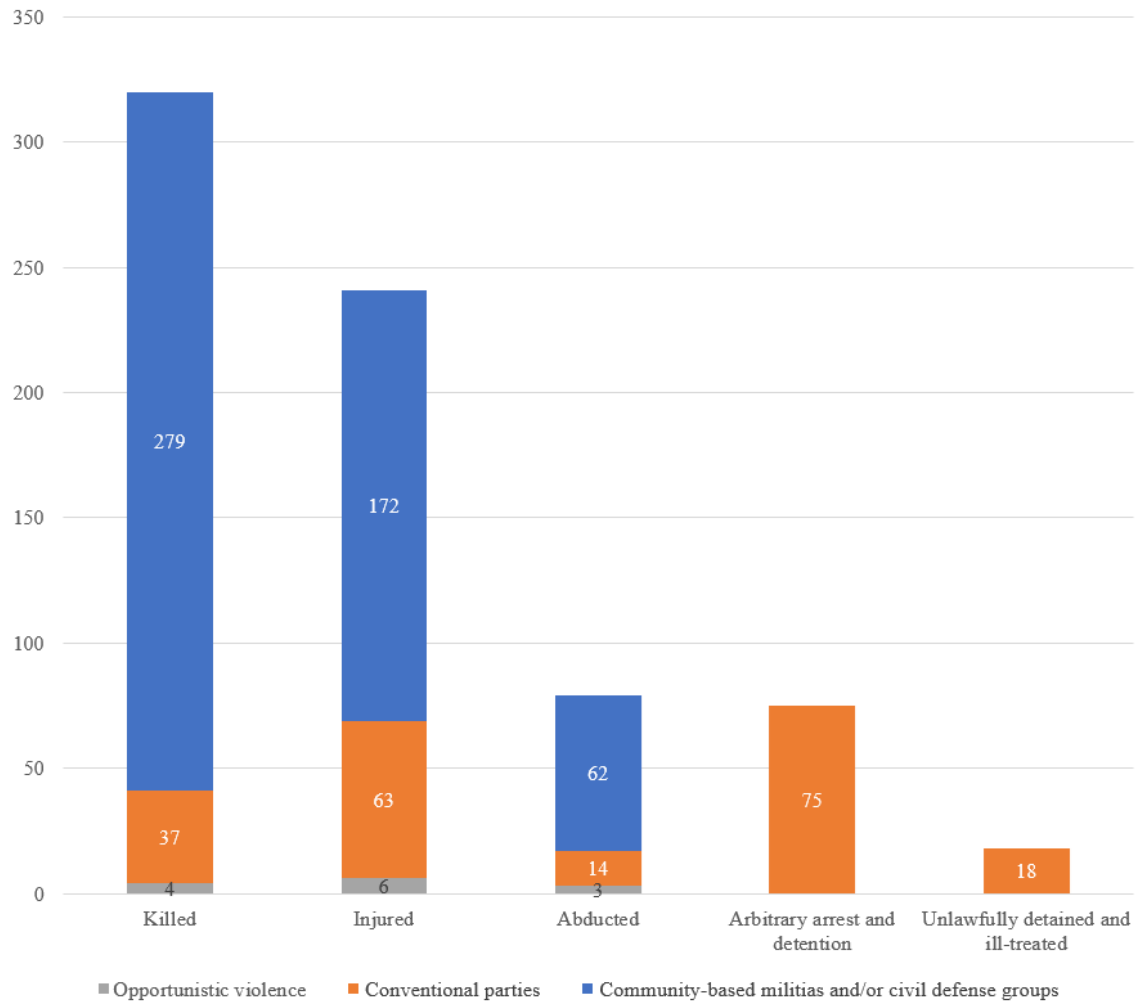
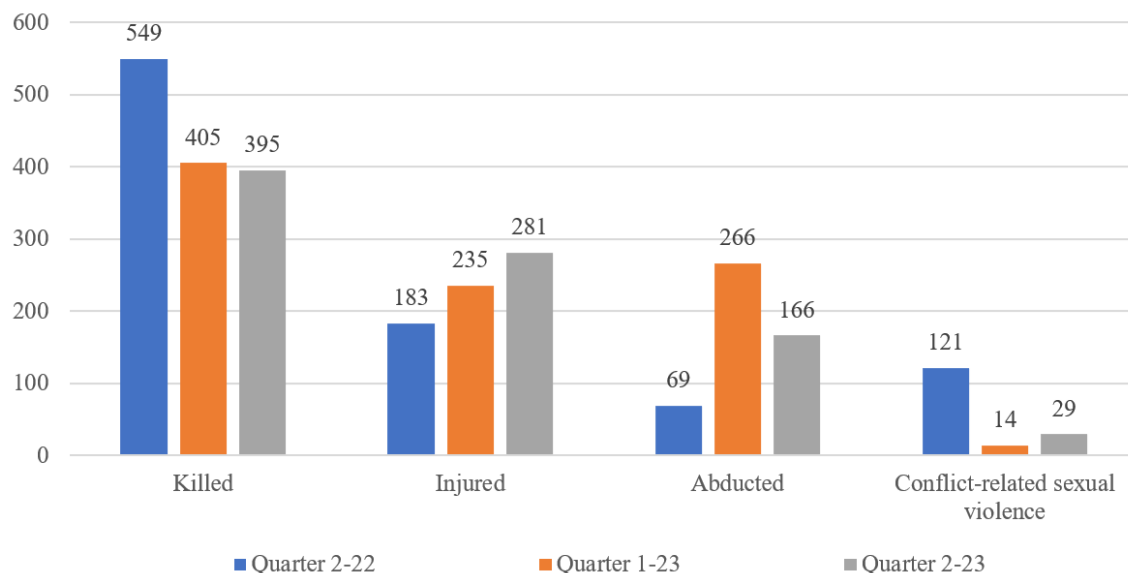


