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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 [2779 \(2025\)](#) and covers political and security developments, the humanitarian and human rights situation and progress towards the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) between 16 October 2025 and 15 January 2026.

II. Political and economic developments

2. During the reporting period, the political situation in South Sudan continued to deteriorate, with the collapse of power-sharing arrangements, inconsistent implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and unilateral proposals for its amendment, continued violations of the ceasefire and escalating military operations. The trial of the First Vice-President and seven co-accused continued as the Government carried out major unilateral political reshuffles, systematically removing Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) officials from ministerial and parliamentary positions. Progress on inclusive electoral preparations and constitution-making efforts were minimal, despite regional and international calls for dialogue and the cessation of hostilities. Amid this deteriorating situation, SPLM/A-IO continued establishing parallel governance structures in areas under its control.

3. On 21 October, the National Elections Commission, supported by the United Nations integrated electoral assistance team, held consultations with key stakeholders on issues related to preparations for the conduct of elections, including lack of political decisions, legal gaps, funding issues and timeline delays. Participants expressed concerns regarding the feasibility of holding elections in the time remaining. They called for political leaders to act and objected to further extensions.

4. On 3 November, President Salva Kiir Mayardit appointed Bak Barnaba Chol as Minister of Finance and Planning, Africano Mande Gedima as Minister of Presidential Affairs and Lieutenant General Philip Nyuon Nyuon as Commander of the Tiger Division.



5. On 12 November, the President reinstated James Wani Igga as Vice-President for the Economic Cluster and First Deputy Chair of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), replacing Benjamin Bol Mel in both positions, and appointed Yeni Samuel Costa as Governor of the Bank of South Sudan.
6. On 14 November, the Cabinet approved the 2025/26 fiscal year budget, estimated at 8.5 trillion South Sudanese pounds and with a revenue projection of 7 trillion South Sudanese pounds. The budget is pending endorsement by parliament.
7. On 17 November, Michael Makuei Lueth was appointed as Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ateny Wek Ateny as Minister of Information, Technology and Postal Services and Mabior Garang de Mabior as Minister of Environment. Women's representation in government remained below the 35 per cent quota. Only 20 per cent of ministers were women and none of the State governors were women.
8. From 24 to 28 November, Revitalized Agreement signatories, stakeholders and women mediators held a consultative forum with technical support from UNMISS and facilitation from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).
9. On 25 November, the Board of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism held an extraordinary meeting, at which participants raised the alarm about rising violence across the country and urged the parties to the Revitalized Agreement to recommit to the ceasefire and prioritize civilian safety.
10. The National Constitutional Review Commission, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNMISS, completed public constitution-making consultations in eight states. Term limits, separation of powers, clarity regarding the country's borders and a federal system of government were some of the priorities raised by citizens.
11. On 3 December, the reconstituted National Transitional Committee discussed transitional security arrangements, despite the ongoing dispute regarding the representation of the parties in the bodies responsible for implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.
12. In addition to the parallel structures established in reaction to the appointments made by the President, the Acting Chair of SPLM/A-IO, Nathaniel Oyet, appointed new commissioners for Leer, Koch, Mayendit and Panyinjar Counties, Unity State, and Uror County, Jonglei State.
13. On 6 December, the President chaired an SPLM leadership meeting on strengthening and consolidating the party ahead of the 2026 elections.
14. On 10, 17 and 23 December, the President chaired extended meetings of the Presidency. The participants agreed to amend certain provisions of the Revitalized Agreement and expedite preparations for elections by deferring the constitution-making process and the census, both of which are prerequisites for elections under the amended National Elections Act, and by completing the transitional security arrangements set out in the Revitalized Agreement. SPLM/A-IO rejected the legitimacy and outcomes of the meeting, describing them as unilateral.
15. On 22 December, following a request from SPLM, the National Elections Commission announced that, owing to census delays, it would use the 2010 constituency boundaries, on the basis of which it declared 102 constituencies across 10 states and three administrative areas. The Commission stated that its decision was in accordance with the amended National Elections Act, although the Act only provides that population census data can be used for establishing constituencies and

outlines related procedures. No funding for the conduct of the elections has been allocated, nor were any key decisions taken, including which elections would be held.

16. On 28 December, the former Ambassador of South Sudan to South Africa, General Wilson Deng Wek Kuoirot, formed a new political-military movement, the National Uprising Movement/Army, and called for a change of government, whether by consent or force.

17. On 7 January, the President dismissed three Cabinet ministers who are members of SPLM/A-IO: the Minister of Mining, Martin Gama Abucha, the Minister of Energy and Dams, Peter Marcelo Nasir, and the Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Aya Benjamin Warile. They were replaced with appointees belonging to the splinter faction led by the Minister of Peacebuilding, Stephen Par Kuol. As a result of that development, all of the SPLM/A-IO representatives appointed by the First Vice-President, Riek Machar, are no longer members of the Cabinet. On 19 January, the President dismissed the Minister of the Interior, Angelina Teny.

18. On 8 January, the Ministry of Presidential Affairs issued an order prohibiting the announcement in the media of appointments or removals made by the President, including in state media or social media. Pursuant to that same order, official documents bearing the signature of the President must remain classified. On 9 January, the Ministry clarified that the order was intended to establish a chain of protocol.

19. Civil society has made multiple attempts to hold inclusive dialogues involving the Revitalized Agreement signatory parties and stakeholders. The dialogue that was scheduled to held in mid-December and led by the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization with UNMISS support was postponed owing to non-participation by the Government. It is expected that it will be held in January 2026.

Other political developments

20. The Transitional National Legislative Assembly passed the national youth policy, the cybersecurity and misuse of computers and the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community bills on 16 October and 25 and 27 November, respectively. Civil society organizations have raised concerns that the cybersecurity bill could be misused to restrict civic and political space.

