



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
1 December 2020

Original: English

---

## Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), by which the Council established the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on the implementation of its mandate. The report covers political, security, socioeconomic and humanitarian developments as well as developments related to human rights and the rule of law in the Sudan from 9 September to 23 November 2020, and provides an update on the establishment of the Mission. The 90-day report on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is included as an annex.

#### II. Significant developments

2. Over the past months, the Sudan continued to make progress in its democratic transition, despite considerable challenges. A key achievement was the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement on 3 October after a year of negotiations. Meanwhile, the situation remained fragile, with civil unrest in parts of the country, pockets of violence in Darfur and tribal frictions generating clashes in Eastern Sudan. The economic situation remained dire and humanitarian needs continued to grow.

##### Political and security situation

3. The reporting period saw the signing of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, which was the formalization of the peace agreement reached in Juba at the end of August between the transitional Government, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Minni Minawi. The Agreement is a crucial step forward in the implementation of the political benchmarks of the transitional period as outlined in the Constitutional Document. It includes several region-specific protocols and one protocol on national issues. The national protocol notably stipulates that the 39-month-long transition envisaged in the Constitutional Document is to start from the signing of the Agreement. It also stipulates how positions in the transitional institutions are to be allocated to the signatories. After being endorsed by the High Peace Council on 14 September, the parties formalized the Agreement in Juba on 3 October by posing their signatures.



4. While this development was broadly welcomed in the Sudan as creating momentum towards a more wide-ranging peace, some groups from Eastern Sudan started to backtrack on earlier commitments, citing issues over representation, and a number of political parties rejected the Agreement. The Agreement's implementation has faced challenges, including ambitious timelines. It stipulates, inter alia, that representatives of the armed movements are to be appointed to the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers within seven days of the Constitutional Document being amended to reflect the provisions of the peace deal. The implementation of this provision and many others remained pending.

5. Following the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement, the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers amended the Constitutional Document in a joint meeting held on 18 October, thereby incorporating the Agreement into the Constitutional Document as an integral part. This prompted discussion among political forces about how such amendments needed to be made and, in particular, whether they needed to be approved by the Transitional Legislative Council. The most controversial amendment was the addition of article 80 to the Constitutional Document, which provides for the establishment of the Council of Partners for the Transitional Period. The Council, which consists of the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), the military and the signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, is mandated to discuss major political issues that arise during the transition. The addition of article 80 was criticized by some members of FFC, who denounced it as an attempt to supplant the group's role as a "political incubator" for the transitional period. They maintained that only the Transitional Legislative Council had the right to amend the Constitutional Document and called for the rescission of the new article. The amendment to article 20 also gave rise to controversy, as it allows representatives of the signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement who are members of the transitional Government, to run in the elections following the transitional period.

6. On 26 October, all transition partners, including SRF, agreed that there was a need to move forward with the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council before the end of November and confirmed the previous agreement that 60 members would be selected by the military, 165 by FFC and 75 by the armed movements bloc with which the transitional Government has reached peace agreements. That bloc thus far comprised SRF and SLA-Minni Minawi. On 12 November, the Chair of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, granted a general amnesty to all people who fought in Sudan's armed conflicts, in line with the Juba Peace Agreement, with the exclusion of those for whom arrest warrants had been issued by the International Criminal Court or who were wanted for genocide and crimes against humanity, or for war crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Special Court for Crimes Committed in Darfur whose establishment is part of the Juba Peace Agreement. On 15 November, the signatories to the Agreement arrived in Khartoum. Subsequently, on 21 November, FFC announced that the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council would not be completed until 31 December so as to take the views of SRF into consideration and to allow for a comprehensive dialogue with groups that were not signatories to the Declaration of Freedom and Change about their share in the legislative structure, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitutional Document. The Sovereign Council, the Council of Ministers and FFC also resolved to develop a national security strategy as one of their urgent tasks for the transitional period.

7. The transitional Government continued its efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. In the Juba Peace Agreement, the signatories reiterate their commitment to promoting gender equality in line with the Constitutional Document, in particular the provisions stipulating that women are to make up at least 40 per cent of the Transitional Legislative Council. All groups represented in the legislative body should therefore be required to secure women's representation in proportion to their

membership allocation. In addition, in line with the transitional Government's commitments, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development had planned a launch event for the Sudanese national action plan on women, peace and security (2020–2022) for 31 October, but that had to be postponed because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The action plan, which was endorsed by the transitional Government in March 2020, is aimed, inter alia, at ensuring women's participation in peacebuilding and decision-making; recognizing women's rights before, during and after conflict situations; and ensuring the protection of women against gender-based violence such as rape and sexual slavery, and putting an end to impunity.

8. Against that backdrop, the Sudanese political landscape continued to undergo realignments among political forces. On 5 November, a grouping of nine resistance committees, and a splinter faction of the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) allied with the Sudanese Communist Party, issued separate statements criticizing FFC. While the committees rejected the distribution of parliamentary seats among the signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement that FFC was proposing, the SPA faction took issue with the composition of the FFC central council, among other issues. On 7 November, the Sudanese Communist Party announced its withdrawal from FFC, the National Consensus Forces and all their affiliated bodies.

9. Tensions escalated in Khartoum on 21 October during demonstrations called for by a group of political parties, members of the FFC and SPA to commemorate the 1964 revolution. Demonstrators demanded government reform and the reversal of the amendments to the Constitutional Document. One protester was killed, which triggered more protests the next day. