



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

9006th meeting

Monday, 28 March 2022, 10.20 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China	Mr. Dai Bing
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon	Ms. Barreau
Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
India	Mr. Tirumurti
Ireland	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico	Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco
Norway	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (S/2022/172)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (S/2022/172)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2022/172, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Perthes.

Mr. Perthes: I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Council again on the situation in the Sudan.

Unfortunately, since the last briefing to the Council in January (S/PV.8948), the situation in the Sudan has not improved. The country has been without a functioning Government since the coup d'état of 25 October 2021. Protests against the coup d'état and the violent repression of such protests continue and, as a result, in the absence of political agreement to return to an accepted transitional path, the economic situation, the humanitarian situation and the security situation are deteriorating.

Time is not on the Sudan's side. I speak to Council members today with a sense of urgency, which is also increasingly being felt by Sudanese stakeholders

concerned about the stability and the very existence of their country.

Let me begin with the economic developments. On 7 March this year, the Central Bank announced the floating of the currency. In the following three weeks, the value of the Sudanese pound has fallen by 45 per cent against the United States dollar. At the same time, there have been dramatic price increases for, among other things, bread, fuel, electricity, health care and public transport. The Sudan also risks losing out on billions in external support as disbursements from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other major donors have been paused and will continue to be paused for so long as no functional Government is in place.

No foreign investment is coming in and exports have dwindled. Moreover, the Sudan is at risk of missing critical World Bank and IMF deadlines for international economic and financial support and the realization of some \$50 billion in debt relief, which the Sudan was well on its path to receive after reaching the heavily indebted poor countries decision point last June.

Notably, protests in Khartoum and other places, while they are still generally political — that is, anti-coup — are gradually attaining an additional socioeconomic character, with more and louder slogans denouncing rising bread prices and deteriorating living conditions.

International humanitarian assistance has continued and has never been paused. The number of Sudanese in need is growing. The combined effects of the conflict, economic crisis and poor harvests will likely double the number of people facing acute hunger to approximately 18 million by the end of this year.

In the absence of a political solution to the crisis, the security situation has also worsened across the country. Crime and lawlessness are on the rise and intercommunal conflict in Darfur has intensified. More concretely, farmers have been dispossessed of their land through violent attacks. Assets have been looted. Villages have been burned. Women from all parts of the country report deepening concerns about their own safety, even in broad daylight. In the most recent violence this month, at least 48 people were killed and more than 12,000 were displaced in what is being described as intercommunal conflict in Jebel Moon in West Darfur. According to local reports, the conflict there is also about control over gold resources.

I have repeatedly urged the authorities to take the necessary measures to help prevent further conflict. We, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), are supporting the implementation of security arrangements in Darfur, through the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee, which UNITAMS chairs. The Committee indeed contributes to stability. It has been able to address some incidents among the signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement. It has also recently been able to inspect assembly areas of armed groups moving out of cities, following a decree from General Al-Burhan earlier this year.

The Permanent Ceasefire Committee is confronted by exaggerated expectations, however, both from the armed groups, in terms of the support we can give, and from civilians. Clearly, the role and mandate of the Committee are limited and remain distinct from the protection of civilians. We have therefore welcomed recent steps by the Government and the signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement to begin the training for and standing up of the joint security-keeping force. A first batch of approximately 2,000 members of the signatory armed groups and movements are currently being trained by the Sudanese Armed Forces as the kernel of this eventually 12,000-strong force. Combined with local peacebuilding efforts, which will need international support, those steps can help to prevent or stop violence and strengthen the protection of civilians. Let me just say here that I fully support the request of the Government of the Sudan, which we heard earlier, that measures to implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for returning fighters or for fighters who have to be dismissed from armed groups should be supported internationally.

Demands for an end to military rule continue, with frequent protests in Khartoum and elsewhere. At the same time, protesters continued to be killed or suffer serious injury from live ammunition. Since late December, arrests have increasingly targeted protest leaders, resistance committee members and political leaders on criminal charges. Many have been denied access to family or lawyers for weeks.

We welcome the invitation by the Sudanese authorities to human rights expert Adama Dieng in February and the access he was granted to high-profile detainees. We hope that the authorities will continue to engage with him.

It is of particular concern that women continue to be targeted and subjected to violence and intimidation by members of the security forces. As of 22 March, 16 women had reportedly been raped during protests in Khartoum. Those cases have rightly triggered public condemnation and mobilized groups across society. In response to this pattern of sexual violence against women, the Working Group on Sexual Violence—which comprises the United Nations, local civil society partners and the Government's Unit for Combating Violence against Women, under the Ministry of Social Affairs—continues to meet regularly to coordinate and strengthen responses to sexual violence. That included a meeting with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict earlier this month. Government committees to investigate allegations of violations have yet to produce visible results.

More recently, there have also been disturbing reports of increased tensions between and within the various security forces. Some interlocutors expressed concern that if a political solution is not found, the Sudan could descend into conflict and divisions, as seen in Libya, Yemen and elsewhere, in a region already beset by instability.

Let me herewith move to our own UNITAMS good offices function. Following the resignation of Prime Minister Hamdok on 2 January, UNITAMS launched intensive consultations on a political process for the Sudan. I have previously briefed the Council about the beginning of those consultations (see S/PV.8925), which were held over a five-week period to hear Sudanese views on a way out of the crisis and the restoration of a credible democratic transition. The report on those consultations, published on 28 February, provides a summary of the opinions and areas of convergence and divergence shared with the Mission in more than 100 consultation meetings with more than 800 participants and more than 80 written submissions.

We heard from the military, political parties, armed movements, civil society, women's groups, resistance committees, young people, Sufi leaders, the business community, nomads, internally displaced persons, the diaspora and other State and non-State actors. Participants came from all parts of the Sudan and one-third of the participants were women. Encouragingly, consensus was visible on many issues, including the need for an end to the violence, for a

technocratic Government or a Government of experts and for a transitional legislative council.

There was wide-reaching agreement on the need to reconsider the role, size and membership of the Sovereign Council and for the meaningful representation of women in transitional institutions at a minimum of 40 per cent in transitional institutions, as well as for mechanisms to advance women's rights.

There is overarching consensus on the need for one unified professional army, for judicial entities to be established and for the creation of conditions for credible elections, as well as for an inclusive constitutional process.

There was also significant agreement around the need for robust engagement by the international community in support of the political transition, including the possibility of serving as guarantors for any agreement.

All of that is remarkable in the light of the political divisions that have paralysed the country in the past couple of months. As one Sudanese commentator remarked, the UNITAMS-led consultations have shown the Sudanese that they agree on more substantial points than they are aware of.

I am pleased to announce to the Council that the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have agreed to join efforts in supporting the Sudan through the next phase of the political process, drawing on our comparative advantages and respective strengths. Our common intention is to facilitate an inclusive Sudanese-owned and Sudanese-led political process with the full and meaningful participation of women, focusing on a limited number of urgent priorities required to address the current crisis and restore constitutional order.