Regional engagements and developments

21. On 17 October, the President reconstituted the high-level committee on the final status of Abyei. The high-level committee had been headed by Benjamin Bol Mel, who was one of the country's Vice-Presidents until he was removed from office on 12 November.

22. On 30 October, following a drone attack, the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum of the Sudan temporarily shut down oil facilities in Heglig, which borders South Sudan. Following further attacks, another shutdown was ordered from 13 to 15 November.

23. On 8 December, the Rapid Support Forces announced that they had taken control of the Heglig oilfield after Sudanese Armed Forces troops had withdrawn and crossed the border into Unity State. South Sudan announced that the Sudanese Armed Forces troops had surrendered their weapons upon entering the country. Tensions in Heglig persisted after an alleged strike by the Sudanese Armed Forces on 9 December resulted in at least seven deaths. On 14 December, the Rapid Support Forces reportedly attacked an SPLM/A-IO border base in Unity State.

24. On 10 December, the Government of South Sudan, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Force reached a tripartite agreement under which the South Sudan People's Defence Forces would protect the oil infrastructure at Heglig.

25. From 14 to 20 December, a delegation led by presidential adviser Tut Gatluak visited the Sudan and met with the President of the Transitional Sovereign Council, General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, and senior Sudanese officials in Port Sudan and discussed strategic cooperation between South Sudan and the Sudan.

III. Security situation

26. The security situation in greater Equatoria and greater Upper Nile, in particular in Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Unity and northern Jonglei States, further deteriorated. The reporting period was marked by aerial bombardments, clashes between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, on the one hand, and SPLM/A-IO and allied factions, including the National Salvation Front, on the other, resulting in large-scale displacement and exacerbating humanitarian concerns.

Greater Upper Nile region

27. The greater Upper Nile region experienced heightened hostilities between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLM/A-IO. Air strikes and clashes in northern Jonglei State and northern Unity State cumulatively resulted in 34 persons being killed (including 5 women and 4 children) and 20 injured (including 5 women and 8 children) over the course of 14 incidents. Armed groups and militias also targeted non-governmental organizations, disrupting humanitarian operations.

28. In a statement issued on 30 December, the spokesperson of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, Lul Ruai Koang, ordered civilians to evacuate Nyerol, Uror and Akobo Counties in Jonglei State, which are controlled by opposition forces. Reportedly, more than 90,000 civilians have been displaced by the fighting. Military operations, in particular in Uror and Nyerol Counties, also resulted in the evacuation of humanitarian workers and the confiscation for military purposes of vehicles contracted by humanitarian organizations and the United Nations by both the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLM/A-IO.

29. In Unity State, fighting in Pariang, Abiemnom, Guit and Rubkona Counties and in the vicinity of the Bentiu internally displaced persons camp raised concerns for civilians, with incidents of conflict-related sexual violence being reported. Security operations were conducted in the camp targeting SPLM/A-IO supporters and officials. The mobilization of armed youth and their increased involvement in violence was also reported.

30. On 14 November, in Upper Nile State, armed youth from Ulang and Baliet Counties clashed in a significant incident of communal violence, resulting in 73 persons killed (including 20 women and 7 children) and 62 injured (including 10 women). The South Sudan People's Defence Forces later conducted an air strike on Doma payam in Baliet County.

31. The emergence in Jonglei State of the Red Belt Movement, a youth militia group, prompted the deployment of government security forces to Bor. On 4 January, following the negotiated surrender of the movement's leader, its members were pardoned and allowed to either integrate into the security forces or return to their communities.

Greater Equatoria region

32. In Central Equatoria State and Western Equatoria State, between 16 and 17 October, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces bombed Nagero and Tambura Counties, displacing approximately 1,200 civilians. Clashes also occurred on 22 and 23 October near the Ayat internally displaced persons camp in Tambura County. Meanwhile, in Mundri East County, on 5 and 7 November, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces were accused by community members of harassment and sexual violence against civilians who allegedly support SPLM/A-IO or the National Salvation Front. In addition, more than 6,000 civilians crossed from the Central African Republic into Tambura County following insecurity linked to the 28 December elections in that country.

33. On 24 and 28 October, the Uganda People's Defence Forces entered Kajo Kaji County in Central Equatoria State, looting civilian property and causing displacement and the closure of the Yumbe-Kajo Kaji border zone. On 29 October, the State Security Committee, which is chaired by the Governor of Central Equatoria State, demanded that the Ugandan forces withdraw, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Sudan engaged with its counterparts to resolve the conflict.

34. In Eastern Equatoria State, the deployment of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces to Iyire and Moti, near Torit, in mid-November led to an escalation in hostilities, as SPLM/A-IO and the National Salvation Front mobilized in defence. Clashes on 18 November in Torit resulted in five security personnel being killed and the displacement of several civilians. In response to violence that occurred on 19 and 23 November, security operations mounted by joint security forces led to the seizure of villages in Magwe and the displacement of civilians, while SPLM/A-IO and the National Salvation Front withdrew towards the Ugandan border. The Governor instituted a curfew, deployed reinforcements and called for the cessation of hostilities.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

35. In Warrap State, the disarmament campaign continued, with progress in Tonj North and ongoing resistance in Tonj East. On 27 and 28 October, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces conducted aerial bombardments in Tonj East, targeting armed youth involved in recurrent cattle-related violence. The strikes resulted in casualties, loss of livestock and the displacement of at least 600 civilians. State authorities later confirmed that the operations had been ordered in order to curb the activities of armed youth resisting disarmament.

36. With the onset of the dry season, cross-border and intercommunal violence persisted along the border of Unity, Lakes and Warrap States, cumulatively resulting in 40 persons being killed (including 5 women and 1 child) and 20 injured (including 3 children) over the course of 21 incidents.

37. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, clashes between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLM/A-IO in Jur River County triggered the displacement of more than 4,000 civilians. On 15 December, an UNMISS national staff member who had been abducted with seven other civilians was killed by South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers.

