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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 [2459 \(2019\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 March 2020 and requested me to report on the implementation of the Mission's mandate every 90 days. It covers political and security developments between 27 February and 28 May 2019, the humanitarian and human rights situation, and progress in the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

II. Political and economic developments

2. During the reporting period, the slow implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan compounded uncertainty around the peace process. Just prior to 12 May 2019, the end date of the eight-month pre-transition period, the South Sudanese parties unanimously agreed to a six-month extension of the pre-transition period to enable the implementation of critical prerequisites for the transition, including the resolution of the number of states and their boundaries; the review and drafting of key legislation; the incorporation of the Revitalized Agreement into the Transitional Constitution; and the cantonment, training and redeployment of unified forces.

Implementation of the Revitalized Agreement

3. During the period leading up to 12 May, the parties continued to engage with one another within the implementation organs of the Revitalized Agreement. However, discussions predominantly focused on procedure. On 28 February, the Independent Boundaries Commission began its work with the full complement of the members of the African Union High-level Ad Hoc Committee on South Sudan (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa). Between 18 March and 11 April, the Independent Boundaries Commission held three procedural meetings, adopting its terms of reference, rules of procedure, workplan and budget. Meanwhile, on 27 March, the Technical Boundary Committee submitted its final report on tribal boundaries and current disputes to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The report was subsequently forwarded to the Independent Boundaries Commission for consideration. Owing to the enormity of the task assigned to the Independent Boundaries Commission under the Revitalized Agreement, the



Independent Boundaries Commission was unable to complete its work prior to the transition deadline of 12 May. As at 19 May, the Independent Boundaries Commission had completed its fieldwork inside the country and was preparing for consultations with refugees in neighbouring countries, after which it will compile its report and recommendations.

4. The National Constitutional Amendment Committee finalized draft amendments of security laws, including the 2009 Sudan People's Liberation Army Act, the 2009 Police Service Act, the 2011 Prison Service Act and the 2011 Wildlife Service Act. On 9 April, the amendments were presented to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, where they remain pending review. The draft bill to incorporate the Revitalized Agreement into the Transitional Constitution is also with the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and has yet to be presented to the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, which reconvened on 14 May after going into recess on 21 December 2018. Meanwhile, the pro-Machar Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) continues to contest the draft bill's description of the system of governance (decentralized versus devolved) and the amendment process. The National Constitutional Amendment Committee is currently considering an amendment to the 2012 Political Parties Act.

5. Advances in transitional security measures and security sector reform remained limited. The process continued to lack clarity and coordination regarding the prioritization and sequencing of tasks. On 26 March, the Chair of the National Pre-Transitional Committee, Tut Gatluak, directed the security-related mechanisms of the Revitalized Agreement, including the Joint Defence Board, the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board and the Joint Military Security Committee, to command all relevant security forces to assemble at designated training and cantonment sites. However, no cantonment took place. With the end of the pre-transition period nearing, the Joint Defence Board announced the formation and training of a 700-strong joint protection force for very important persons, which would provide security to government officials. While 350 members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces reported to the Rajaf training site, no troop contributions were made by the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO or the South Sudan Opposition Alliance.

6. Despite such delays, rapprochement efforts between the Government and the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO continued at the subnational level. Confidence-building meetings were held in Gbudwe, Tambura, Terekeka, Torit, Central Upper Nile, Yei River, Lol and Wau. Peace celebrations took place in Torit, Gbudwe, Tambura and Southern Liech. Joint visits were also conducted to areas affected by the conflict in Gbudwe, and exchange visits to areas in Northern Liech. These engagements, which mostly involved local-level stakeholders, have contributed to the opening of roads and riverine routes, increased movement of civilians, enhanced commercial trade and reduced commodity prices in some areas. In Wau, for example, multiple checkpoints have been removed and illegal taxation and harassment have been curbed. Increased cooperation in Gbudwe, Kapoeta and Torit has led to commitments to address other security challenges, including criminality and cattle raiding.

7. Meanwhile, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism met regularly to discuss adherence to the permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements. While the parties continue to cooperate with the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, it has been denied access on 24 occasions, including in Aweil, Juba, Bentiu, Yei, Wau and Yambio. Of these, 13 were verification denials and 11 access denials.

8. The IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan, Ismail Wais, also continued his outreach to key individuals and groups outside the peace process. The Special Envoy

met with the leader of the South Sudan United Front/Army, General Paul Malong, from 11 to 13 March. Given General Malong's willingness to join the peace process, efforts are under way to facilitate negotiations with the incumbent Government. The Special Envoy also met with the leader of the National Salvation Front and the umbrella group South Sudan National Democratic Alliance, Thomas Cirillo, on 8 and 14 March. These talks did not yield much, with the South Sudan National Democratic Alliance continuing to demand the renegotiation of the Revitalized Agreement, calling for a lean government, ten states and a federal system.

9. Meanwhile, the leadership dispute within the South Sudan Opposition Alliance continued to test the bloc's cohesion and impede progress towards the implementation of certain aspects of the Revitalized Agreement, including the nomination of a Vice-President and the completion of the allocation of ministerial portfolios. The IGAD Special Envoy and the South Sudan Council of Churches continued to engage with members of the South Sudan Opposition Alliance to reconcile the bloc. On 15 April, the South Sudan Opposition Alliance suffered yet another complication with the death of the leader of the South Sudan United Movement and the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, Peter Gatdet.