Based on the outcome of our initial consultations, we jointly consider those priorities to include, first, interim constitutional arrangements, including the executive, legislative and judicial organs of the transitions, as well as their structure and functions; secondly, the criteria and mechanisms to appoint a Prime Minister and a cabinet; thirdly, a road map for the transitional period and a Government programme focusing on an achievable set of priority areas; including, fourthly, the type, timing and necessary conditions for elections at the end of that period.

We expect to start an intensive phase of talks in the next couple of weeks, fully recognizing that it will be during the holy month of Ramadan. We anticipate that stakeholders will participate in the month's spirit of peace and forgiveness. Over the past two weeks, our three organizations — UNITAMS, the AU and IGAD — have been working robustly to agree on a common approach and lay the ground for that process, including by holding individual and joint consultations with some of the key stakeholders. Many of those stakeholders have emphasized the urgency of the situation and the need for a speedy yet sound resolution. We share that concern and will undertake all efforts together to advance that process.

While the focus of the next phase will be on addressing immediate issues, a separate process will be needed to discuss mid- and longer-term issues, including a permanent constitution, levels of governance, centre-periphery relations, equitable wealth-sharing, and peace agreements and their implementation. Hopefully such a longer-term process can subsequently be led under the auspices of a domestically accepted Prime Minister and Government.

The upcoming talks, however, have a narrow and clearly defined aim: to return to constitutional order and the transition, with an empowered civilian-led Government to steer the country through the transitional period and address the critical priorities. If those political talks are to have a chance of succeeding, favourable conditions and a conducive environment must be created. That will entail, primarily, three things: an end to violence and establishment of the right to hold peaceful demonstrations; the release of political detainees; and a firm commitment to phase out the current emergency status in the country.

AU Special Envoy El Hacen Lebart and I have been conveying those messages both publicly and also directly and privately to the military leadership and all stakeholders. I have been informed over the weekend that the military is now studying some confidence-building measures that, if implemented, could indeed enhance the environment for political talks. We are coordinating closely with respected Sudanese interlocutors, who are working diligently and constructively to help foster consensus stakeholders on a way forward. The international community has also been playing a critical supportive role, both in the consultations and now in our preparations for the

upcoming talks. I thank them and look forward to that continued support.

In conclusion, let me say that the stakes are high. The aspirations of Sudanese women and men for a prosperous, civilian-led, democratic future are at risk. Unless the current trajectory is corrected, the country will head towards an economic and security collapse and significant humanitarian suffering. All Sudanese stakeholders will therefore need to be prepared to make compromises in the interests of the people and for the sake of stability and prosperity.

I am encouraged by the desire of the Sudanese to reach agreement and the wide-ranging consensus that has crystallized on several key principles during our consultations. Our commitment and support to the Sudanese people is unwavering. I would like to thank the Council for its support for our endeavours at this critical juncture. I also wish to thank my colleagues in the African Union and IGAD, Special Envoy El Hacem Lebatt and Special Envoy Ismail Wais for their fruitful collaboration to date.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Perthes for his briefing.

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Special Representative Perthes for his briefing and commending his and his team's continued efforts in challenging circumstances.

Before focusing on the situation in the Sudan, I wanted to note the concerns raised by the Government of the Sudan in its letter to the Council of 22 March. The United Kingdom fully supports the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) to monitor and report on the situation in the Sudan, including in the area of human rights, as mandated by the Council. For the appropriate support to be provided by the Mission, it is essential for UNITAMS to be able to provide a full and balanced representation of the situation in the Sudan in its reporting.

Since we last discussed the Sudan (see S/PV.8948), there has been little cause for optimism. The military seized power on 25 October, claiming that the civilian-led Government was failing to deliver on key aspects of the transition. In the five months since, the suffering of ordinary Sudanese people has increased. They continue

to face violence, including, as we heard, sexual violence; human rights abuses; economic hardship; and humanitarian crises.

The civilian-led Government inherited enormous challenges in 2019. Despite difficulties encountered in the transition, the Sudan was on a path to a more peaceful, prosperous and stable future. Regrettably, the coup has put these gains at risk, including with respect to economic reform, the peace process and human rights. It is our sincere hope that there can soon be a return to such progress.

In this regard, we welcome the collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), in particular the efforts of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes and AU Special Envoy Lebatt towards the next phase of talks, with the aim of restoring the transition. There is a great opportunity to end the political crisis. We are encouraged by the consensus on issues like the need for a civilian cabinet, justice and accountability, and the role of women in the transition. We urge all parties, including the military, to engage fully and in good faith in the next phase of talks.

We deplore the loss of life at least 88 persons since the coup began. These people were killed while calling for freedom, peace and justice — something that thousands of Sudanese people continue to do, despite the threat of violence. We urge the authorities to allow protest without violence, lift the state of emergency and release political detainees, journalists and activists.

The political crisis and actions of the military have contributed to delays in implementing the Juba Peace Agreement, leading to further violence and marginalization in such areas as Darfur. A regrettable consequence of the coup is the economic hardship and increasing humanitarian need across the country. The United Kingdom has a strong track record in providing economic, humanitarian and political support to the Sudan.

Let us be clear. It is the actions of the military that have led to the pause in international economic support. We hope that the early restoration of a credible, civilian-led transitional Government can create the conditions for much-needed economic reforms and for international support, including debt relief, to resume. Instead of calling on the international community to provide economic assistance, let us instead call on the Sudanese stakeholders, especially the military, to reach

the sustainable political agreement needed to enable the resumption of such support.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom remains committed to supporting the Sudan's journey to democracy and the realization of the Sudanese people's calls for freedom, peace and justice. As a Council we should remain focused on these aspirations and support the process facilitated by the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Representative Volker Perthes for his statement. For my part, I would like to highlight three points.

First, France supports the efforts of the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to facilitate dialogue among the stakeholders in the transition. The Special Representative presented us today with a road map concluded after consultation with all Sudanese actors. It is not a prescription, of course, but an attempt to identify points of convergence, in order to resume dialogue. We encourage this approach, which it is up to the Sudanese people to embrace. We again call on all international actors to support the action of the United Nations, the AU and IGAD, not to interfere with their efforts or to exploit the Sudan's fragilities, for the sake of its national interest.

My second point is that the immediate priority remains to restore a democratic transition. Since the coup, the country has been in a political stalemate that is undermining the gains of the transition and is threatening the stability of the country. Every day the repression of demonstrations, the sexual violence that the Special Representative mentioned in his briefing, and the harassment of civil society are aggravating the tensions. We condemn the violence that has left nearly 90 people dead since 25 October and many more injured.

It is the responsibility of the military authorities to create the conditions for a way out of the crisis by deciding to return to constitutional order, guaranteeing fundamental freedoms, releasing political detainees and prosecuting those responsible for abuses against civilians. The right of Sudanese men and women to express their views peacefully without fear of violence must be guaranteed. We stress the importance of the Sudanese authorities' unequivocal cooperation with the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission

in the Sudan (UNITAMS) in the implementation of the Mission's human rights mandate.