IV. Humanitarian situation

38. As at 12 January 2026, approximately 1.3 million people had fled the conflict in the Sudan and arrived in South Sudan since the outbreak of fighting in April 2023. While that number also includes Sudanese refugees, a significant majority of the refugees are South Sudanese returnees. As at the end of December 2025, South Sudan

was hosting a total of 605,062 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 571,071 (95 per cent) were from the Sudan. Projections in the 2026 South Sudan Country Refugee Response Plan indicate that roughly 380,000 more individuals are expected to arrive in South Sudan by the end of 2026, driven by ongoing insecurity and severe food shortages in the Sudan.

39. In the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report released on 4 November, it was projected that more than half of the population of South Sudan, about 7.56 million people, would face at least a crisis level of food insecurity (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3) during the 2026 lean season (April to July). An estimated 2.11 million children and 1.15 million pregnant and breastfeeding women were expected to suffer acute malnutrition in the period from July 2025 to June 2026. Of greatest concern is the situation of 28,000 people in Nasir County, Upper Nile State, and Fangak County, Jonglei State, who are currently facing a catastrophic level of food insecurity (IPC Phase 5). Drivers of the situation include escalating conflict, displacement, access constraints, economic instability, climatic shocks and eroded coping mechanisms.

40. As at 31 December, flooding had affected 1.35 million people across 39 counties in eight states, displacing nearly 375,600 persons. Jonglei, Lakes and Unity States account for 88 per cent of those affected. The year 2025 was the fifth consecutive year in which severe flooding had inundated homes, farmland and infrastructure. As the waters recede, some families are returning, but many houses have been destroyed and services are unavailable. Partners continue to provide life-saving assistance and engage in planning for early recovery.

41. The cholera outbreak persisted, with 97,257 cases and 1,600 deaths reported as at 14 January. Vaccination coverage reached 88.9 per cent, with mop-up vaccination campaigns under way in several regions. On 17 November, the Ministry of Health issued an alert after a confirmed case of Marburg virus disease near the border with Ethiopia. No additional cases had been reported as at 15 January.

42. On 14 November, in an instance of communal cattle raiding, armed men attacked Adong Payam, Baliet County, Upper Nile State, displacing approximately 4,400 civilians, most of whom were women and children. An aid worker was killed, a healthcare facility was vandalized and humanitarian supplies looted, forcing humanitarian staff to relocate. On 21 November, it was reported that continued insecurity had led to the displacement of an additional 300 persons from Baliet County to Nyerol County, Jonglei State.

43. According to an inter-agency assessment conducted from 7 to 17 November, it was estimated that 225,500 people had been displaced by conflict in Western Equatoria State between June and November.

44. As at 31 December, more than 14,000 people continued to be displaced in Eastern Equatoria State following clashes that occurred in November between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and joint SPLM/A-IO and National Salvation Front forces in Torit County. Partners have activated contingency plans, but response capacity remains limited.

45. Estimates indicate that, since 29 December, more than 180,000 people have been displaced by conflict and air strikes in Nyerol, Uror, Akobo and Duk Counties in Jonglei State. Many of them are sheltering in remote areas, while others have fled to neighbouring states. The authorities in Mingkaman, Awerial County, Lakes State, reported that, as at 15 January, more than 18,000 people had arrived from Jonglei State. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continues to engage with all parties in order to facilitate the safe delivery of aid.

46. From October to December 2025, 165 humanitarian access incidents were reported, 52 of which were in December. By comparison, 102 incidents were reported during the same period in 2024. During the reporting period, humanitarian access across South Sudan progressively deteriorated as a result of active hostilities, increased militarization and expanding bureaucratic interference. Fighting and air strikes across Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity, Western Equatoria and Eastern Equatoria States triggered widespread displacement, while insecurity constrained humanitarian operations. In October and November, the authorities began to require travel permits for movement from Malakal to counties in Upper Nile State. Targeted engagement with the authorities temporarily enabled access to Kurwai, allowing assistance to reach 24,000 people and nutrition services to be delivered to more than 2,000 children.

V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks

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

47. UNMISS continued its engagements to advance political dialogue and inclusive implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, including through high-level engagement with government stakeholders and by supporting dialogue at the national and state levels, the National Constitutional Review Commission and the National Elections Commission.

48. On 6 November, as part of the effort to promote women's participation in media and politics, UNMISS partnered with the Union of Journalists of South Sudan to train 100 journalists (including 67 women) on responsible reporting during elections and constitutional processes. From 11 to 13 November, UNMISS and partners held a national workshop on local governance and devolution of power for 100 officials (including 20 women), with a view to developing recommendations for reforms to the federal structure. On 25 November, UNMISS hosted a meeting of 20 senior political leaders (including 1 woman), with a view to fostering consensus on inclusive dialogue as the path to stability.

49. From 11 to 13 December, UNMISS facilitated civil society-hosted youth forums at three universities as part of an inclusive governance programme for the political participation, empowerment and civic education of young people. More than 250 students engaged on core political transition issues, including constitution-making; elections; the truth, reconciliation and healing process; the women and peace and security agenda; and the youth and peace and security agenda.

50. From 7 to 14 November, in Malakal, Upper Nile State, UNMISS facilitated a meeting of the Sudan/South Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference, marking the first time that the gathering of bishops from both countries had been held in Upper Nile State. At the meeting, religious leaders committed to reinforcing dialogue, trust and collaboration across ethnic and political lines.

51. On 27 November, UNMISS facilitated a quarterly meeting between Mission leadership and civil society organizations, the focus of which was the latter's contribution to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. More than 200 civil society representatives (including 105 women) from across the country committed to strengthening coordination and agreed on actions to prepare for the closure of UNMISS field offices owing to the effects of the liquidity crisis on peacekeeping operations.