10. The reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission met four times during the reporting period. On 12 April, the interim Chair said that 32 of the 59 tasks to be completed during the pre-transition period were ongoing or pending. The disengagement of forces, the demilitarization of civilian centres, the cantonment, training and unification of forces, the determination of the number and the boundaries of states, and the composition and restructuring of the Council of States were identified as the most critical ongoing or pending tasks. Given the shortfalls in the implementation of the tasks and the fact that the end of the pre-transition period was approaching fast, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission urged IGAD and the parties to meet as soon as possible to agree on the way forward.

11. Several initiatives were undertaken to avert a setback to the peace process. On 9 and 10 April, the Vatican hosted a spiritual retreat for the South Sudan presidency. In attendance were the President, Salva Kiir, the First Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai, Rebecca Garang and Riek Machar. Absent were the Vice-President, James Wani Igga, who remained in Juba to maintain a government presence, and the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, which failed to agree on a representative to send. The retreat focused on reconciliation and was facilitated by the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

12. On 2 May, the IGAD Special Envoy convened a meeting of the signatory parties in Addis Ababa to discuss the status of the Revitalized Agreement and the way forward. Following two days of talks, during which the parties identified the lack of political will and adequate funding as key impediments to progress, the parties unanimously agreed to extend the pre-transition period by six months. This decision was premised on the need to complete the necessary transitional security arrangements, including protection for senior government officials, to form the transitional Government. Meanwhile, the Government also pledged \$100 million to expedite the implementation of the pending tasks.

13. Following the decision to extend the pre-transitional period, the sixty-seventh extraordinary session of the IGAD Council of Ministers was held in Juba on 7 May. In the communiqué of the session, the Council of Ministers endorsed the six-month extension; called for the completion of the pending tasks within that additional period, which was non-renewable; and authorized the IGAD Special Envoy to undertake one final round of engagement with the non-signatory groups to persuade them to join the Revitalized Agreement. The Council of Ministers decided to meet with the parties every two months to review progress on the pending tasks and recommended that a

summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government be convened. It also recommended that all restrictions against Riek Machar be lifted. While the parties and IGAD succeeded in averting a deadlock over the beginning of the transition period, statements by President Kiir on 9 May regarding his preference for a 12-month extension and accusations and threats about the mobilization of forces raised doubts about the goodwill of the parties to work together.

14. Nevertheless, on 10 and 11 May, the IGAD Special Envoy and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission held a workshop on joint security mechanisms in Juba to develop a road map and implementation schedule for the critical security tasks to be completed within the next six months. On 17 May, the Joint Transitional Security Committee also met to discuss draft curricula for training the 83,000 Unified Necessary Forces earmarked for creation during the pre-transitional period. The Strategic Defence and Security Review Board also met on 20 and 21 May.

15. During this tense period, I remained in close contact with regional and international partners to discuss the delay in the formation of the transitional Government and the need for concerted pressure on the parties to ensure steady progress over the next six months. From 10 to 12 May, my Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations undertook a joint visit to South Sudan with the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the ambassadors of the States members of the African Union High-level Ad Hoc Committee on South Sudan and the IGAD Special Envoy to demonstrate continued support for the peace process and to urge the parties to take responsibility for the timely implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.

Other national political developments

16. The national dialogue process saw some progress towards inclusivity and compromise. Following a leadership forum facilitated by UNMISS on 6 and 7 March in Juba, and a retreat held by the In Transformation Initiative from 8 to 12 April in Pretoria, South Africa, some opposition groups indicated their willingness, in principle, to take part in the national dialogue. From 20 to 24 May, the national dialogue regional conference of greater Upper Nile commenced in Juba, with discussions on the integration of opposition groups held on the margins of the conference.

17. During the reporting period, South Sudan followed closely developments in the Sudan, following the overthrow of the President, Omer Al-Bashir. On 17 April, a delegation led by the Presidential Advisor for Security Affairs of South Sudan met with the head of the Transitional Military Council of the Sudan and exchanged assurances on continued good relations between the two countries.

18. Meanwhile, a youth group called for anti-government demonstrations on 16 May to protest against delays in the implementation of the peace agreement. The Minister of Information, Michael Makuei, publicly threatened would-be protesters and warned them against emulating the protests taking place in the Sudan. UNMISS observed a significant build-up of government forces throughout Juba in the lead-up to 16 May, but no protests materialized.

19. Between 14 and 19 May, President Kiir issued decrees replacing the governors of Ruweng, Southern Liech, Western Lakes, Northern Upper Nile, Central Upper Nile and Aweil. On 22 May, President Kiir convened a meeting of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement Political Bureau, the highest party leadership organ, and urged all members to reconcile. Meanwhile, celebrations for the Sudan People's Liberation Army Day were postponed from 16 May to 23 May and passed without incident.

Economic developments

20. The economy of South Sudan continued to show early signs of recovery. On the parallel market, the currency was relatively stable, at about 270 South Sudanese pounds to the United States dollar. The year-on-year inflation rate for South Sudan continued to stabilize and stood at an estimated 7 per cent for the month of February, which is the lowest in six years. Oil production stood at 175,000 barrels a day thanks to the resumption of oil production in Unity, although this is still below the pre-conflict level of 350,000 barrels per day.

III. Security situation

21. While the permanent ceasefire continued to hold in most parts of the country, tensions persisted. Increased movement and reinforcement of troops; sporadic clashes involving the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO and the National Salvation Front; skirmishes along the border between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces; cattle raids; attacks on civilians; and intercommunal violence continued to be reported.

Greater Upper Nile region

22. In Unity, on 3 March, three civilians were reportedly killed during an exchange of fire between the South Sudan National Police Service and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces at a police station in Abiemnom, Ruweng. On 6 March, fighting between armed youth and members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces stationed in Rubkway, Mayendit, resulted in two young people being killed. On 25 April, an unknown armed youth from Mayom attacked the military barracks in Abiemnom, Ruweng, killing two South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers.