Figure IV
Number of victims Quarter 2, 2022; Quarter 1, 2023 and Quarter 2, 2023



70. Reports of allegations of extrajudicial executions continued to be received. During the reporting period, 10 civilians (nine men and one boy) were reportedly executed in Warrap and Lakes States on accusations by the State authorities of involvement in intercommunal violence and other criminal activities. UNMISS engaged with both States and national authorities to investigate and address the reports.

71. Undue restrictions on fundamental freedoms by security forces, including censorship, harassment, arbitrary arrests and detention of individuals expressing dissenting views persisted, further limiting the civic space and public participation in governance processes, and affected 19 civilian males.

72. UNMISS contributed to the review of the bills on the Commission of Truth, Reconciliation and Healing and the Compensation and Reparation Authority in accordance with international best practices. The Mission conducted a series of engagements and trainings for stakeholders on transitional justice mechanisms; and is supporting the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to establish an online platform through the creation of a website for dissemination of information on transitional justice.

73. UNMISS conducted 49 capacity-building and awareness-raising activities for stakeholders, including government officials, South Sudan Peoples' Defence Forces, SPLA-IO forces, civil society organizations, community leaders and the general public, reaching 1,919 individuals (729 women) and strengthening their capacities to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in South Sudan.

a. Children and armed conflict

74. The United Nations verified 111 grave violations against 110 children (97 boys, 13 girls): the recruitment and use of 103 children (102 boys, one girl); killing (three) and maiming (four) of seven children (five boys, two girls) and rape (one girl). Children were affected in Western Equatoria (72), Jonglei (33), Unity (three), Central Equatoria (one) and Upper Nile (one) States.

75. One hundred and three violations of recruitment and use were recorded, including 46 by South Sudan People's Defence Forces, 29 by forces loyal to Major General James Nando and 28 by the SPLA-IO. One incident of rape was attributed to forces loyal to Major General James Nando. One incident of killing was attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, one maiming by SPLA-IO and five to unidentified perpetrators resulting from explosive remnants of war.

76. UNMISS delivered 63 child protection awareness-raising sessions to 3,532 participants (1,037 women), including 2,320 community members (869 women), 998 government security forces (135 women), 129 government officials (26 women), 77 SPLA-IO officers (three women) and eight protection partners (four women).

b. Conflict-related sexual violence

77. UNMISS documented and verified 18 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 21 survivors (12 women, one man, eight girls) (see figures V and VI). Adult survivors' ages ranged from 20 to 49 years old. Thirteen survivors received medical assistance, six of which sought legal action, and two were referred for psychosocial care. These incidents were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (six), South Sudan National Police Service (one), National Security Services (two), community-based militia (nine) and jointly to South Sudan People's Defence Forces and South Sudan National Police Service (two) and unidentified armed element (one).