It is essential that the civilian movements agree on the main points of the negotiations. Without this consensus, it will be impossible to overcome the current political impasse. Any way out of the crisis will need to take into account the democratic aspirations of the Sudanese people. We call on all stakeholders to engage in dialogue in a spirit of compromise and responsibility.

My third point concerns the exacerbated fragility of the Sudan. There is an urgent need to overcome this political crisis, which only worsens existing fragilities. We are particularly concerned about the resurgence of violence in Darfur and the Two Areas that has been accompanied by restrictions on humanitarian access. In this regard, we welcome the continued work of the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee supported by UNITAMS, which has led to some progress. It is imperative that the authorities and the signatory parties accelerate the deployment of the joint force and agree on the modalities for the reintegration of combatants. Humanitarian access must of course be guaranteed. We encourage the authorities to continue their contacts with the non-signatory groups of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan and their efforts to ease tensions in eastern Sudan.

Finally, we are extremely concerned about the deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation linked to the rise in food and fuel prices, which has been exacerbated by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. France will remain committed to the Sudanese people. We are continuing our cooperation with civil society, which is why we will maintain our level of humanitarian assistance, as well as that of the European Union, whose total aid amounted to €55 million last year.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes for his comprehensive briefing and reporting.

The United States fully supports the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) to monitor and report on the situation in the Sudan, including on the human rights situation, as it has been mandated to do by the Security Council (resolution 2579 (2021)). We agree with our colleague from the United Kingdom that it is essential for UNITAMS to be able to provide a

full and balanced representation of the situation in the Sudan in its reporting to the Council.

The United States fully supports the collaborative efforts of UNITAMS, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to facilitate a Sudanese-led political process, one that will restore a civilian-led transition to democracy. The Sudan needs a transitional framework that is civilian-led, moves the country towards free and fair elections, reworks the role of security services as participants of the Government, and is broadly acceptable to the Sudanese people.

In order for this process to be effective, the military and security services need to take concrete steps to create an environment where all actors can safely participate in negotiations. The Sudanese authorities must immediately end the unjust detentions of civil society activists, politicians, journalists, cultural figures and humanitarian workers. The authorities must allow media outlets to reopen and end communications blackouts. And State actors must stop the terrible violence perpetrated against peaceful protesters, including reported sexual violence and attacks on patients in medical facilities and on medical personnel.

We also call for the authorities to hold accountable without delay those responsible for human rights abuses and violations, including the excessive use of force against peaceful protesters. The United States stands with the Sudanese people in their pursuit of a democratic human-rights-respecting and prosperous Sudan. That is why, on 21 March, the United States designated Sudanese Central Reserve Police for serious human rights abuses committed during protests calling for democracy. All people in the Sudan must be able to express their opinions and peaceably demonstrate without threat of violence or arrest. Our action demonstrates the United States continues to implement the tools at our disposal to stop the violence and press for a restoration of the Sudan's democratic transition. Restoring a transitional Government that is legitimate in the eyes of the Sudanese people will require demonstrable steps towards a reassertion of genuine irreversible civilian authority. In the meantime, we will continue to press for sustained and unhindered humanitarian access to all conflict-affected and displaced populations to facilitate life-saving assistance.

In Darfur, security forces and former armed opposition groups continue to clash and exacerbate the

intercommunal violence. We condemn the violence in Darfur and elsewhere in the Sudan, express our concern for its impact on the people of the Sudan and urge the Sudan's authorities to implement the Government of the Sudan's own national plan for civilian protection.

Lastly, I hope that the Council's Panel of Experts on the Sudan can continue its vital work to report on the situation in Darfur, including to document the violence and its drivers. We heard the Special Representative of the Secretary-General say how high the stakes are here. We must therefore work to find the solution and we must end the violence in the Sudan.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I have the honour to read this statement on behalf of members of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely Gabon, Kenya and my country, Ghana.

At the outset, we wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes for his presentation of the 90-day report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/172) on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), pursuant to Security Council resolution 2579 (2021). We also welcome the participation at this meeting of the representative of the Sudan.

The A3 welcomes the additional briefing provided to the Council by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and will in this statement comment on the political situation, the security environment, the persisting socioeconomic challenges and the humanitarian developments in the Sudan during the reporting period.

The A3 also takes note of the letter dated 22 March 2022 from the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the President of the Security Council providing clarification, as well as expressing reservations, on the content of the report of the Secretary-General and the activities of UNITAMS.

With regard to the political situation in the Sudan and the implementation of the August 2019 Constitutional Declaration, the A3 remains deeply concerned about developments since 25 October 2021 and the political stalemate, which could derail the commitment to adhering to the transition to full civilian rule that would lead to a new constitution and elections in 2023.

The lack of civilian political leadership, including the absence of a Prime Minister, in the transitional process and the continued absence of significant political constituents from the Sovereign Council represent major challenges that the Sudanese people must quickly resolve to prevent the country slipping further into chaos.

In that regard, we urge all political stakeholders in the Sudan to place the overall interest of the people of the Sudan at the heart of their discussions and decisions in the furtherance of a Sudanese-led and -owned process to place the country on a pathway leading towards peace and stability. We encourage UNITAMS to remain engaged with the Sudanese people and recall the announcement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on 8 January that he had launched a

“United Nations-facilitated intra-Sudanese political process, which is aimed at supporting Sudanese stakeholders in agreeing on a way out of the current political crisis”.

In that context, we note the assessment of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), following their recent visits to the Sudan, that the current political impasse in the Sudan is more complicated than widely appreciated, with far-reaching implications for the Sudan and the region and mistrust on both sides of the externally led interventions.

The A3 therefore avers that UNITAMS activities should not go forward in isolation but must be coordinated closely with those of IGAD and the African Union in the search for a peaceful settlement of the current political impasse in the Sudan. The role of regional leaders, as well as the support of international partners, also remains indispensable to the transition process in the Sudan. The partnership between UNITAMS and relevant regional bodies should further develop into a systematic, operational and strategic partnership rooted in shared values and a strong commitment to international cooperation that is adapted to the complex security challenges facing the Sudan.

We also encourage UNITAMS to adequately utilize the necessary confidence-building measures in the implementation of its mandate to build trust with the parties in the Sudan. Equally, we urge the Sudanese authorities, the political parties and civil society groups in the country, including the Sudanese Professionals

Association and the Forces for Freedom and Change, to collaborate with UNITAMS.

Concerning the security environment in the Sudan, the A3 continues to be worried about the deteriorating security situation, which is related also to other developments in the country, including the political impasse and socioeconomic challenges. The intermittent armed conflicts, intercommunal clashes in parts of Darfur and violent crimes are a deep concern. The A3 condemns all forms of violence directed towards civilians and civilian property. While the A3 acknowledges the measures taken by the Government to improve security, a lot more needs to be done to expedite the implementation of the security arrangements under the Juba Peace Agreement and the National Plan for Protection of Civilians.