23. In Upper Nile, on 26 March, some members of the national parliament and the Latjoor assembly, and officers from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces were reportedly ambushed by two armed men believed to be White Army soldiers, near the village of Burjwok, on the Sobat River. Four people died and three others were injured in the incident. Also on 26 March, in Shomadi, Renk County, Sudanese border guards reportedly opened fire on South Sudanese tax collectors patrolling close to the border in search of smugglers, while fighting also occurred between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces in Atam. On 15 April, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and nomads clashed in the town of Obay, Panyikang County, resulting in the death of one soldier and four nomads. On 18 April, a civilian settlement was reportedly attacked in Dollieb Hill, south of Malakal, in Panyikang County, by unidentified gunmen. One civilian and the bodyguard of the acting Paramount Chief were killed.

24. In Jonglei, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and opposition armed groups traded accusations about attacks on 12 March near Pibor, in which three SPLM/A-IO soldiers died and one South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldier was injured. On 7 and 8 May, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces were seen moving heavy weapons out of the town of Bor and heading north on the Bor-Panyagor road and north up the Nile River. The pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO also alleged that members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces from Yuai shelled their positions at Juet and Muodit on 10 and 11 May. The South Sudan People's Defence Forces rejected the claim, and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism found no evidence to support the allegations.

Greater Equatoria region

25. In Central Equatoria, on 5 March, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces clashed with the National Salvation Front near Katigiri and Gumba, reportedly leading to civilian displacement towards Kuda in Wonduruba County. That same day, the Wonduruba County Commissioner's vehicle was allegedly ambushed by National Salvation Front forces along the Wonduruba-Lainya road. On 10 March, the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO allegedly ambushed a commercial convoy in Ligi, along the Yei-Kaia road. On 13 April, National Salvation Front forces reportedly abducted five people close to the village of Pisak, on the Yei-Tore road. On 21 April, in the same area, National Salvation Front forces allegedly killed two South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers during an ambush. That same day, they also allegedly ambushed a South Sudan People's Defence Forces convoy in Kirikwat Boma, Otego County, causing the death of two soldiers and the displacement of civilians to Logo and Yei. Skirmishes between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the National Salvation Front forces were also reported in Lujulo County, Yei River, on 27 and 28 April. The National Salvation Front also allegedly attacked a South Sudan People's Defence Forces vehicle at Bereke Payam, Wonduruba County, on 28 April, resulting in four casualties and two injuries. On 9 May, the newly appointed County Commissioner of Wonduruba was killed by a mine north of Lainya, while on his way to Juba to be sworn into office. While the perpetrators have yet to be identified, it is believed that the Commissioner was the intended target. Meanwhile, in Western Equatoria, between 9 and 10 March, members of the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO based in Kediba attacked the National Salvation Front in Wiro, Mollo, Garanya and Minga, in Witto County, over the alleged ongoing recruitment of residents. In Eastern Equatoria, on 21 May, a demining team from the Mine Action Service was ambushed on the Kapoeta-Narus road, with one national contractor sustaining an injury. The security situation has reportedly improved following the deployment of South Sudan People's Defence Forces patrols to the area.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

26. In Warrap, on 17 April, a commercial vehicle was allegedly ambushed by unknown armed men on the outskirts of Ajakuach, killing four people and injuring five civilians. On 25 April, suspected members of the SPLM/A-IO attacked two locations in Pagol County, reportedly resulting in seven people being killed and one injured. Meanwhile, in Western Bahr-el Ghazal, on 22 April, armed men presumed to be from Tonj attacked the village of Uliira, in Kuajeina County. On 24 April, an unidentified armed group attacked the village of Khor Jamus in Rocrocdong County, leading to three deaths.

Intercommunal conflict

27. While there was a decrease in incidents of armed conflict, the secondary effects of years of conflict, including the destruction of basic livelihoods and the polarization of communities, is contributing to increased intercommunal violence across South Sudan. During the reporting period, UNMISS recorded 152 incidents, resulting in approximately 531 deaths and 317 injuries, a 192 per cent increase in casualties compared with the corresponding period last year.

28. In Jonglei, fighting between the Murle and the Jie communities in Jabal Boma County on 9 April resulted in 81 persons being killed and 41 injured. The South Sudan People's Defence Forces refrained from intervening owing to the overwhelming number of armed fighters. Renewed fighting between the communities on 8 May reportedly resulted in 17 persons being killed, 10 injured and dozens of abductions.

UNMISS has been assisting the authorities to de-escalate the situation through dialogue.

29. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal, tensions over the destruction by Dinka pastoralists from Tonj of Lou-Jur crops in Kuajeina, Rocrocdong and Alur counties – areas predominately controlled by SPLM/A-IO – have led to intermittent clashes since 27 February, resulting in the reported killing of 57 persons, the destruction of property and the displacement of hundreds of civilians. UNMISS repeatedly engaged with the authorities and communities in Wau, Tonj and Juba to de-escalate tensions.

30. In Tonj, alleged actors from Northern and Southern Liech carried out three separate cattle raids between 8 and 10 March, targeting cattle keepers in Luanyjang South and Akop Counties. Some 28 persons were reportedly killed, and a further 29 injured. Also in Tonj, clashes between the Wanh Alel and the Manyangok communities over disputed grazing and farming areas led to 9 fatalities and injured 22, while in Torit, a communal clash between the Latuko and the Pari communities on 24 March resulted in the killing of 22 persons. In Western Equatoria, between late March and April, three separate attacks by the Ambororo nomadic community in the villages of Yubu, Mogoroko and Naziazia allegedly resulted in the killing of 21 civilians and the displacement of many others. In Upper Nile, inter-clan fighting between the Jikany Nuer and the Lou Nuer in Doma resulted in the killing of 36 civilians and the displacement of a section of the Jikany Nuer population to Gel Achol.