Figure V

Victims of conflict-related sexual violence by type of violation

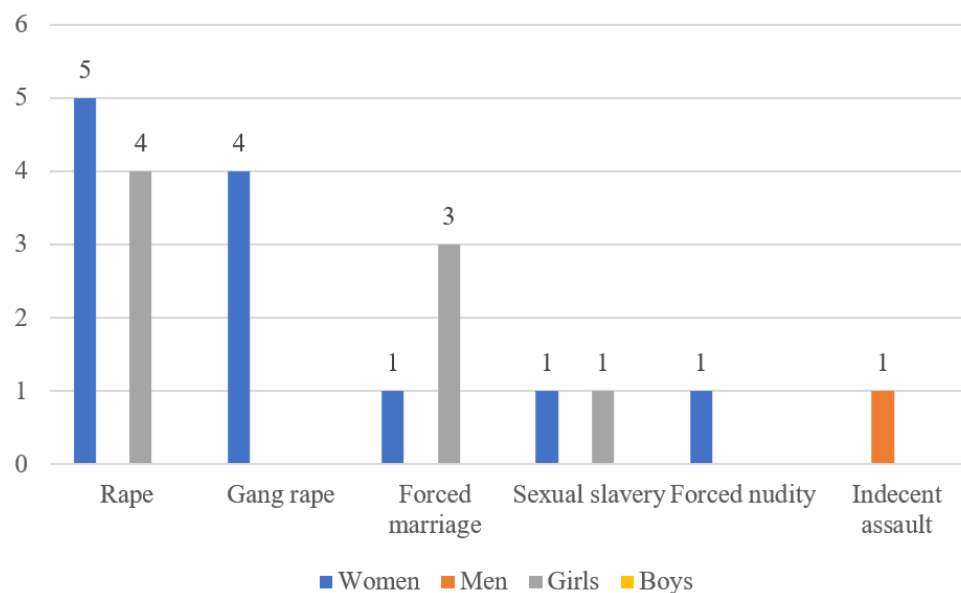
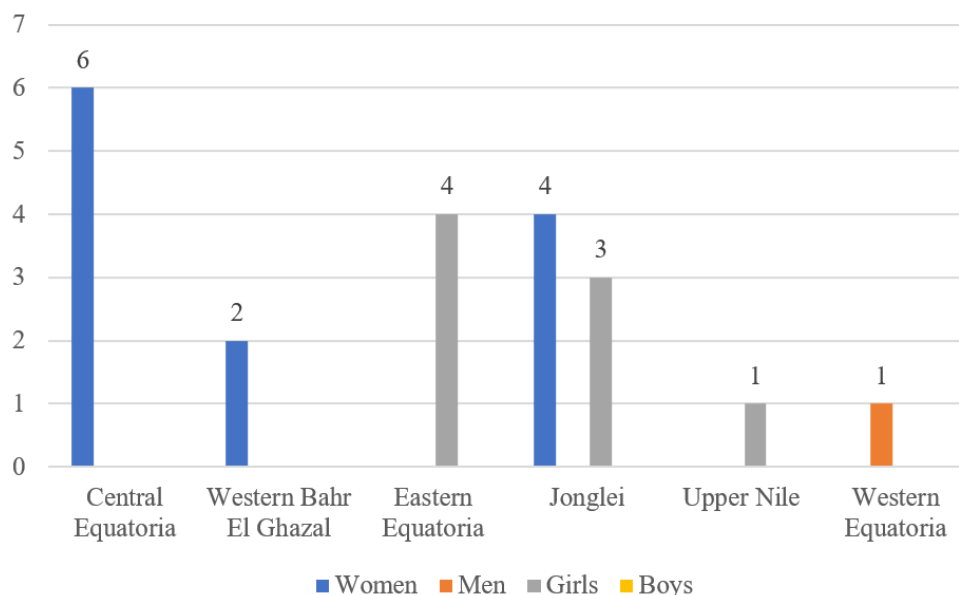


Figure VI
Victims of conflict-related sexual violence by State



78. On 15 June, UNMISS and the International Organization for Migration convened a civil-military dialogue in Yei County, Central Equatoria State, attended by 121 participants (31 women), including co-chairs of the Joint Implementation Committee on the Action Plan for the Armed Forces on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and senior military personnel. It concluded with 18 recommendations to address conflict-related sexual violence. A similar workshop was organized on 7 and 8 July in Kuajok, Warrap State, attended by 22 participants (eight women). It recommended accelerating the unification of armed forces to reduce conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated by members of the military through accountability.