We urge the Sovereign Council of the Sudan to exercise restraint and show tolerance when dealing with the social forces in the country, which through peaceful assembly and protests seek to express their desire for an early resolution to meet their needs and the fulfilment of their aspirations, including the improvement of their living conditions and the return to constitutional rule.

We reaffirm that the population of every nation constitutes an important component of the State and that any actions against their legitimate interest would ultimately weaken the State. We therefore urge the Sudanese authorities to be mindful of the rights of its people in law-enforcement actions.

We regret the criminal incidents of looting at the UNAMID logistics base in El Fasher, as well as the camp handed over to the North Darfur state authorities. We urge restraint and encourage coordinated border arrangements between the Sudan and Ethiopia in order to avoid a recurrence of the incident of 27 November 2021.

We also remain concerned about the illicit flow and large presence of small arms and light weapons outside State control, which have fuelled the situation of instability. We therefore encourage the continuation of negotiations with all relevant armed groups along the lines of the agreement reached between the transitional authorities and the Sudan Revolutionary Front on 3 October 2020.

The socioeconomic challenges of the Sudan continue to be immense. At the heart of the Sudanese people’s rise against their Government in 2019 were the

sharply rising prices of food. Today, that challenge, if anything at all, has worsened. The interruption of access to markets and the suspension of financial-assistance programmes has predictably had adverse impacts on the Sudanese people, as reflected in the higher prices of goods and services and the shortages of basic goods, including food and medicine.

With the ongoing war in Ukraine, those impacts are projected to be even worse. We therefore encourage the Sudanese people to urgently and constructively work on their political differences in order to enable donor partners and international financial institutions to positively engage in their fiscal processes and support the implementation of the 2022 budget of the country, which was adopted on 22 January.

A review of the current situation in the Sudan cannot leave anyone in doubt about the huge humanitarian challenges that the country faces. We therefore call for sustained international support for the humanitarian programme in the Sudan for the more than 10 million people who remain acutely food insecure, the 3.1 million internally displaced persons and the more than 1.1 million refugees in the Sudan.

Lastly, we would be remiss if this statement failed to call on the international community to support the funding of the Juba Peace Agreement to realize its objectives. In that regard, we welcome and appreciate the kind gesture by Norway in donating \$800,000 to the multi-partner trust fund for the Sudan. We continue to remain engaged with the penholder on the Sudan, as we anticipate the renewal of the mandate of UNITAMS by June 2022

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes for his briefing on developments in the Sudan. We welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Acting Chargé d'affaires of the Sudan. We read the most recent quarterly report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/172) very carefully.

The situation in the Sudan remains complex. The political crisis has not subsided. There are acute humanitarian and socioeconomic challenges. The situation has been compounded by a near complete suspension of donor assistance. In those conditions, we note the Sudanese authorities' intensive efforts to stabilize the situation and establish a constructive national dialogue, both in the centre and at the periphery.

We welcome the creation in January of a committee with the mandate to find a resolution and identify candidates for the post of a new head of Government and the extension of the ceasefire regime in the entire territory of the country. We also welcome the military's stated intention to hold general elections in June 2023 and its commitment to the Juba Peace Agreement of 3 October 2020.

We further view in a positive light the involvement of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the political process of the country and their decision to create, jointly with the United Nations, a coordination mechanism to support intra-Sudanese dialogue. We hope those decisions will bear fruit.

We continue to call on all Sudanese parties to be guided by the greater national interest, to be responsible and to refrain from taking steps that could lead to new clashes. We are in favour of addressing existing disputes through dialogue.

We cannot agree with the biased and politicized approaches towards what is happening in the Sudan contained in the most recent report of the Secretary-General. Rather than focus on the tasks facing the transition period of creating institutions to ensure the preparation and holding of general elections in the country, the report focuses on important but secondary questions.

Human rights topics, for example, are stressed, as well as the rule of law, and there is an excessive discussion of the gender dimension. The functions of assisting and mobilizing assistance for the special political missions are being replaced by monitoring and observers. That does not promote the spirit of cooperation between the United Nations and the authorities of the host country.

We support the concerns about the methodology of the report and its assessments expressed in the letter of 22 March from the Sudan to the Security Council. We call on the special political mission and Mr. Perthes himself to fully comply with that mandate and pay equal attention to all its components.

It is important to work on achieving a lasting agreement among the different Sudanese political forces and social, regional and ethnic groups. But we must not neglect the direct objectives of mobilization of international assistance to the Sudan and assistance

for the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, as reflected in Security Council resolutions.

The Russian Federation is categorically opposed to measures that exert political pressure, as well as the blatant economic blackmail that is still being used against the Sudan. We believe it could be counterproductive and unacceptable to engage in any external interference in the affairs of that country.

We are convinced that the people of the Sudan can decide for themselves and solve their own domestic problems. The imposition of dubious socioeconomic schemes and universal “democratization” templates on their leadership and the politicization of the provision of economic and financial assistance have already led to divisions in society, as well as a loss of civic trust in the transitional authorities, which in turn have led to general instability and new separatist trends in the country.

We have also noted, in some statements of Council members and statements made by Western countries published in Sudanese media on 21 March, that blame has been placed on Russia for worldwide economic instability and price increases — in particular the prices of energy, provisions and food, including in the Sudan.

Make no mistake: a potential food crisis will be caused not by the Russian special military operation in Ukraine but by the illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the West, which have decimated logistical and financial supply chains and fully excluded Russia, which is a producer of food and fertilizers, from the Swift system. The seizure of cargo carriers also poses a threat. Limitations have also affected their cooperation with humanitarian agencies of the United Nations.

We do not know who believes the assertions of Western countries. It is definitely not the Sudanese, who have had the experience of being subjected to unilateral restrictions and are still being blackmailed with regard to economic assistance. We call on countries who currently experience economic difficulties, many of which have been created artificially, not to give in to anti-Russian slogans but rather to view the situation in terms of their own vital interests.

In conclusion, we would like to note that we took note of the report of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, on the work of that Security

Council subsidiary body over the past 90 days. We continue to believe that the restrictions imposed 15 years ago on the Sudan because of the situation in Darfur have done their job.

We would also like to note that in resolution 2620 (2022) of 15 February, the intention was expressed to establish by 31 August clear and realistic benchmarks for reviewing the measures imposed on the Sudan because of the situation in Darfur. We call for that time frame to be complied with fully rather than extending it, since to do so would show only that some countries seek to maintain international sanctions as an instrument for exerting pressure on Khartoum.

Mr. Tirumurthi (India): Let me begin by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes for his detailed briefing on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). I also thank the Permanent Representative of Ghana for his statement as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan.

The ongoing political impasse on the Sudan is a reminder of the inherent challenges to the democratic transition process that began in December 2018. The political and security developments since last October reflect the tenuous state of the transition. Those developments have further aggravated political instability and negatively affected the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. They have also hampered the progress made on political and socioeconomic fronts during the past two years.