IV. Humanitarian situation

31. The humanitarian situation remains serious. Despite a decline in conflict, internal and external displacement continues. While the overall numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees remained static from the previous reporting period, at 1.9 million internally displaced persons and 2.3 million people displaced to other countries, population movements were reported within the country and across its borders. Owing to increased hope for peace, along with some positive signs of change such as improved security and community dialogue, there is evidence that some internally displaced persons and refugees were cautiously exploring options to return home or to other areas of relocation. At the same time, others were newly displaced owing to violence and insecurity.

32. As of April, there are unverified reports of over 147,400 South Sudanese refugees having returned spontaneously, mostly to assess the security situation or to plant crops before the dry season ends in May. Some 4,600 spontaneous refugee returns were verified in March by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The needs of returnees are considerable, as many do not have access to water, basic services, such as education and health care, or livelihood opportunities. Of the spontaneous refugee returnees monitored by humanitarian actors, 85 per cent report that they are living as internally displaced persons, unable to return to their places of origin. Despite ongoing humanitarian assessments, the full scale of returns remained difficult to track and quantify. In March, hostilities and intercommunal clashes in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity and the Equatorias, and cattle raids in Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Warrap, prompted new displacement, with thousands of people forced to flee their homes. Some areas, such as Yei in Central Equatoria, saw a combination of returns and new displacements, illustrating the fluidity of population movements in the current context.

33. In April, the Central Emergency Response Fund allocated \$11 million in response to ongoing population movements, targeting nearly 270,000 people across Jonglei, Unity, Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Western Equatoria. The fund aims to

bolster health care, education, and water and sanitation activities in areas of return, and support returnees by providing them with seeds and tools, food and essential household items. Protection services were a central component of the plan.

34. According to a food security projection analysis, it is estimated that between February and April, 6.45 million people, or 57 per cent of the population, faced acute food insecurity or worse, despite the provision of humanitarian food assistance. An estimated 45,000 people were believed to be in phase 5, “catastrophe”, of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system. These estimates are expected to rise during the height of the lean season (May–August). Malnutrition levels remain critical, with approximately 860,000 children under the age of five expected to be severely malnourished in 2019. Forecasted rainfall deficits may have a further negative impact on the supply of food in parts of South Sudan.

35. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which borders South Sudan, as at 22 May there were 1,877 cases of Ebola virus disease, and a total of 1,248 people have died since the beginning of the outbreak in August 2018. Although the risk of Ebola spreading to South Sudan remains very high, no cases have been reported. The South Sudanese Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund and other partners continue to maintain vigilance and support preventative actions. By 20 May, over 2,201,833 travellers had been screened at 31 Ebola screening points and a total of 2,610 health-care and frontline workers in states identified as high risk had received Ebola vaccinations.

36. The permanent ceasefire has generally improved humanitarian access, except for the Greater Maridi and Mundri areas in Western Equatoria and Yei in Central Equatoria. Between March and April, a total of 101 incidents were reported, including ambushes and robberies of humanitarian vehicles, operational interference, relocation of humanitarian personnel due to active hostilities and military operations, access denials out of Yei and Wau, and looting and taxation of supplies.

37. In March, at least 42 humanitarian workers had to be relocated owing to insecurity in Abiemnom, Koch and Leer in Unity, and Nasir and Ulang in Upper Nile. This affected food distribution to thousands of people and led to the early termination of a needs assessment in Nasir. Other incidents included the detention and taxation of food items being transported from Ethiopia to Upper Nile; interference with, and delay of, the International Organization for Migration’s mobility tracking system; and the holding of 11 humanitarian workers over income tax disputes. In a positive development, road security out of Yei started to improve in March, although criminality remained a concern. The number of checkpoints and fees demanded along the Juba-Bentiu corridor reportedly fell following national-level intervention. In April, however, increased road insecurity related to criminal activity was reported around Torit and Kapoeta in Eastern Equatoria, with four ambushes on humanitarian vehicles.

38. By the end of March, humanitarian workers had delivered assistance and protection to 2.6 million people, or 45 per cent of all people targeted for assistance in 2019. Almost 2.1 million people received food assistance; over 921,800 people were given access to improved water sources; more than 180,000 people were provided with vital non-food items and emergency shelter; over 300,000 children, pregnant women and new mothers received emergency nutritional assistance; almost 330,000 children were given access to temporary emergency education; over 500,000 people received health consultations; and nearly 110,000 people received services related to gender-based violence, child protection, mine awareness education and general protection.

39. The 2019 humanitarian response plan calls for \$1.5 billion to aid 5.7 million people, of 7.1 million in need. As at 23 May, the plan was 23 per cent funded.

V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks

A. Protection of civilians

40. UNMISS continued to protect civilians in South Sudan, both inside and outside protection of civilians sites. The main threats to civilians included sexual violence, killing, wounding, abduction, arbitrary arrest and detention, ill-treatment, looting and destruction of civilian property. Attacks against civilians occurred in the context of armed conflict between State security forces, opposition forces and other armed groups, as well as intercommunal conflicts, cattle raids and other violent criminal activities, including road ambushes. Major obstacles to the Mission's implementation of its mandate to protect civilians included denial of access by both State and opposition actors, hindering the Mission's situational awareness and ability to act to address threats to civilians.