52. UNMISS supported the County Commissioners' Forums that were held in the Ruweng Administrative Area on 8 and 9 December, Western Equatoria State on 9 and 10 December and Unity State on 18 and 19 December for state and county authorities to review achievements and challenges and identify future priorities. The 155 participants (including 26 women) in the forums developed recommendations for strengthening local governance, improving service delivery and advancing implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, including electoral preparations.

53. UNMISS continued to support the Specialized Committee for National Security and Public Order of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly in developing its action plan for the period October 2025–March 2026. In addition, the Mission assisted with efforts aimed at enhancing regional linkages with the African Security Sector Network, thus fostering transparency, accountability and compliance with the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement in order to advance inclusive, rights-based security sector reform and promote confidence in parliamentary oversight.

B. Protection of civilians and mitigating intercommunal conflict

54. During the reporting period, the Mission supported seven programmes aimed at strengthening protection of civilians in Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States and the greater Bahr el-Ghazal area, targeting a total of 320 participants (including 89 women). From 16 to 19 October, UNMISS and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) facilitated a civil-military dialogue review workshop in Malakal for 70 participants (including 11 women), which concluded with a renewed commitment to establishing a joint committee for collaboration between civilians and security forces. In Renk, from 4 to 6 December, UNMISS facilitated a forum on trauma awareness and healing for 80 community leaders (including 36 women), in order to promote reconciliation and mitigate inter-ethnic tensions.

55. From 1 to 3 December, UNMISS, with IOM and peace partners, supported a dialogue between Akoka and Fashoda Counties that was held in Malakal, with a view to advancing reconciliation in relation to a long-standing land dispute. The 80 participants (including 11 women) in the dialogue endorsed resolutions on shared land use and agreed to establish a peace committee to oversee their implementation. From 2 to 4 December, UNMISS facilitated a capacity-building workshop for 40 persons (including 12 women) aimed at strengthening civil society, media actors and social media bloggers in conflict-sensitive reporting and preventing hate speech. From 11 to 15 December, UNMISS facilitated a peace dialogue for traditional leaders in Yambio. The dialogue, which brought together 50 participants (including 15 women), was organized by the Azande kingdom and the Ministry of Peacebuilding with a view to promoting peace and social cohesion in Western Equatoria State. From 16 to 20 December, UNMISS convened the annual Pre-Seasonal Tristate Cattle Movement Conference in Wau. The conference, which brought together 150 participants (including 26 women), marked a key step towards institutionalizing collaborative mechanisms for conflict prevention in greater Bahr el-Ghazal.

56. In order to prevent violence, mitigate intercommunal tensions, promote social cohesion, support community-level conflict resolution and create space and preconditions for potential future disarmament, demobilization and reintegration-related activities, on 31 October, UNMISS completed a community violence-reduction project in Eastern Equatoria State, empowering 167 vulnerable youth (including 43 women) with livelihood and psychosocial training, thereby advancing the voluntary civilian disarmament strategy.

57. On 19 November, UNMISS resumed consultations with key actors, including the State government of Upper Nile, humanitarian actors and internally displaced persons, in order to assess the possibility of handing responsibility for the security and administration of the Malakal protection of civilians site to the Government of South Sudan.

58. UNMISS peacekeepers continued to patrol main supply routes and hotspots, in order to project force and support the protection of civilians. The UNMISS force conducted 7,911 patrols, including 228 integrated patrols comprising United Nations police and civilian personnel for protection of civilians through presence in strategic areas.

59. United Nations police conducted 4,570 patrols, including 33 integrated patrols and 2,925 patrols involving women personnel. Quick response teams were on standby on 1,583 occasions to support policing efforts in Juba, Malakal and Bentiu. Eight of the teams were activated and deployed in order to address incidents in the Malakal protection of civilians site and the internally displaced persons camp. In addition, 61 individual police officers (45 men and 16 women) were deployed to two temporary operating bases and two company operating bases to support confidence-building, leadership engagement, capacity-building for the South Sudan National Police Service and service delivery to communities.

60. Workshops organized by the Mission enhanced institutional capacity and community engagement in relation to the protection of civilians. The workshops were attended by 122 participants, 61 of whom were women, including members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and community members in Yei, Central Equatoria State, and Bor, Jonglei State. In October, inclusive dialogues and reintegration workshops engaged 230 participants, 119 of whom were women, including elders, returnees and internally displaced persons, and host communities in Yirol East, Lakes State, Nyalath payam, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State, Guit, Bentiu and Rubkona, Unity State, and Upper Nile State, with a view to promoting early warning of violence and violence risk mitigation. In order to reinforce security communication and rapid response, UNMISS distributed 80 FM radios across Lakes State and trained 30 members of the protection of civilians alert network. Those efforts were complemented by 10 radio talk shows and six dialogues. Quick-impact projects enhanced government service delivery, benefiting 314 students (including 194 girls) in Lakes State; provided a solar-powered water yard in Jonglei State, improving access to clean water, reducing sexual violence risks, promoting social cohesion and fostering a protective environment for sustainable return and reintegration; and constructed a training hall in Bentiu, Unity State, for South Sudan National Police Service capacity-building and a state electoral committee office, also in Unity State, with a view to advancing civic education and credible elections.

61. The Mine Action Service responded to 384 requests from UNMISS and local communities for identification, removal and disposal of explosive ordnance. The operations reduced immediate threats and enabled safe access to 12 agricultural sites and four water sources, decreasing the risk of accidents in areas affected by conflict and intercommunal tensions. About 226,439 m² of hazardous land were cleared and 103 explosive items destroyed, achieving tangible progress towards safeguarding communities from explosive ordnance across a known contaminated area that is estimated to be 20,943,457 m². Explosive ordnance risk education was delivered to 29,249 individuals (9,424 boys, 8,521 girls, 5,216 men and 6,088 women), including people who had been displaced from the Sudan, lowering likelihood of explosive ordnance incidents.

C. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

62. The Mission continued to provide security for humanitarian assistance delivery through the protection of convoys. The UNMISS force conducted 93 long-duration patrols, 396 short-duration patrols and 659 force protection tasks to help to create conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and ensure the protection of humanitarian workers.

63. UNMISS supported delivery of medical supplies and flood-mitigation materials for dyke construction for flood-affected communities in Unity State and joint humanitarian response planning for 96,205 people affected by flooding across Upper Nile State.

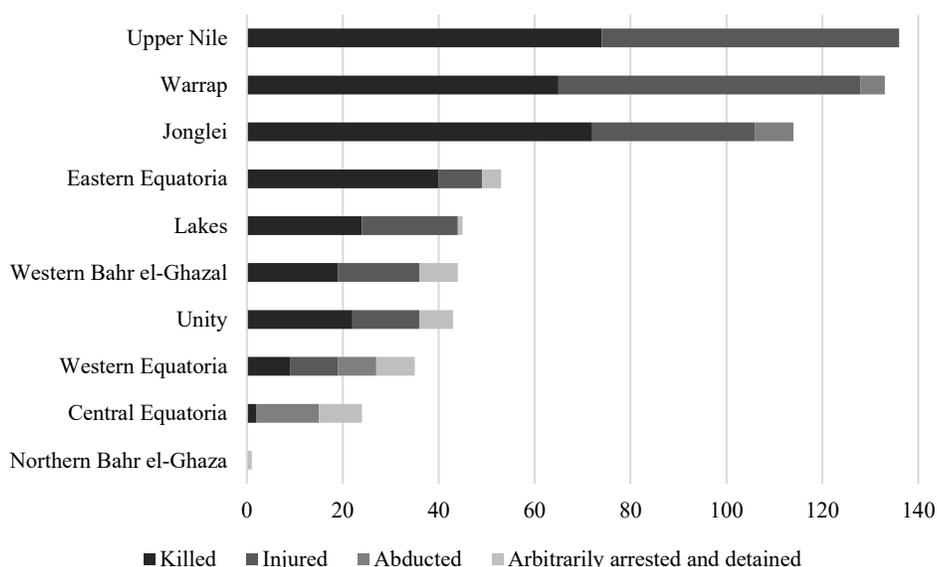
64. United Nations police implemented 117 activities, reaching 3,145 participants (2,033 men and 1,112 women). Of that number, 104 activities, some of which concerned preventing and responding to cattle raids, were delivered to the South Sudan National Police Service, engaging 2,595 participants (including 719 women). The other thirteen activities were community-focused and covered such topics as crime-reduction awareness and drug and alcohol management, engaging 550 participants (including 148 women).

65. The Mine Action Service reduced the threat of explosive ordnance by assessing and clearing areas suspected of being contaminated with unexploded ordnance for several partners. The activities conducted included verifying that an airstrip in Udier, Upper Nile State, was clear of explosive ordnance, thereby allowing the resumption of World Food Programme food drop operations that had been halted owing to the suspected presence of unexploded ordnance, and the assessment and clearance of several areas near Malakal. The Mine Action Service conducted route verification over a distance of 730 km, enabling safe movement for humanitarian personnel, accompanied by UNMISS patrols, and facilitated the rehabilitation of main supply routes.

D. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations

66. The Mission documented and verified 171 incidents of human rights violations and abuses affecting 628 civilians, including 72 women and 60 children (35 boys and 25 girls). A total of 327 civilians (258 men, 42 women, 14 girls and 13 boys) were killed, 229 (189 men, 25 women, 8 boys and 7 girls) were injured, 34 (12 men, 5 women, 13 boys and 4 girls) were abducted and 38 (37 men and 1 boy) were arbitrarily arrested and detained (see figure below). Community-based militias and/or civil defence groups were responsible for 60 per cent of incidents, while 37 per cent were attributed to conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups and 3 per cent to unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements. The Mission also documented four extrajudicial executions by security personnel (three in Warrap State and one in Lakes State).

Number of victims by State and type of violation



Source: United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Human Rights Division.

67. UNMISS documented and verified three incidents of infringement on fundamental freedoms affecting four civilians (all men). Those cases involved arbitrary arrest and detention, intimidation of civil society actors for exercising the rights to freedom of expression and association and the use of State institutions to suppress dissent. UNMISS continued to advocate compliance with national and international human rights norms and standards and to engage with relevant stakeholders in order to safeguard civic space.

68. On 9 January, UNMISS published its third quarterly brief on violence affecting civilians, in which it documented 295 incidents affecting 1,153 civilians (including 166 women and 93 children). Community-based militias and/or civil defence groups accounted for 59 per cent of incidents and 72 per cent of victims. Warrap State was most affected, accounting for 46 per cent of victims (528).

1. Children and armed conflict

69. The Mission verified 132 grave violations against 100 children (74 boys, 25 girls and 1 sex unknown). A total of 64 children (54 boys and 8 girls) were recruited and used, 28 children (17 boys, 10 girls and 1 sex unknown) were killed (16) and maimed (12), 6 children (3 boys and 3 girls) were abducted and 4 girls were raped. Some 23 boys and 2 girls suffered multiple violations. UNMISS verified two attacks on schools and two attacks on hospitals.

70. The Mission also verified the military use of one school and one hospital by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the separation of 45 children (43 boys and 2 girls) from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. Persistent advocacy by UNMISS and partners secured the vacation of both facilities and the formal release of 22 children (including 2 girls) in Western Equatoria State.

71. Violations occurred in Upper Nile (47), Western Equatoria (43), Jonglei (23), Central Equatoria (11), Lakes (6), Warrap (1) and Western Bahr el-Ghazal (1) States, and were attributed to South Sudan People's Defence Forces (104), unidentified perpetrators (10), the South Sudan National Police Service (7), SPLM/A-IO and

National Salvation Front elements acting together (4), SPLM/A-IO (4) and the National Security Service (3).