79. On 27 June, UNMISS partnered with the United Nations Population Fund in hosting a forum on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict for 36 survivors (30 women, 6 men) which discussed challenges they face and recommended projects responding to their needs (medical, psychological and means of subsistence).

80. From 26 to 27 June, UN-Women, UNMISS and UNDP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare; Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs; and Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, organized a consultation workshop on ensuring a gender responsive transitional justice process in South Sudan. A total of 128 participants (108 women) attended, developed and transmitted key recommendations to the parliament speaker to ensure a survivor-centric and gender-responsive transitional justice process and legislation that would establish the transitional justice mechanisms.

F. Women and peace and security

81. On 6 June, UNMISS engaged with 30 women peace ambassadors in Logurung, Eastern Equatoria State, to identify challenges to the effective implementation of their programmes. The women requested that UNMISS and other peace partners provide more support in building their capacity. On 13 July, UNMISS held an outreach

activity on sexual and gender-based violence for 30 students (11 girls, 19 boys) in Alliance High School in Bor, Jonglei State. Students condemned early and forced marriage and gender-based violence and emphasized the need for joint efforts to minimize the occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence.

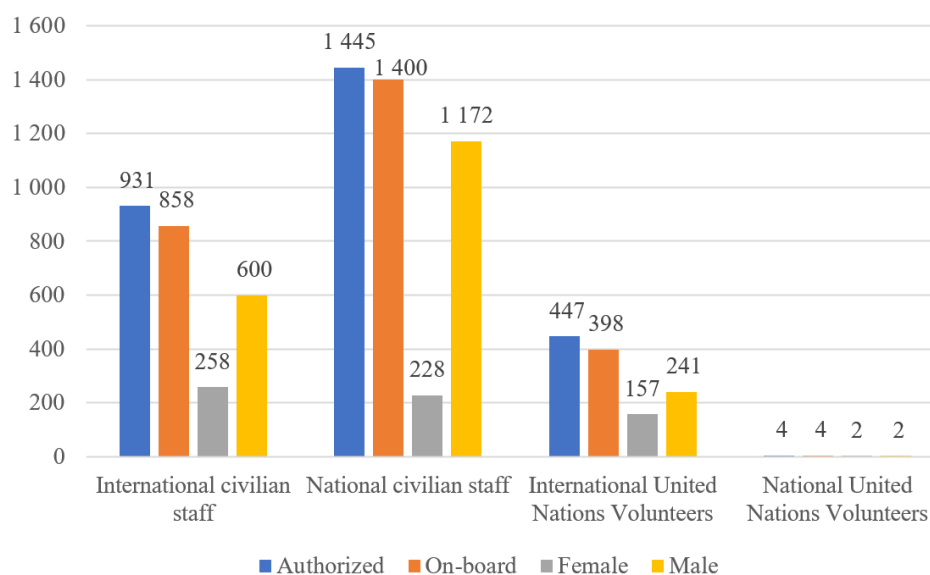
82. On 19 July, the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare organized an event on the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (known as Maputo Protocol), in preparation for its implementation. The President signed the Protocol into law in March 2023.

83. To support gender mainstreaming in the National Prison Service, UNMISS continued its gender needs assessments in Bentiu, Kuajok and Torit in August. From 21 to 23 August, UNMISS conducted a training on Gender Friendly Prison Service for 30 prison officers (20 women) in Rumbek.