41. Within the protection of civilians framework, UNMISS facilitated confidence- and trust-building activities across the country. The Mission supported 16 of the 35 confidence- and trust-building initiatives undertaken between the Government and the opposition at the subnational level. UNMISS also conducted 39 workshops, forums, community dialogues and campaigns at the subnational level to facilitate conflict management, social cohesion, reconciliation and civil-military cooperation and to promote the role of women, young people and traditional leaders in peacebuilding. A total of 9,124 people (including 4,257 women) were reached. In Lakes State, UNMISS facilitated a conference to review previous agreements and harmonize traditional and statutory norms related to cattle migration. The Mission also facilitated a dialogue between the Dinka of Jonglei and the Murle of Boma, leading to enhanced trust and pledges from both communities. Through conflict management workshops, the Mission improved relations between returnees and settled communities in Akobo, while a dialogue in Gbudwe strengthened cooperation between the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO and the population.

42. UNMISS continued to host and provide protection to internally displaced persons in the protection of civilians sites. As at 23 May, a total of 178,186 internally displaced persons (88,874 males and 89,312 females) were residing in such sites, as follows: 30,272 in Juba (15,338 males and 14,934 females); 1,999 in Bor (960 males and 1,039 females); 100,441 in Bentiu (49,981 males and 50,460 females); 29,190 in Malakal (14,293 males and 14,897 females); and 16,284 in the area adjacent to the UNMISS base in Wau (8,302 males and 7,982 females).

43. The Mission continued to ensure the civilian character of its protection sites through the conduct of weekly meetings with community leaders and regular cordon, search and seizure operations to halt the smuggling of weapons into the sites. The Mine Action Service supported UNMISS in weapons searches in Malakal, Wau and Juba. A total of 356 crimes and security incidents were recorded in the sites at Wau (52), Bentiu (164), Juba (65), Malakal (66) and Bor (9). A total of 146 persons suspected of involvement in serious security incidents were detained at UNMISS holding facilities in Bentiu, Juba and Malakal.

44. UNMISS continued to promote national accountability for serious crimes committed within the protection sites. From 11 to 16 April, national authorities, with logistical support from UNMISS, constituted a mobile court to adjudicate eight cases involving 13 accused. The trials resulted in five convictions, with prison sentences ranging from five months to 10 years.

45. To expand access to justice outside protection sites, on 30 April, UNMISS and the United Nations Development Programme held discussions with national authorities and civil society to coordinate the establishment of future mobile courts

and identify lessons learned. UNMISS also supported the efforts of the national authorities to restore a prosecutorial presence across the 10 former states of South Sudan by providing logistical assistance for the deployment of over 50 prosecutors to areas where prosecution capacity was either missing or insufficient.

46. Beyond the protection sites, UNMISS continued to focus its activities on situational awareness, with the aim of pre-empting, deterring and mitigating violence against civilians across its area of responsibility. During the reporting period, a total of 14,873 patrols (short and long duration, dynamic air, riverine and foot) were planned and conducted, including 110 patrols to support the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism. The Mission also continued to improve its austere operating bases in Kodok and Akobo to accommodate civilian staff on a regular basis and to enhance the ability of the Mission to implement its protection of civilians mandate in those areas.

47. To support a protective environment, the Mission continued to advocate that protecting civilians was a primary responsibility of the South Sudanese authorities. Meanwhile, UNMISS-supported confidence- and trust-building activities also contributed to returns, including from protection sites. In Bor, the Mission supported the return of 132 internally displaced persons from the protection site to their places of origin or their relocation to another area. Similarly, Malakal has seen an increase in movement from the Malakal protection site into the town. Numbers in the Bentiu protection site decreased from 113,695 people in the last week of February to 100,441 at the reporting time. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal, UNMISS collaborated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to help 110 individuals to return, voluntarily, from protection sites in Wau. The returns resulted in the closure of protection site 1 in Wau on 31 March.

48. UNMISS, together with humanitarian partners, continued to coordinate engagement on housing, land and property issues, providing technical assistance to national and international stakeholders. From 8 to 10 May, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, held a three-day workshop on women's land rights. The workshop provided a forum for women, civil society organizations, traditional leaders and key members of the Government to discuss land-associated challenges faced by women and to formulate recommendations on the national land policy to enhance protection for women.

B. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations

49. The human rights environment in South Sudan remained of serious concern. During the reporting period, UNMISS verified 81 incidents that had a negative impact on the human rights and protection situation and that resulted in the killing of 154 civilians and the injury of 125 others. These incidents included the killing or wounding of civilians, State-sanctioned executions, abductions, forced and child recruitment, conflict-related sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, forced displacement, and the looting and destruction of civilian property. Eight of these incidents were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, four to the National Salvation Front, two to the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO, four to the National Police Service, one to the National Prison Service, ten to the National Security Service, and three to operations conducted by all three government security forces. The remaining 49 incidents were attributed to other armed groups, including community-based militias.

50. Violence involving community-based militias continued and accounted for the vast majority – 94 per cent – of civilian casualties. Overall, UNMISS documented 35 incidents of violence involving community-based militias in Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal, resulting in a collective total of 263 civilian casualties (146 deaths and 118 injured). Between March and May, violence by Dinka militia elements targeting members of the Luo community in Western Bahr el-Ghazal intensified, killing 26 civilians and wounding 17 others, and displacing a substantial number of civilians.

51. UNMISS continued to investigate allegations of serious human rights violations and abuses in the context of operations by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces to dislodge non-signatory opposition armed groups in the Yei and Lobonok areas of Central Equatoria. A public report with the findings is forthcoming.

52. Access restrictions continued to impair the Mission's ability to monitor and investigate alleged human rights violations and abuses. During the reporting period, UNMISS was denied access on six occasions by elements of the National Security Service in Western Bahr el-Ghazal and on one occasion by members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Central Equatoria.