72. The Mission delivered 47 awareness-raising sessions on child protection to 2,998 participants (1,272 of whom were women), including 2,620 community members (1,206 women), 259 government security forces (54 women), 100 government officials (11 women), 16 SPLM/A-IO members (all men) and three protection partners (2 women).

73. The Mission delivered two training sessions on child protection to 92 participants (30 of whom were women), including 61 community members (25 women), 19 members of government security forces (1 woman), 8 government officials (all men) and 4 protection partners (all women).

74. The Government extended the duration of the Comprehensive Action Plan to End and Prevent All Grave Violations against Children, which had been set to expire in October 2025. The plan will now remain in effect until October 2027.

2. Conflict-related sexual violence

75. The Mission documented and verified 31 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 41 survivors (31 women and 10 girls). Survivors ranged in age from 9 to 42 years old. Of that number, 35 survivors received medical assistance and 22 were referred for psychosocial care. A total of 12 incidents were reported to the South Sudan National Police Service. The incidents occurred in Western Equatoria (9), Central Equatoria (8), Western Bahr el-Ghazal (6), Jonglei (4), Unity (1), Eastern Equatoria (1), Warrap (1) and Lakes (1) States and were attributed to unidentified armed elements (8), the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (8), community-based militias (6), SPLM/A-IO (5), the South Sudan National Police Service (2), the National Salvation Front (1) and the National Security Service (1).

76. The Mission conducted 44 outreach and capacity-building activities on conflict-related sexual violence across South Sudan, reaching 4,088 beneficiaries (including 787 women). UNMISS facilitated the quarterly meeting of the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements Technical Working Group and continued to provide technical support to the Oversight Committee of the South Sudan National Police Service with regard to evaluating the police's action plan for conflict-related sexual violence and consolidating feedback from police state focal points, in order to ensure that the plans of all states are aligned.

E. Cross-cutting issues

1. Rule of law and accountability

77. The Mission, in partnership with UNDP, provided technical guidance on the role of the panel in relation to the selection of commissioners for the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing and continued to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in its efforts to establish effective transitional justice mechanisms. UNMISS continued to build the capacity of civil society and survivors networks to participate effectively in Commission-related processes. On 31 October, the African Union and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs started the recruitment and selection process for the commissioners.

78. Building on past judicial reform efforts, the South Sudanese judiciary, with support from UNMISS and partners, launched a nationwide recruitment campaign to hire 193 new judges and judicial assistants, with a view to achieving gender balance

in the composition of the judiciary and promoting access to justice across a broader geographical area.

79. Between 29 September and 24 October, UNMISS supported the Bentiu mobile court, which concluded 135 cases, including 23 sexual and gender-based violence cases, leading to the conviction of 40 individuals and the acquittal of 2 others. The proceedings were survivor-centred, with psychosocial support provided at all stages. In addition, the Mission enhanced local capacity to address crime by supporting a 15-day training session on sexual and gender-based violence investigations for 20 investigators (including 4 women) and providing technical assistance for the establishment of the first special protection unit in Unity State, which began operating on 5 December.

80. From 24 October to 19 November, a mobile court in Maban, Upper Nile State, that was supported by UNMISS adjudicated 28 criminal cases (8 of which were sexual and gender-based violence cases), leading to the conviction of 23 individuals and the acquittal of 13 others. In November, in greater Yei, UNMISS supported investigators and prosecutors in collecting information in relation to 46 criminal cases (24 of which were sexual and gender-based violence cases). In addition, a circuit court adjudicated 10 cases (including 9 sexual and gender-based violence cases) between 2 and 16 December, leading to the conviction of 14 individuals.

81. The Mission advanced the implementation of the intercommunal Pieri Action Plan for Peace through capacity-building activities for customary justice leaders, prosecutors and investigators in Akobo and Bor. The Mission also supported the release of a multilingual campaign song to deter cattle raiding, abductions, killings and sexual and gender-based violence across Jonglei State and greater Pibor Administrative Area, and it strengthened customary justice mechanisms across greater Upper Nile region in order to support the review and harmonization of Nuer customary law.

82. From 8 to 12 December, UNMISS and the Mine Action Service supported the South Sudan National Police Service in delivering a weapons and ammunition management training course for 25 personnel in Wau, with a view to curbing arms proliferation and enhancing civilian protection, inventory control and safe disposal.

83. The Mission facilitated training for 84 prison personnel (including 20 women) across South Sudan on prison security, prison management and food security. In order to address food insecurity in prisons, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UNMISS distributed agricultural implements to correctional facilities in Rumbek, Malakal, Terekeka and Yei. In addition, the Mission upgraded infrastructure in Magwe, Bentiu, Renk, Rubkona and Pariang and inaugurated the Adolescent and Juvenile Literacy Centre in Yei, educating 46 juveniles in order to prepare them for reintegration and supporting safer detention.

84. The Mission continued to support advocacy efforts and case reviews to address unlawful detention, which resulted in the release of 68 individuals in Yambio and Kuacjok. UNDP-supported mobile courts in prisons, facilitated by UNMISS, reviewed 230 cases in Juba and Bor, leading to the release of 89 individuals (including 49 juveniles, 17 of whom were females).

85. The Mission enhanced locally driven justice delivery by strengthening coordination through the Prisons Development Committee and rule of law forums. In order to expand access to justice, UNMISS handed over a judges' accommodation to the national authorities in Tonj East.

2. Women and peace and security

86. On 4 November, UNMISS held a high-level dialogue that was led by the Vice-President, Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior, with women leaders from Revitalized Agreement signatory parties and civil society. The participants highlighted concerns about conflicts in Upper Nile and Western Equatoria States, displacement, increased conflict-related sexual violence, the trial of the First Vice-President, the stagnant peace process and the lack of political will for implementing the 35 per cent quota for women.