Mutual trust and understanding among the Sudanese stakeholders are key for addressing the current impasse. We hope all stakeholders, including the military and the civilian political forces, will show the political will to build consensus and foster national unity. The transition process needs to be inclusive and address the concerns of all stakeholders in order to meet the democratic aspirations of the people of the Sudan. We believe that the 2019 Constitutional Document remains the basis for the transitional period and the way forward should be guided by it.

We are encouraged by the recent proactive engagement, in particular the dialogue, among the political actors and the Sudanese authorities. We have also noted the efforts, including those undertaken by the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to break

the political impasse. We hope that all those efforts will facilitate a return to the constitutional status and a transition path towards civilian rule, democracy and peace in the Sudan.

We also underscore the importance of the comprehensive implementation of the Juba Peace agreement. In that regard, we welcome the progress made in security arrangements, including the formation of the Joint High Council on Security Arrangements in Darfur and the Two Areas, the setting up of protection forces and the integration of formal fighters. We hope that implementation will gain momentum in the coming months, in particular through the establishment of a transitional legislative council.

On the economic front, recent developments resulted in the international community revisiting the positive decisions taken to support the economic recovery of the Sudan over the past three years. We hope that the international community and the partners of the Sudan will reconsider their decision to stop economic support and assistance given its adverse impact on the civilian population. The Sudan needs our collective support.

On the security front, we remain concerned at the situation in eastern Sudan. In Darfur, the incidents of looting and violence at El Fasher logistical base and incidence of intercommunal violence earlier this month remain concerning. We note that the Sudanese authorities have continued to make efforts to provide physical protection in Darfur through the deployment of joint Government forces to de-escalate violence and calm tensions. Those are positive developments that reflect a broadening of governance structures and a sustained commitment of the authorities to implement the national plan for civilian protection.

The establishment of a gender desk at the headquarters of the central Darfur police is noteworthy. The support of UNITAMS to the Sudan will be critical during the coming months, particularly in assisting the political transition, the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and peacebuilding efforts.

We expect UNITAMS to focus on the implementation of its core mandate in close partnership with the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. We also noted the contents of the letter sent by the Sudan on the Secretary-General's report (S/2022/172). We hope that in future UNITAMS reports will take cognizance of the points made in the letter, in particularly adhering to the mandate of the

four strategic objectives and regarding the sourcing of the data.

India has long-standing relations with the Sudan and its people. Over the years India has assisted the Sudan through several projects under concessional lines of credit, capacity-building and humanitarian assistance. We wish to see the Sudan emerge as a prosperous, peaceful and stable country in the coming years. India will continue to support the Sudan and its people in these challenging times.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I listened carefully to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes's briefing and welcome the representative of the Sudan to today's meeting.

While the country has recently experienced challenges, the Sudan's political transition continues to move in the right direction. The international community should remain patient, take additional actions that are beneficial to the Sudan's unity and stability, avoid artificial divisions and help the country explore a development path that suits its national conditions.

I would like to make the following points.

First, every effort should be made to advance the political process following the resignation of Prime Minister Hamdok. The Sudan's Sovereignty Council indicated that it would remain committed to forming a civilian Government and completing all transitional tasks and that it would hold a dialogue with the relevant political factions. That should be strongly encouraged by the international community.

Special Representative Perthes announced the launch of an intra-Sudanese political process and reiterated the need for respect for a Sudanese-led process. A total of 110 groups have joined so far, and China calls for the active participation of other political factions.

In its good-offices efforts, the international community should fully respect the Sudan's sovereignty and leadership, focus on facilitating dialogue among the Sudanese parties to resolve differences, and avoid taking sides.

On 22 March the Permanent Mission of the Sudan addressed a letter to President of the Council expressing concerns about the fact that the report of the Secretary-General on the Sudan (S/2022/172) failed to reflect the situation in the Sudan comprehensively

and accurately. It is hoped that the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) will in its work focus on its core mandates and fully respect and give full attention to the views of the Sudanese Government.

The ways to realize democracy can be diverse. There is no fixed model, nor should there be. The international community should support the Sudan in exploring a development path that suits its national conditions and avoid imposing external solutions. The Chinese Government's special envoy for the Middle East visited the Sudan last week and met with Lieutenant General Al-Burhan and other Sudanese leaders in an effort to help advance the Sudanese political process.

The security situation in Darfur is largely stable, but intercommunal conflicts and criminal activities still occur from time to time. China appreciates the work of the Permanent Ceasefire Committee and supports the Sudanese authorities in their efforts to ensure the accelerated implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians.

China condemns the looting of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and World Food Programme bases and humanitarian convoys. We wish to be informed of the progress made in the investigation of the incidents and to see the adoption of measures necessary to prevent similar incidents in future.

Secondly, it is important to relaunch economic growth. At present, high inflation, diminished employment opportunities and lower household incomes are all factors of instability with respect to peace and security in Sudan. We welcome the efforts made by the Sudanese authorities to improve the country's economy. However, just when the Sudanese people needed help the most, some countries and international organizations decided to suspend international assistance, which is obviously not helpful to the Sudan's endeavour to escape its current predicament.

China calls on UNITAMS to actively mobilize economic and development assistance to the Sudan in accordance with its mandate. China has always done its best to help the Sudan's economic development. China assisted the Sudan with a slaughterhouse project, which has begun implementation, and a well-drilling and water-supply project is steadily progressing.

The Chinese Government has successfully implemented a maternal and child health-care project under the framework of a South-South cooperation fund, benefiting more than 70,000 Sudanese women and children.

Thirdly, sanctions should be lifted as soon as possible. Following the withdrawal of UNAMID, the Sudanese authorities have assumed primary responsibility for the protection of civilians. It is therefore urgent to strengthen its security capacity. The arms embargo has had a negative impact on the Sudan's security capacity-building, and the Security Council should adjust the sanctions in a timely manner in the light of the changing situation.

Resolution 2620 (2022), adopted last month, requires the development of benchmarks for adjusting the sanctions by 31 August. China hopes that that requirement can be effectively implemented.

It must be noted that unilateral sanctions are a roadblock to the Sudan's development. Unilateral sanctions often fail to solve problems and can create fresh troubles, worsening the food, energy and economic crisis, harming the Sudanese people's livelihoods and causing additional humanitarian consequences. We hope that the relevant country can change its imperious logic of sanctioning and pressuring other countries at every turn and try to treat others as equals and work together for win-win results.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): I wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes for his excellent briefing. I have to say that he did paint a very bleak picture of the situation in the Sudan.

We deeply regret that the fallout from the coup last October continues to have such devastating effects on the lives of the people of the Sudan. In that regard, let me make three points this morning.

First, we roundly condemn the continued use of violent tactics by the security forces against civilians, which we have seen have resulted in the deaths of and injury to hundreds. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the sexual violence that has been used as a tool to intimidate and punish women and men exercising their civil and political rights. Mr. Volker's remarks today were particularly shocking.