53. The limited space for freedom of expression remained of concern, with reports from civil society and media actors of intimidation and interference by State officials in Central Equatoria, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal and Warrap. On 27 March, the newspaper *Al-Watan* was suspended for 30 days owing to alleged non-compliance with media licensing regulations. The suspension followed the newspaper's continued defiance of warnings by the South Sudan Media Authority to suspend coverage of protests in the Sudan. Additionally, government efforts to suppress planned anti-government protests on 16 May, including by means of public threats, intimidation, arbitrary arrest and alleged surveillance of civil society activists, were of significant concern.

54. On 21 March, the trial of Kerbino Wol, Peter Biar Ajak and five other individuals commenced at Juba High Court. The defendants were initially charged with treason, terrorism, sabotage and insurgency in connection with a standoff that occurred on 7 October 2018 at Blue House, a National Security Service detention facility in Juba. On 30 April, the Court dismissed the treason charge against Mr. Ajak, but maintained the remaining charges in connection with statements he made to international media sources during the standoff. As at 22 May, Mr. Wol and Mr. Ajak had not yet been charged with any offence in connection with their initial arrests in April and July 2018, respectively.

55. UNMISS documented the execution of one death row inmate in Juba on 14 March. The use of capital punishment in South Sudan remained of serious concern, considering the limited ability of the country's national justice system to fully comply with minimum due process and fair trial safeguards. An increase in executions in 2019 continued to raise concerns of a potential acceleration in the implementation of the death penalty, as at least eight executions were carried out in the first quarter of 2019 (as compared with seven executions documented for the entirety of 2018). On 8 March, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights wrote to President Kiir, expressing concern about the increased number of executions and urging him to implement a moratorium on the death penalty. Meanwhile, on 22 March, the Human Rights Council extended the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan for one year.

56. In April, UNMISS supported the civil society-led national Transitional Justice Working Group to launch transitional justice forums in Bor and Yambio to raise awareness and prepare for local and regional participation in transitional justice processes, as provided for in the Revitalized Agreement. In May, however, the public

disclosure of the Government's multimillion-dollar contract with a United States lobbying firm to block the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan raised significant concerns about the Government's genuine political will to establish the Hybrid Court.

57. UNMISS completed three human rights due diligence policy risk assessments related to the provision of transportation to opposition and government representatives to enable them to participate in peace activities, as well as the provision of materials to the National Police Service.

Children and armed conflict

58. During the reporting period, the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting on children and armed conflict verified 57 incidents of grave violations against children, affecting at least 75 children (48 boys and 27 girls), including 17 incidents of recruitment and use affecting 39 children (34 boys and 5 girls), 14 incidents of killing and maiming affecting 17 children (14 boys and 3 girls), 18 incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence affecting 18 girls, 1 incident of abduction affecting 1 girl, and 4 incidents of denial of humanitarian access. In addition, 2 incidents of attacks on schools and separate attacks on two hospitals were verified, affecting an estimated 1,926 children (996 boys and 930 girls). The task force also verified 10 incidents of military use of schools, affecting an estimated 3,210 children (1,660 boys and 1,550 girls).

59. Of the 57 verified incidents, 32 incidents (affecting 20 boys and 17 girls) were attributed to government security forces, including the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (29), Taban Deng-aligned elements of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (1) and the National Police Service (1). Nine incidents affecting 7 children (6 boys and 1 girl) were attributed to the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO; 4 incidents affecting 3 girls were attributed to unknown armed persons; 6 incidents affecting 23 children (18 boys and 5 girls) were attributed to the National Salvation Front; 5 boys were maimed by unexploded ordnances in 4 verified incidents; and 2 verified incidents of attacks on schools were attributed to crossfire between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO (both those incidents occurred in 2017 but the task force verified them during the reporting period).

60. UNMISS trained 717 United Nations personnel (600 men and 117 women) through child protection mainstreaming activities. Training was also delivered to 328 (including 31 women) government security members and 108 members (including 11 women) of the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO, while 1,298 community members (742 men and 556 women) were engaged in activities aimed at raising awareness and sensitizing the community to child protection matters.

Conflict-related sexual violence

61. During the reporting period, 19 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence were reported, involving 28 victims (including 10 children), primarily in Central Equatoria and Unity. These incidents were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (10), the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO (2), the National Salvation Front (2), community-based militia (2) and the National Police Service (1). The 2 remaining incidents had yet to be attributed at the time of reporting. Additionally, these numbers are expected to be largely underreported.

62. Following the publication of a joint report by UNMISS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on conflict-related sexual violence in northern Unity in February 2019, the Minister for Foreign Affairs reported to the Human Rights Council on 27 February that a Government investigative committee had documented 16 incidents of rape.

63. On 14 March, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces launched an action plan on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan, in fulfilment of the commitments made in the 2014 Joint Communiqué of the Government of South Sudan and the United Nations on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, which was signed by President Kiir and by my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The action plan provides for, among other things, nationwide training of soldiers, enhanced coordination between military and civilian justice systems and thorough vetting processes to exclude the perpetrators of sexual violence crimes from recruitment or integration into the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. As part of the nationwide roll-out of the action plan, UNMISS partnered with the South Sudan People's Defence Forces to provide training to officers on the issue of conflict-related sexual violence, including command responsibility for acts perpetrated by subordinates.

64. From 27 April to 4 May, the drafting committee of the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO convened to finalize its action plan on conflict-related sexual violence. UNMISS, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, provided technical support and organized a one-day workshop on international laws and standards.

C. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

65. UNMISS continued to support humanitarian partners to implement humanitarian activities in areas affected by conflict and instability. During the reporting period, UNMISS conducted 628 long-distance and 3,303 short-distance patrols to both government-controlled and SPLM/A-IO-controlled areas in Upper Nile, Unity, Jonglei, greater Equatoria, greater Bahr el-Ghazal, Lakes and Warrap to support the delivery of assistance and to protect humanitarian workers.

66. UNMISS provided force protection to 3,764 integrated missions, enabling access to high-risk areas; force protection convoys for 28 non-governmental organizations; and 9,263 patrols in protection sites and weapons-free zones and to escort communities fetching firewood and water. UNMISS also provided force protection for 17 planned main supply route maintenance works.

67. The Mine Action Service deployed 25 teams during the reporting period. The teams surveyed and released 741,822 m² of land and removed and destroyed a further 10,702 explosive items and 372,390 rounds of small arms ammunition. The Mine Action Service investigated reports of four accidents from explosive hazards in Central Equatoria and Unity. In total, two boys and two men were killed, and one boy, two women and four men were maimed in these verified incidents. The Mine Action Service surveyed and cleared the Korkal-Bentiu road in Unity, destroying 215 explosive items, removed eight explosive items from the weapons-free zones in Juba, and continued to survey and clear the contingent operating base in Malakal, after uncontrolled detonations occurred during a bush fire.

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

68. My Special Representative for South Sudan and his deputies continued to exercise their good offices, engaging with the parties and stakeholders to help sustain commitment to the peace process. They actively participated in meetings of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, urging

the parties to expedite critical pre-transition tasks. UNMISS continued to support implementation bodies and institutions, including through the provision of a technical expert to the Technical Boundary Committee and the Independent Boundaries Commission; by monitoring and observing the work of security-related bodies, such as the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board and the Joint Transitional Security Committee; and by providing logistical support to the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism.

69. UNMISS continued to engage regularly with the international community to promote coherence and coordinate support for the peace process. On 12 April, the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD issued a joint statement urging the parties to renew their commitment to the Revitalized Agreement. On 16 April, my Special Representative for South Sudan, the IGAD Special Envoy and the interim Chair of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission undertook a joint visit to Panyume and Yei in Central Equatoria. In Panyume, they observed an approved cantonment site and engaged with opposition forces and civilians. In Yei, the delegation interacted with officials, civil society, youth and women's groups, religious leaders and humanitarian actors regarding the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.

E. Women and peace and security

70. UNMISS continued to engage with women's groups and organizations to advance their participation in the peace process and the national dialogue. The Mission held 16 subnational workshops for women on the Revitalized Agreement to develop effective and inclusive implementation strategies. Consequently, several women's networks were established and managed to persuade state-level leaders to support the gender provisions in the peace agreement. On a practical level, in Tonj, this resulted in a significant increase in the number of women appointed to key ministerial and leadership positions.

71. The Mission also engaged with Members of Parliament to advocate enhanced representation and participation of women in the implementation bodies.

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

72. On 24 May, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,704, comprising 905 international staff members (249 women, or 28 per cent); 1,390 national staff members (197 women, or 14 per cent); and 409 United Nations Volunteers (154 women, or 38 per cent).

73. The police strength stood at 1,871 (of an authorized 2,101 officers), comprising 653 individual police officers (210 women, or 32 per cent); 1,147 personnel in formed police units (224 women, or 20 per cent); and 71 corrections officers (16 women, or 23 per cent).

74. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, including up to 4,000 troops for the regional protection force, UNMISS troop strength stood at 14,892 military personnel: 215 military liaison officers (36 women, or 17 per cent); 410 military staff officers (63 women, or 15 per cent); and 14,267 military contingent personnel (510 women, or 4 per cent).

75. During the review period, UNMISS continued to focus on activities in line with the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Toolkit. These activities included the identification, assessment and management of risks related to sexual exploitation and

abuse in the Mission area and the development of clear workplans. UNMISS coordinated its efforts to complement those of the United Nations country team. During the period under review, no allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were received. A further 28 allegations were assessed and processed in accordance with established procedures.

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

76. During the reporting period, UNMISS recorded 42 incidents constituting violations of the status-of-forces agreement, compared with 20 in the previous reporting period.

77. UNMISS recorded 24 incidents of movement restrictions impeding the Mission's ability to implement its mandated tasks, which were attributed to the Government. Obstructions of UNMISS movements included access restrictions along the Torit to Pajok axis, as well as in Lokiri, Loronyo and Pachidi in Eastern Equatoria; in the Morsak, Kejiko and Senema areas, approximately 32 km from Yei in Central Equatoria; and along the Wau to Tonj axis, the East Bank of the Jur River, and the Wau to Athiro Boma and the Wau to Kuajena axes, especially around the village of Ukol in Western Bahr el-Ghazal.

78. Violations of the obligation to facilitate the entry of UNMISS and associated personnel into South Sudan, without delay or hindrance, continued. Specifically, military officers deployed to UNMISS continue to experience lengthy delays in securing entry visas into South Sudan owing to cumbersome processes imposed by the Government, which significantly impedes the Mission's ability to implement its mandate efficiently.

79. The whereabouts of two staff members arrested in 2014 remains unknown. The Government has neither granted UNMISS access to the staff members nor provided information about their condition, despite regular requests.