87. On 18 November, UNMISS held discussions with the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the African Union on conflict dynamics, humanitarian concerns and protection needs. In those discussions, the Mission reaffirmed the importance of collaboration among the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and UNMISS.

88. From 28 to 29 October, the civil society organization Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, supported by UN-Women, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and UNMISS, provided training on conflict analysis and mediation for 21 women mediators from Revitalized Agreement signatories.

89. On 6 and 7 November, UNMISS and the Female Journalists Network conducted a workshop for 100 women media professionals on political transitions.

90. From 20 to 26 November, as part of the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign, UNMISS facilitated three workshops for 146 participants in Ruweng Administrative Area that were aimed at fostering the women and peace and security agenda. The participants called for ending gender-based violence and advancing women's leadership.

91. On 18 December, the Mission supported the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare in convening the second meeting of its National Sexual and Gender-based Violence Task Force. The participants discussed the effects of deteriorating security, reduced Mission presence and ways for the Government to assume responsibility for women's protection.

3. Climate, peace and security

92. As the floodwaters receded following the peak of flooding in September, some areas of high ground used by communities for self-relocation became hotspots of conflict in such locations as Panyinjar, with the situation in those areas compounded by military action and political crises. The onset of the dry season gave rise to more conflict in some locations, increasing protection of civilians concerns.

93. Early cattle migration and delayed crop harvests triggered by shifts in the climate system created disruptions and misalignment in the traditional seasonal pattern of migration. As a result, the cattle migration overlapped with crop harvesting, stirring conflicts between farmers and herders in Jur River County, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, and Aweil Centre and Aweil North Counties, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State, with the risk that the conflict might spill over into Warrap State.

94. UNMISS continued to support dialogue in relation to land and natural resource-based conflicts in Eastern Equatoria State, providing training to the South Sudan National Police Service and conducting activities in support of the National Flood Preparedness and Response Taskforce, in order to enhance preparedness and joint flood response.

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

95. As at 31 December, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,153, comprising 852 international staff members, including 270 women (32 per cent); 1,301 national staff members, including 224 women (17 per cent); and 304 United Nations Volunteers, including 123 women (40 per cent).

96. There was a significant decrease in the strength of UNMISS uniformed personnel components owing to the contingency measures implemented across United Nations peace operations in response to financial constraints (see paras. 105–107 below). Police strength stood at 1,316 (of an authorized 2,101 personnel), comprising 566 individual police officers, including 175 women (31 per cent); 720 personnel in formed police units, including 194 women (27 per cent); and 30 justice and corrections officers, including 11 women (37 per cent).

97. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, UNMISS troop strength stood at 9,682 military personnel: 184 liaison officers, including 62 women (34 per cent); 365 staff officers, including 85 women (23 per cent); and 9,133 contingent personnel, including 831 women (9 per cent).

98. In accordance with the applicable policy, information on possible unsatisfactory conduct and/or misconduct was processed in a timely fashion. A total of 25 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

99. Between 16 October and 31 December, UNMISS recorded 428 incidents related to the status-of-forces agreement. Of those, 408 incidents involved movement restrictions imposed by government authorities, which affected UNMISS patrols. Between 1 and 15 October, UNMISS recorded 143 incidents that had not been previously reported. Of those, 132 involved movement restrictions, including 124 cancelled ground and dynamic air patrols. The cancellation of those patrols was caused primarily by either a delay on the part of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in acknowledging information and flight safety assurance documents shared by UNMISS or the non-acknowledgement thereof by the Mechanism.

100. UNMISS continued to experience restrictions on issuance of tax exemptions for the import of essential supplies for the Mission's exclusive use. In November, the South Sudan Revenue Authority imposed new requirements for the use of its digital portal that automatically triggered a compulsory payment of \$3,580 for each container imported into South Sudan, with no possibility of obtaining an exemption. As a result, the import of rations for the Mission's exclusive use was impeded. The Mission protested the matter through a démarche to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. On 5 December, the collection of this fee was suspended.

101. On 15 December, a United Nations police patrol in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, was confronted by armed uniformed personnel believed to be members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. During the incident, an UNMISS language assistant was assaulted and forcibly detained. When the Mission followed up on the incident, the leadership of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces initially denied

that the incident had occurred. It was confirmed, however, that the staff member was being held by security forces that had been involved in the operations in Jur River County. On 18 December, following engagement with local authorities, it was verified that the staff member had been killed by a member of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. The authorities pledged that they would conduct a full investigation and reported that several suspects had been arrested.

102. The Mission recorded a sustained pattern of security incidents affecting personnel, movements and premises. A total of 35 incidents were recorded in Juba of United Nations vehicles being stopped and turned back at temporary checkpoints. In addition, 37 incidents of gunfire were reported near United Nations House, the Topping compound and field locations, with rounds fired close to UNMISS compounds. The facilities of the United Nations security management system experienced 68 instances of intrusions or attempted break-ins, in addition to thefts.

103. Threats to personnel remained significant, with 53 incidents reported. United Nations security management system staff were victims of armed robberies, physical assault, extortion and intimidation, including cases where armed individuals forced staff to hand over money or valuables. Several houses belonging to national personnel of the United Nations security management system were burglarized and multiple staff members were targeted while driving. National staff were arrested or detained in Juba, Bor, Rumbek and Aweil over alleged traffic violations or employment or domestic matters, some of whom were held for extended periods.

104. Heavy exchanges of fire between security forces occurred within a few hundred meters of United Nations security management system premises in Tambura and Yambio, resulting in movement restrictions and temporary postponement of United Nations operations. Armed youth blocked a United Nations convoy near Tambura on 4 November. In addition, three kidnappings targeted the staff of national non-governmental organizations.

VIII. Implementation of the 15 per cent expenditure reduction and its impact on the Mission's mandate

105. On 8 October, UNMISS began to implement its contingency plan to cut expenditures by 15 per cent. Following a proposal from the Government, a joint technical working committee was established to coordinate the implementation of related measures.