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

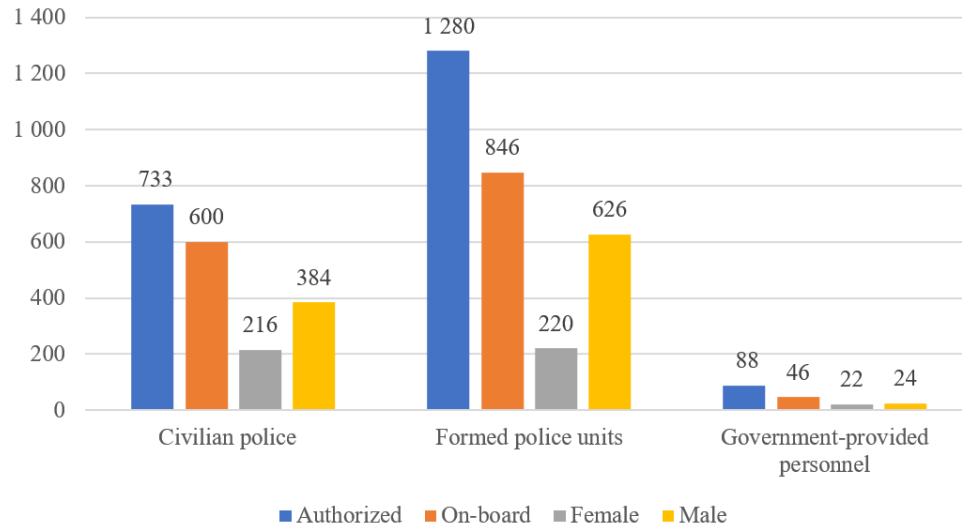
84. As at 31 August, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,660, comprising 858 international staff (258 women, 30.0 per cent); 1,400 national staff members, (228 women, 16.3 per cent); and 398 international United Nations Volunteers, (157 women, 40.0 per cent) (see figure VII).

Figure VII
UNMISS civilian personnel as at 31 August 2023



85. The police strength stood at 1,492 (of an authorized 2,101 personnel), comprising 600 individual police officers, including 216 women (36.0 per cent); 846 personnel in formed police units (220 women, 26.0 per cent); and 46 justice and corrections advisors (22 women, 47.8 per cent) (see figure VIII).

Figure VIII
UNMISS police strength as at 31 August 2023



86. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, UNMISS troop strength stood at 13,742 military personnel: 237 military liaison officers, including 75 women (31.6 per cent); 439 military staff officers, including 81 women, (18.5 per cent); and 13,066 military contingent personnel, including 912 women (7.0 per cent) (see figures IX and X).

Figure IX
UNMISS military personnel

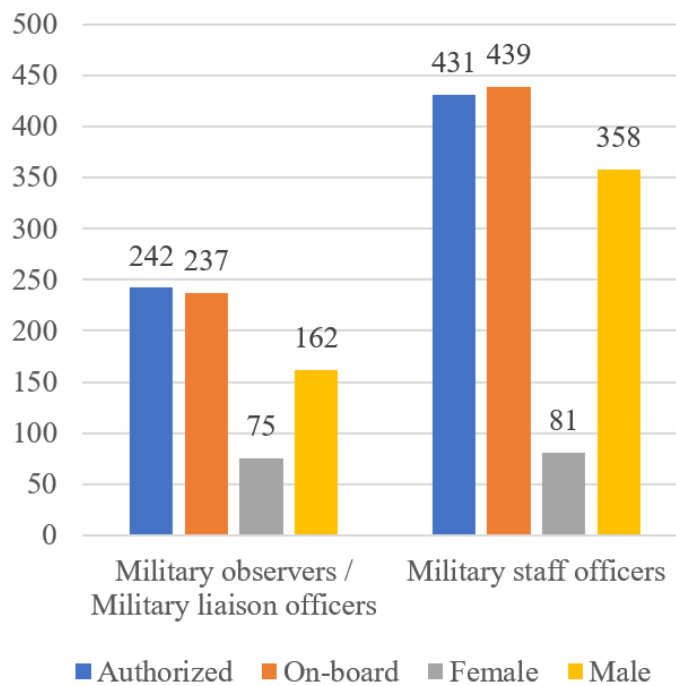
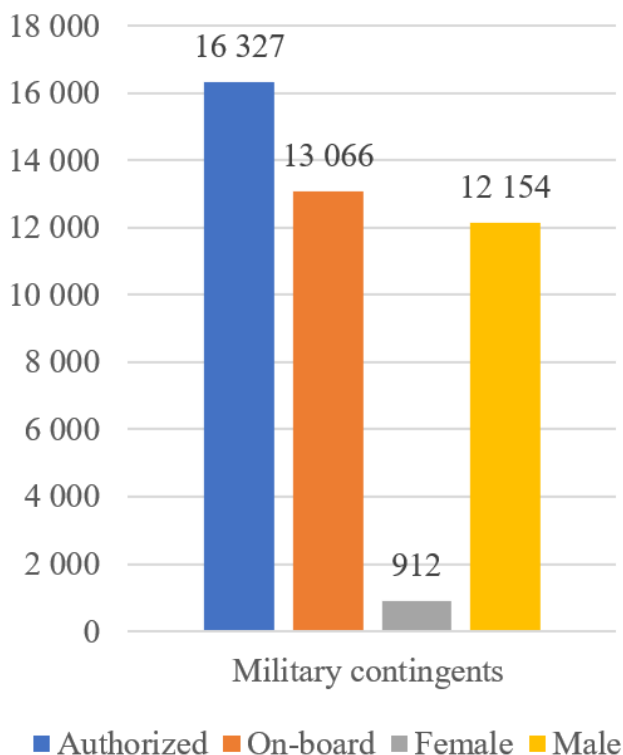