80. Four cases of interference in UNMISS activities by the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO were recorded in Central Equatoria, with the group disrupting UNMISS patrols on two different occasions. On 8 March, an UNMISS patrol travelling from Yei to Panyume (located about 7 km from Yei) was blocked by pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO members. On 22 March, an UNMISS patrol travelling along the Yei to Morobo axis was also blocked by pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO members. On 2 April, the pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO-appointed Governor of Boma threatened to shoot down UNMISS aircraft overflying areas under his control. Following UNMISS engagement, a declarative statement was subsequently issued, guaranteeing the safety of UNMISS flights throughout the area.

81. On 24 April, a commander of the Taban Deng-affiliated South Sudan People's Defence Forces denied access to an UNMISS human rights team that was attempting to visit the Kuergini military barracks to interview two soldiers in connection with an alleged incident of rape.

82. UNMISS continued to strengthen implementation of safety and security measures for United Nations personnel, premises and assets, emphasizing the criticality of adhering to the security risk management processes approved by the United Nations security management system.

VIII. Financial aspects

83. The General Assembly, by its resolution [72/300](#), appropriated the amount of \$1,124,960,400 for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

84. As at 21 May 2019, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNMISS special account amounted to \$352.2 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to \$1,954.5 million.

85. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 October 2018, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 30 September 2018, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IX. Observations and recommendations

86. The ultimate objective of the Revitalized Agreement, signed on 12 September 2018, was to ensure the sustainable return of South Sudan to peace and stability. Regrettably, delays in the implementation of critical political and security tasks during the eight-month pre-transition period rendered the South Sudanese parties unable to form the reconstituted transitional Government on 12 May 2019, as provided for in the Revitalized Agreement. The unanimous decision taken by the parties on 2 May in Addis Ababa to extend the pre-transition period by six months to complete these tasks is welcome, but this extra time should not be squandered. Unless a significant political investment is made by the parties and the region to step up preparations for the transition period, the new deadline could easily be missed. I urge the parties to sustain this spirit of compromise and collaboration and to make concrete and rapid progress in addressing the required benchmarks for the successful preparation of the transition. Priority must be given to resolving the transitional security arrangements, including the security of the opposition members of the reconstituted transitional Government.

87. I commend the sustained efforts of faith leaders, the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations during this tense period to support the parties to preserve the Revitalized Agreement and to avert a relapse into conflict. I fully support the initiative of the three Churches to reconcile the South Sudanese leadership and provide spiritual guidance to the country in these dark times. In addition, I commend the sustained engagement of IGAD through its Special Envoy and its Council of Ministers, which convened at short notice to take stock of the peace process and endorse the extension proposed by the parties, and the commitment of IGAD to carefully guiding the process. The immediate follow-up action taken by the IGAD Special Envoy and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission to convene the parties and develop clear and achievable benchmarks for the next six months is an example of what the international community must proactively do to hold the parties accountable to their commitments, while supporting them to turn their decisions into action. In this regard, I again encourage the timely appointment of the Chair of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission.

88. The Revitalized Agreement remains the only option for a political solution to the crisis in South Sudan. The dividends of peace are already apparent, as demonstrated by a permanent ceasefire across parts of the country, which is largely holding, and by the ongoing subnational rapprochements between Government and pro-Machar SPLM/A-IO forces and officials. This, alongside reports of the spontaneous voluntary return of some 142,000 refugees, albeit mostly to areas for internally displaced persons within the country, in addition to more internally

displaced persons expressing a willingness to leave UNMISS protection sites to return home or to relocation areas, are positive signs that the country is ripe for peace.

89. We cannot afford to lose this momentum. These gains are fragile and their sustainability depends on the parties' full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. The precarious security and humanitarian situation in the country, along with persistent sexual and gender-based violence, is a direct testament to this fact. We cannot forget that this crisis, now in its sixth year, has caused immense suffering for millions of civilians across the country. One third of the population (4.2 million people) has been displaced by the conflict, while over half (6.45 million) faces acute food insecurity or worse. Violence and hunger are everyday realities and the vulnerability created is likely to take years to reverse.

90. Given this context, the South Sudanese parties must make full use of the window of opportunity that this extension provides to ensure a successful transition in November. In this connection, I welcome the Government's pledge to make available \$100 million for the implementation of the pending activities of the pre-transition period and I encourage the timely and transparent disbursement of the funds. It is my hope that such positive actions will restore the confidence of the international community and attract further donor support to enable the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. The United Nations, for its part, will enhance its support for the peace process, including through the provision of technical assistance to the security mechanisms charged with formulating the country's defence and security policies and reforming its security sector. We will continue to provide logistical and substantive support for the critical work of the Independent Boundaries Commission, and will support trust- and confidence-building efforts and the dissemination of the Revitalized Agreement at the grass-roots level.

91. The prevailing circumstances in South Sudan require that the region and the international community continue to speak with one voice. We must act in a concerted and reinforcing manner. I urge the region and the international community to continue to impress upon the parties the need to refrain from mutual recrimination and inflammatory rhetoric and instead to engage in dialogue to ensure the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. To this end, I agree that more needs to be done to build trust between the members of the future presidency, and I extend my full support to IGAD to assist it to operationalize its decision to organize face-to-face meetings between President Kiir and Riek Machar to review implementation progress in the next six months.

92. In conclusion, I convey my sincere appreciation to the personnel of UNMISS, who, under the leadership of my Special Representative for South Sudan, work courageously to protect civilians in vulnerable situations, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, safeguard human rights and support the peace process. In particular, I wish to thank the troop- and police-contributing countries that have provided much-needed uniformed personnel and assets to UNMISS. I commend the United Nations country team and partner non-governmental organizations for their tremendous courage and sacrifice in providing vital humanitarian assistance to the population, in arduous and often dangerous conditions. I thank IGAD for its tireless efforts to steer the peace process. Lastly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the active engagement of the African Union in our collective efforts for peace in South Sudan.