106. Following several flight cancellations owing to lack of clearance and after further discussions with the Government, progress was made with regard to planned reductions in troop numbers (4,743 of the 4,986 earmarked uniformed personnel as at 15 January).

107. Reduction measures have already resulted in significant operational constraints, which have limited the Mission's capacity to deliver fully on core protection, political, human rights, stabilization and electoral support functions. Protection patrols were reduced by an estimated 30 to 40 per cent in areas where force deployment is decreasing and by 60 to 70 per cent in areas where bases are closing. Long-duration ground patrols per battalion decreased from 3 to 4 per month to 1 to 2 per month, limiting reach and rapid response capacity. Some 40 human rights monitoring and investigation missions were cancelled. In order to mitigate the effects of those constraints, UNMISS has been adapting its operations to prioritize protection, humanitarian facilitation and rapid response efforts, leveraging available resources to sustain critical engagement, provide escorts to enhance the security of

communities and institutions and deliver essential services to the greatest extent possible.

IX. Performance optimization

108. The UNMISS force conducted eight evaluations in five sectors and found the units to be trained and operationally ready.

109. United Nations police conducted five performance assessments and evaluations of the Nepal Formed Police Unit in Juba, the Ghana Formed Police Unit in Bentiu and the Rwanda Formed Police Units in Malakal and Juba. Overall performance was assessed to be satisfactory, with gaps in sustainment, logistics and administration. Performance improvement plans were initiated in order to ensure full adherence to operational standards. All UNMISS formed police units were advised to either use partial repatriation arrangements in order to replenish expired ammunition or coordinate with their countries to swap ammunition approaching the end of its shelf life.

X. Observations and recommendations

110. South Sudan is at a critical juncture, amid rising political violence and uncertainty regarding its political trajectory. Despite repeated commitments by the Government, the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement remains stalled, raising concerns about the viability of the peace process. Continued unilateral political reshuffles and parallel governance structures in opposition areas undermine the spirit of the Revitalized Agreement and risk entrenching fragmentation and fuelling further instability. The leaders of South Sudan must act collectively to prevent the outbreak of a full-scale war.

111. I note with concern the recent efforts to unilaterally amend the Revitalized Agreement, including proposals to defer key tasks, such as the constitution-making process, until after the elections in 2026. Acting on those proposals would strip the Revitalized Agreement of its supremacy and constitute a unilateral reorganization of the transition framework. I urge all Revitalized Agreement signatories and stakeholders to engage in dialogue, so as to achieve consensus. The parties must recommit to the Revitalized Agreement in a manner that reflects broad national ownership, with the support of regional and international partners. I reiterate that the “critical mass” of outstanding provisions that I identified in my assessment of 8 April 2024 (S/2024/297) are necessary conditions for the conduct of peaceful and credible elections.

112. Without sustained efforts by the Government to implement the Revitalized Agreement, there is a risk that the security environment will further deteriorate. The escalation of clashes, in particular across greater Equatoria and greater Upper Nile, including aerial bombardments, targeted killings and criminal activities, is troubling. I am deeply concerned by those ceasefire violations, which undermine the cessation of hostilities agreement and the Revitalized Agreement and have had a significant humanitarian effect. The heightened military campaign has displaced thousands of civilians and affected humanitarian operations.

113. I echo the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and renewed dialogue. In addition, I urge all parties to ensure the protection of civilians, and I commend IGAD and the African Union and its High-level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan for the more proactive stance that they have taken with regard to facilitating consensus and ensuring compliance with

agreed upon commitments. I note the call made by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for the African Union Commission to appoint a high representative to support the implementation of the outstanding provisions of the Revitalized Agreement. The international community must remain united in its messaging, and it must emphasize that further delays are unacceptable and risk plunging the country back into full-scale conflict, with catastrophic consequences for its people and the region.

114. The human rights situation remains a matter of serious concern, in particular the persistence of extrajudicial executions and the recruitment and use of children in conflict by community-based militias and the parties to the conflict. The investigation and prosecution of those responsible for these violations and abuses must be prioritized and national accountability mechanisms must be strengthened.

115. The engagements between the Mission and civil society actors that occurred during the reporting period are encouraging. Civil society must play a vital role in fostering dialogue, promoting accountability and supporting the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. I am also encouraged that the African Union has launched recruitment for the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing.

116. The humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains dire and is linked to the security context. Escalating violence, displacement and access constraints have compounded the effect of economic shocks and climatic hazards, with more than half of the population projected to face crisis-level food insecurity during the next lean season. Addressing the humanitarian crisis requires a holistic approach that tackles its root causes, including insecurity and governance deficits. I urge the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity to remove all obstacles and create a conducive environment for life-saving assistance, while investing in resilience and recovery.

117. The implementation of the measures to reduce expenditure by 15 per cent across peacekeeping operations, including UNMISS, poses significant challenges owing to the Mission's substantially reduced footprint, which affects mandate delivery. The Mission will strengthen its efforts to adapt, recalibrate and reprioritize operations within those constraints. In addition, I stress the importance of all Member States paying their assessed contributions to the peacekeeping budget in full and on time.

118. I strongly condemn the killing of an UNMISS staff member in Wau after he was forcibly detained by security actors while performing his duties. This appalling act is unacceptable and highlights the urgent need to guarantee the safety and security of United Nations personnel. I call for a prompt, thorough and transparent investigation into the circumstances of his detention and death, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

119. I wish to thank the troop- and police-contributing countries for their steadfast support to UNMISS and to the Mission's civilian personnel for their dedication under challenging circumstances. I also commend humanitarian actors and development partners for their tireless efforts to alleviate suffering and build resilience. The United Nations remains committed to working with all stakeholders to advance peace, protect civilians and support the aspirations of the people of South Sudan for a stable, prosperous and democratic future.