The horrific reports of the gang rape of a teenage girl in Khartoum two weeks ago by a large group of uniformed Sudanese security forces as she was

getting off a bus starkly exemplify the situation faced by many women in the Sudan. We know that that is not an isolated incident. We have seen a systematic terrorizing of the civilian population by the security forces, and that has been facilitated by granting them new powers and immunities. I want to commend that young woman's bravery in coming forward. We call on the Sudanese authorities to carry out an investigation into that heinous crime.

We are also very concerned by the continued detention of protesters, activists and leading political figures, which is impeding a political resolution to the crisis.

Across the country, we are seeing an upsurge in violence, as parties now seem to be leveraging the wider political crisis in order to consolidate their interests. The increase in attacks on civilians in regions such as Darfur and South Kordofan have unfortunate echoes of previous conflicts. That situation reinforces the urgent need to return to the path of transition, peacebuilding and implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement.

The Sudanese authorities must also fulfil their Juba Peace Agreement commitments on transitional justice, including their important and urgent obligation to cooperate with the International Criminal Court.

Secondly, we share the concerns Mr. Perthes outlined today about the bleak economic picture in the Sudan. But let me be clear, the economic catastrophe facing the Sudan stems directly from the military coup d'état. Hard-won economic and governance reforms, which we had mostly welcomed here at the table, have now been unwound by the coup d'état before they had a chance to fully deliver for the very people they were intended to help. We believe that to be deeply regrettable.

Of course, there is no doubt that the Sudan is vulnerable to the knock-on effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is driving up the cost of basic food staples. The World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and now Mr. Perthes have told us that the number of people who face acute hunger in the Sudan is likely to double to more than 18 million by September. I believe that that is an extremely — indeed exceptionally — worrisome state of affairs and we will continue to be vigilant.

The people of the Sudan have borne enough. To effectively address the looming economic and humanitarian catastrophe, there must be a return to

constitutional order and a civilian-led democratic transition. Meanwhile, the European Union and the international community will assume their obligations to ensure that humanitarian support continues to flow to those who need it most in the Sudan.

Thirdly, we fully support Mr. Perthes' work on facilitating the political consultative process and we welcome the fact that he works alongside the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. We call on all parties to engage with the process in good faith and with an openness to finding agreement on the way out of the crisis towards a civilian-led transition.

That process must continue to be inclusive. We believe that the definition of that word means that there will be meaningful participation of women, who will be critical to ensuring the lasting success of peace in the Sudan. We cannot emphasize that enough. We are very glad that the Secretary-General and Mr. Perthes are paying attention to that concern.

Ireland remains steadfast in its support for the people of the Sudan in their demands for freedom, peace and justice.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Let me thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes for his comprehensive briefing and even more so for his important work, in particular in conducting inclusive political consultations with Sudanese stakeholders to find a way out of the current impasse.

The political and security situation in the Sudan has been marked by significant setbacks, following the military coup d'état last October. Furthermore, continued violence, an influx of refugees from Ethiopia, the impact of climate change and the lack of essential services have made a difficult situation worse. As if all that were not enough, the fallout from the food insecurity caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine, which is being felt worldwide, has placed an additional toll on the Sudan.

The coup has put a stop to the traditional process of rolling back key benchmarks, while deepening the economic crisis and exacerbating the human rights situation. It is depressing and utterly regrettable. We are particularly concerned about the human rights violations committed in the Sudan, especially by security forces, including the use of live ammunition against civilian

protesters and the increased intimidation, harassment and sexual violence practised against women and girls.

The Sudanese authorities must respect the right of protesters. We call for investigations into the disproportionate use of force by security forces and all other actors. We strongly condemn the arbitrary arrests, the detention of protesters, political actors and human rights activists, the harassment of media and journalists, and the deliberate attacks on medical facilities and medical personnel. All such acts are a violation of human rights. All those who violate human rights and commit crimes must be held accountable. Violence perpetrated by security forces must stop.

We do not wish to see the Sudan slipping back to the time of Al-Bashir, without Al-Bashir. We appreciate the efforts of United Nations human rights expert Adama Dieng and reiterate that his work must be unhindered and that Sudanese authorities must fully cooperate with him. In that respect, we fully support human rights reporting by the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, an issue of primary importance for any meaningful progress in the Sudan or elsewhere.

The thirst of the Sudanese for democracy, peace, justice and freedom is simply remarkable, as demonstrated through their continued resilience and courage. I would particularly like to praise the courage of Sudanese women, who were the backbone of the revolution in 2019 and now are again leading the protests against the military coup. Only an inclusive negotiated solution will help the Sudan achieve political and economic stability. As the next phase of United Nations-facilitated discussion approaches, the Sudanese leadership must prove its commitment to working together in reaching consensus to ensure a Sudanese-owned and Sudanese-led process and a Sudanese-owned, Sudanese-accepted outcome.

Consultations must remain inclusive and ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and civil society, including youth groups. A constitutionally legitimate transition must be established and a clear path to civilian leadership and democracy in the Sudan must be charted. Sudanese authorities must release all political prisoners without further delay. Peaceful solutions through negotiations cannot be found when many intellectuals and actors are behind bars.

The lack of implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement risks the persistence of further instability

without a genuine political process. As we have already seen in recent months, political instability in Khartoum has spilled over to other parts of the country. Particularly noticeable is the surge of violence in Darfur, which has been further exacerbated by the return of fighters from Libya. We condemn the increased killing of civilians, the destruction of property and violence against internally displaced persons.

The Sudan cannot remain mired in a roundabout in which hope and despair change places at the will of strongmen. To avoid total political and economic collapse and endless conflict and divisions, authorities must meet key benchmarks and accelerate the implementation of the transitional security arrangements contained in the Juba Peace Agreement. The international community has demonstrated that it stands ready to re-engage politically, economically and financially with the authorities of the Sudan. However, for that to happen there is a need for genuine and continued political commitment by those on the ground. They hold the keys to their country's future.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes for his insightful briefing and for his tireless efforts and those of his team.

The current constitutional and political crisis has serious consequences for the people of the Sudan. It has rapid negative impacts on the humanitarian, human rights, security and economic situations, as we have just heard from the Special Representative. There is an urgent need for the Sudanese authorities to recommit to the country's democratic transition. We strongly condemn all breaches of human rights. The continued use of lethal force against peaceful protesters is unacceptable. Such violence must stop to allow for credible political dialogue to take place.

Norway appreciates the role of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) in concluding the first phase of the political consultation. Now, as the process moves to the next phase, we particularly welcome the close cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). We encourage strong Sudanese ownership and leadership, while urging all Sudanese stakeholders to engage constructively.

It is key to build on the lessons learned in 2019. The process must be inclusive, must be representative of historically marginalized groups, including young

people, and must ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women.