Figure X
Military personnel contingent



87. UNMISS continues to manage risks of misconduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse. As at 31 August, the Mission had conducted four visits to Wau, Yambio (including Tambura), Torit and Yei, and reviewed risk registers and action plans; held meetings and engagements with the field-level prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse task forces and community-based complaints mechanisms; presented refresher training sessions on United Nations standards of conduct and engaged with personnel on conduct and discipline related matters. Henceforth, a special focus will be placed on deployments in remote locations.

88. In accordance with the applicable policy, information on possible unsatisfactory conduct and/or misconduct was processed in a timely fashion. As at 31 August, 33 allegations of misconduct were recorded in the case management tracking system. Two allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were recorded. All identified victims of 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

89. As at 31 July, UNMISS recorded 28 violations of the status-of-forces agreement (63 violations during the previous reporting period). Twenty-five violations involved movement restrictions imposed by Government authorities, affecting UNMISS patrols in Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Upper Nile Lakes, Northern and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States. Eleven dynamic air patrols and ground patrols from Wau to Raja, Timsaha, to Deim Zubeir, Boro Medina, Khor-Ghana, Kata and Sopo, were cancelled owing to non-acknowledgement of sharing of information and Flight

Safety Assurance documents by the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism headquarters in Juba. Seventeen UNMISS patrols were denied access to Wonduruba, Gangura, Nabiapai, Lobonok, Maridi, Ngiri, Mundri, Kediba, Mvolo, Asare, Rego-Tindalo, Lainya, Terekeka, Wuji, Tonj, Jobor, Mangalla, Gemmaiza, Yebisak, Wunuliet and Lado Koda, respectively.

90. On 1 June, Mine Action Service contractors were denied access and assaulted by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Loa, Eastern Equatoria State, travelling from Nimule to Opari to conduct a demolition of unexploded ordnance, despite having acquired the relevant permission.

91. 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 14 June, UNMISS international rations contractor for troops, ESKO was forced to pay the sum of SSP 2,550,000 (approximately \$19,500) to the National Revenue Authority as import licence fee for food items. On 5 July, UNMISS transmitted démarches to the Government in protest and continued to engage with the Government to exempt UNMISS and its contractors from payment of the imposed fees.

92. On 16 June, the South Sudan National Police Service in Jonglei State recovered an UNMISS Indian contingent truck which was unlawfully taken by unknown elements during an armed attack on a UNMISS convoy along the Manyabol-Gumuruk road in December 2013.

93. Criminality remained the predominant threat to United Nations personnel and operations, in the form of road banditry, petty theft and armed burglaries of locally recruited staff domiciles, among other typologies. Humanitarian convoys, escorted by UNMISS force protection, continued to be targeted in road banditry incidents. In the Malakal protection of civilians site, the temporary abduction of a United Nations police officer and vandalizing of two UNMISS watchtowers occurred following intercommunal clashes within the site. During the reporting period, 55 incidents of access denial, harassment, intimidation and extortion against United Nations and non-governmental organizations personnel were recorded.

VIII. Performance of uniformed components

94. The UNMISS force evaluated 11 units, including five infantry battalions, four engineer unit, one aviation and one medical unit. The units were found to be well-trained and operationally ready according to United Nations standards. Five units exceeded the set military unit evaluation tool standards, and six units successfully met the set standards.

95. United Nations police conducted the performance evaluation and assessment of four formed police units (two in Juba, one in Bentiu and one in Malakal). The overall performance was satisfactory, with some recommendations for improvements on training and administration. During an additional evaluation on Malakal unit on 16 and 17 August, performance gaps were identified and correction measures were recommended.

IX. Observations and recommendations

96. South Sudan is at a defining moment in its history as it moves towards its first-ever general elections since attaining independence in 2011. With less than two years remaining in the transitional period, the Government has yet to put in place the requisite legal frameworks, along with relevant institutions to prepare for and hold

credible elections. Time is of the essence. I urge the leaders of South Sudan to use the limited time remaining to address these pending tasks.

97. While I commend the consistent statements by the President that the elections will be conducted as planned, I note with growing concern that parliament is yet to pass the elections bill, which remains held in the Reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly, and that the reconstitution of the National Constitutional Review Committee, National Elections Commission, and Political Parties Council has yet to take place. Agreeing on these critical tasks does not require financial resources, but political will and a spirit of compromise to move forward in an inclusive manner. The non-functional status of the Political Parties Council adversely impacts the political process, as most political parties are operating without registration and there is so far no meaningful inter-party dialogue on the streamlining of the electoral process

98. I urge the Government to prioritize reaching an agreement on these key provisions to pave the way for the holding of free, fair and credible elections together with reaching consensus on the census, voter registration and participation of internally displaced persons and refugees.

99. The establishment of the Government-Trilateral joint task force aimed at supporting the Constitution-making and electoral processes provides a platform for progressing implementation and an opportunity for partners to assess entry points within the scope of the Government's request for electoral assistance. I encourage the parties to meet public expectations and implement these key benchmarks. I appreciate the continued participation of IGAD, the African Union and the Troika in the task force and call for enhanced collaboration with the United Nations towards common messaging and leveraging the comparative advantage that each partner brings to the processes.

100. I continue to emphasize the importance of a political and civic space, as well as a secure environment, which are preconditions for the conduct of free, fair, and credible elections. With the initiation of electoral campaigning in parts of the country, it is imperative that all political parties have equal opportunities, access and rights, by law, to mobilize political support. I also remind the parties of their commitment to the gender provisions of the Revitalized Agreement.

101. I call upon President Salva Kiir and First Vice-President Riek Machar to urgently resolve their differences over the transitional security arrangements and finalize the distribution of posts in the middle echelon of the command of the necessary unified forces. Deadlines related to the necessary unified forces continue to be missed and I call upon both leaders to bring the process back on track as a matter of urgency.

102. I reiterate my concern that the unresolved political impasse between SPLM and SPLM-IO over the removal of the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and the Minister of the Interior, and the reallocation of their portfolios without consensus, have implications for progress on the transitional security arrangements. I call upon both sides to urgently resolve the issue.

103. Intercommunal violence, allegations of extrajudicial killings and sexual violence continue to be reported in parts of the country. I urge the Government to take the necessary steps to strengthen rule of law institutions to end the persisting impunity, including for serious crimes. In this regard, I recognize the commitment of both civilian and military justice actors to increase access to justice, including for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The United Nations continues its support to strengthen the criminal justice chain in an integrated manner and expand the presence of justice actors across the country in order to promote justice and the full realization of human rights.

104. While I to appreciate the efforts of South Sudan to address the deteriorating situation in the Sudan, I remain extremely concerned over the impact of the conflict on South Sudan. An overwhelming influx of refugees and returnees along the entry points in the northern States of the country has further exacerbated a fragile humanitarian situation. I appeal to the international community and donors for their increased financial contribution to enable humanitarian actors to provide the required assistance.

105. South Sudan remains a dangerous environment for aid workers. Frequent attacks and criminality continue to affect the ability of humanitarians to undertake their work. I call upon the Government to take all possible steps so that humanitarian partners have safe, unfettered access to deliver lifesaving services while perpetrators must be brought to justice.

106. Finally, I express my deep appreciation to the troop- and police-contributing countries and United Nations personnel and commend the efforts of IGAD and the African Union. I thank my Special Representative for South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, UNMISS staff, the United Nations country team, as well as humanitarian partners for their ongoing efforts towards peace and stability in South Sudan.

UNMISS

JUNE 2023

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