Regrettably, progress on the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement — one of the achievements of the transition period — is slowing down. Renewed progress will require the Juba Peace Agreement signatories to engage constructively and abstain from illegal actions. We expect the Sudanese authorities and Juba Peace Agreement signatories, as well as non-signatories, to take urgent and concrete actions to de-escalate and reduce the risk of further conflict. Preventing further armed conflict, violence and the proliferation of armed actors in Darfur is of key importance not only to Darfur and the Sudan, but the entire region.

In addition to Darfur, the situation in South Kordofan has deteriorated rapidly in recent months. Increasing military mobilization, the political exploitation of intercommunal clashes, new displacements, increased food insecurity and grave violations against women and children are of great concern.

We urge the authorities to resume engagement with the United Nations on the development of a national prevention plan on all grave violations against children, ensuring the timely implementation of the joint road map signed in 2021. National authorities bear the primary responsibility for the protection of civilians, including children, and the prevention of conflict across the country. Accordingly, the national plan for civilian protection should also be updated and swiftly implemented. UNITAMS, too, plays an important supporting role in preventing conflict and protecting civilians, in line with its mandate.

The Sudan is in a dire situation, but the people of the Sudan have not given up. They demand a return to constitutional order and a continuation of the civilian-led democratic transition. Only an inclusive political settlement will enable Norway, in close collaboration with other partners, to engage as we did before the coup. That is the surest path to economic recovery and development, to restart implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, to improve the humanitarian situation and to strengthen the protection of civilians.

UNITAMS continues to play a key role in supporting the Sudan in reaching those goals. It is imperative that we, as international partners, now rally behind the joint good offices of the United Nations, the AU and IGAD.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Volker Perthes, for his briefing. I also welcome the delegation of the Sudan. I would also like to thank the Panel of Experts for its January 2022 report (S/2022/48) and refer to resolution 2620 (2022), which was adopted here last month (see S/PV.8964), and welcome the new term of the Panel.

Brazil believes that a review of the situation in Darfur, as well as benchmarks to assess the Security Council measures on Darfur, are vital endeavours. Clear-cut, well-identified and credible benchmarks will provide the necessary standards to adjust actions on the ground.

Let me now turn to the vital points raised today by Special Representative Perthes.

The political stalemate in the Sudan is concerning and complex. Its possible ramifications in and around the country should be carefully assessed. Back in January, when the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) had just announced the inclusive consultations set out in resolution 2579 (2021), the Council had already realized some of the grim consequences of the events of 25 October 2021 and the pushback against Sudanese civil society that ensued. It is troubling to note the additional bleak effects since then.

What is especially concerning right now is the realization that the transition opened in 2019 has stalled. Since 2019, we have followed in detail — including from our embassy in Khartoum — the difficult decisions and developments that the political transformation entails. We empathize with the civilians who peacefully took to the streets to seize the transition and help build new institutions in the Sudan. Agreement around shared concerns and values is one of the ways forward that we hope to see in Khartoum, Omdurman, Nyala, Port Sudan and beyond.

My delegation commends Special Representative Perthes and UNITAMS for the first round of inclusive consultations. The Council clearly mandated the special political mission in the Sudan with that task. We know that it is not a straightforward duty. The first round has simulated the Sudan to reach further convergence, so praise and support are indeed in order here. Those broad consultations have also enabled diverse voices to take part in the political debate once again. Women and men, girls and boys and young Sudanese citizens have all

been part of the transformation since 2019. Inclusivity is key to the way forward and should continue to be built from now on.

No number of United Nations- or foreign-led processes even come close to replacing local ownership. Sudanese leadership, Sudanese guidance and Sudanese inputs are all essential to building consensus and then to helping to break the stalemate that has beset politics in the Sudan.

Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation joins others in expressing its thanks to Special Representative Perthes for his report (S/2022/172).

At the previous meeting of the Council on the subject (see S/PV.8948), the Special Representative initiated a consultation process at an extremely delicate political juncture with a view to breaking the political impasse. We have followed the results of that process very closely and I would like to acknowledge his excellent work at the helm of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan. Now that the first stage of the consultations advocated by the Special Representative has been completed, it is essential that the parties assume their responsibilities to move forward in the same constructive spirit in which they participated in those initial talks. It will now be up to the Sudanese themselves to define the path of the political process that will enable them to develop a road map.

While divergences remain, there are also areas of consensus, and it is those that need to be focused on. It will be essential to prioritize those aspects that can foster confidence-building. Only on the basis of trust will it be possible to work towards resolving the more controversial outstanding issues. We recognize the inclusive nature of the consultations process in which the voices of civil society, political parties, activists, academics and journalists — to name but a few — were heard. It is particularly important to note that one-third of the participants in the consultations were women and representatives of women's rights organizations.

We hope that the conclusions gathered in the synthesis document will be taken into consideration in the next stage. The content of that document reflects the priorities of the Sudanese people in order to achieve the objectives of the revolution. We will be closely following developments in the next phase of the process, as well as the involvement of the United Nations, the

African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

We are concerned that the situation of insecurity in the country threatens to jeopardize or slow down the political process. Violence in Darfur and other parts of the country remains unacceptable. We condemn the intercommunal violence, the sexual assaults perpetrated against women, and the serious violations of children's rights, including the disappearance of minors.

It is deplorable that the broad powers granted to the security forces supposedly to deal with the demonstrations in recent months have often resulted in abuse of force and human rights violations. In this context, it is critical that direct interaction be maintained with the expert appointed by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to assess the situation in the Sudan. We must also once again urge the Sudanese authorities to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court.

Unbiased information is essential. The Working Group on Children in Armed Conflict has been clear that the lack of access and the deteriorating security situation prevents accurate information on the impact of armed conflict on children. The number of food-insecure people has increased by almost half a million in recent months, bringing the total number of food-insecure people to nearly 10 million. The drought has significantly affected the agricultural and livestock sectors.

At this time of shortage and vulnerability, the assaults on facilities of the World Food Programme in El Fasher and the looting of supplies are deplorable. These attacks led to the suspension of operations for weeks, leaving 730,000 people without food assistance. We call on the authorities to ensure the safety and security of both humanitarian personnel and supplies being distributed.

I conclude with my country's call for the Sudanese authorities to redouble their efforts aimed at ensuring the full implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians and to move forward with the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. These steps are undoubtedly essential for the stabilization of the country.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Volker Perthes, for his briefing on the latest updates and developments in the Sudan, including the United Nations initiative to facilitate a Sudanese-led dialogue. I also welcome the representative of the Sudan, Mr. Ammar Mohammed, in today's meeting.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the efforts of the United Nations to facilitate consultations with Sudanese stakeholders with a view to forging a common understanding that will push the transitional period forward. In this regard, we highlight the active and broad participation in consultations, including women and youth, as well as the consultations held with international and regional partners, including the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. This demonstrates widespread support for a Sudanese-led political transition that fulfils the aspirations of the brotherly Sudanese people.

With regard to the social, economic and humanitarian situation in the Sudan, and despite the economic reforms that have been implemented as part of the political transition over the past two years, in cooperation with international partners, the suspension of international assistance has negatively affected the economy of the Sudan. Inflation averaged 350 per cent in 2021, food prices have sharply risen, and the provision of basic goods and services is constrained.

The economic situation is further exacerbated by climate change and the disruption of the agricultural season. It is now projected that over 14 million people will require humanitarian assistance in 2022, which underlines the importance of heeding the Secretary-General's call for the States Members of the United Nations to respond swiftly to the humanitarian needs in the Sudan.

As part of our commitment to highlighting the implementation of resolution 2565 (2021), we note that fewer than 5 per cent of the Sudan's people are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus disease, which requires investing in the Sudan's health system and combining vaccination efforts with other essential services.

With regard to the security situation in some parts of the Sudan, we recognize the important steps undertaken by the Sudanese authorities to address these challenges. We also view the role of the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee as critical in the context of completing the integration of forces and beginning the implementation

of the security arrangements outlined in the Juba Peace Agreement. We join the Secretary-General in welcoming the steps to operationalize the Committee, which requires international donors to allocate adequate logistical and financial resources so that it can carry out its tasks.

In conclusion, we reiterate that our primary responsibility must be to incentivize greater progress and achieve a successful political transition in the Sudan. The Sudanese people have shown their determination to overcome this difficult period and build an inclusive, stable and prosperous State. We call on the friends and partners of the Sudan, including the Security Council, to support the aspirations of the Sudanese people in a manner that respects the Sudan's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohammed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): We have taken note of the briefing presented by Mr. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

The Sudan is witnessing a massive movement towards ensuring the success of the political transition in the country, putting it on track towards democracy, freedom, peace and justice. Shaping a future for the Sudan is based on foundations that would strengthen State entities and establish a system of governance that guarantees the values of the glorious December revolution.

In this context, actors on the Sudanese political scene continue to engage in favour of national dialogue that would preserve the gains achieved, thanks to Sudanese youth's determination and sacrifices for a brighter future that they and the country deserve. We note in this regard that the challenges of the political transition in the Sudan since April 2019 have strengthened the conviction of the Sudan's transition partners, be they civilian or military, that we must guarantee the success of the transition period to achieve the desired goals.

I would like to focus on the following three points concerning the political, security and economic situation in the Sudan.

First, surmounting the current political situation in the Sudan and restoring national harmony requires consensus on a comprehensive vision based on the four elements put forward by the President of the Sovereignty Council, namely, to engage in an in-depth dialogue involving all the political and social actors in the country without exception, except the former governing party; to establish a competent and unbiased Government; adopting amendments to the constitutional document to keep pace with the changes; and, finally, to hold free and fair elections at the end of the transitional period.

The consultations that are currently being carried out by UNITAMS need to be in line with this perspective. The Sudanese political leadership has welcomed the role of the Mission, provided that the entire process is Sudanese-owned. The role played by UNITAMS must be limited to facilitating dialogue among the parties without attempting to influence the outcomes of the consultations.

We also reiterate the need to unify efforts between UNITAMS and the African Union. The Sudan believes that the AU plays a key and important role in the success of the transitional period in the Sudan and that it must be involved as part of respecting the sphere sovereignty of this continental organization.

Secondly, with regard to the security situation and the implementation of Juba Peace Agreement, we note that the Sudanese Government is coordinating fully with the partners in the peace process to implement its provisions. The Chairperson of the Sovereign Council visited El Fasher in Darfur last month and presided over a meeting of the Joint High Council on the security arrangements. He also presided over a meeting of the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee. At the end of his visit, the Joint High Council announced a number of decisions taken, including the establishment of a special force to maintain security and protect civilians, as well as regrouping of forces of the parties to the peace forces outside the cities in order to rehabilitate them and integrating them in the regular forces or demobilizing them with a view to integrating them in the society. Campaigns were also launched to combat criminal acts such as those committed against the previous headquarters of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, Government warehouses and others that belong to the United Nations agencies in El Fasher.

As I made clear earlier in our statement about the briefing of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan (see S/PV.9005), the greatest challenge currently facing the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement is the failure of the international parties to meet their financial obligations and commitments concerning the agreement. The Sudanese Government is doing its utmost to reap the benefits of peace in precarious economic conditions. We therefore once again appeal to the international community to provide financial support to complete the implementation of all the provisions of the agreement, especially as the security arrangements of the Juba Peace Agreement and related demobilization and reintegration of forces related to armed movements are very costly and complex in terms of their organizational, logistical, managerial and financial aspects.

Thirdly, the Sudan continues to implement economic reform measures that are quite painful for large segments of its citizens. However, they are needed to address the inherited defects in the structure of Sudanese economy. One measure taken by the Sudan over the past few days has been the complete deregulation of the exchange rate of the Sudanese pound against foreign currencies so that banks and currency-exchange companies can determine and announce the rates of the sale and purchase of foreign currencies without the intervention of the Central Bank. That is part of the integrated and sustainable reform of the monetary policy to stabilize the exchange rate and increase the ability of the banking system to attract investment. We expect those measures to have a positive impact on the banking system and macroeconomics in the medium and long terms.

With a view to ensuring that the economic reforms achieve their desired goals, we look forward to resuming cooperation with and development assistance from our bilateral partners and international financial institutions that are keen on alleviating the reform consequences and the burden of external debt. The Sudan has taken the measures necessary, in accordance with the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, to address the inherited economic defects.

In that context, we hope to maintain support for the social protection programme, known as Thamarat, to address some of the social situations and implement economic reforms so that their objectives can be achieved. The international community should also shoulder its responsibility by providing all forms of

humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries hosted by the Sudan.

We note that the report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/172) before the Council focuses heavily on developments in the situation in the Sudan, as if the work of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan were limited to reporting to the Council on the situation in the Sudan. Of course, UNITAMS has four strategic objectives, pursuant to resolution 2579 (2021), which renewed its mandate last year.

We are concerned, however, that the Mission's work in implementing strategic goals has been disappointing and below expectations. During the reporting period, the Mission made no progress. Although the report is supposed to cover the past three months, it unnecessarily covers events that took place before that period in order to exaggerate the significance of certain events and give erroneous information on them, especially with regard to the section on allegations of sexual violence and human rights violations.

Most of what has been included in the report is far from true and in no way resembles the Government's reporting on the events. If the Security Council is to be able to objectively consider and correctly assess the situation in the Sudan by placing events in their proper context, the reports of the Mission must be more credible, objective and professional. We have provided the Council with our comments on the report.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that our partners in the transition period in the Sudan will continue their efforts to make the transition a success, while affirming our commitment to dialogue as an indispensable way to address the challenges of the political transition in the Sudan. We also renew our commitment to working with the international community to address the challenges that may stand in the way of the transition process in the Sudan to achieve the goals to which we aspire.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more names on the list of speakers. I will now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its discussion on the subject in closed consultations.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.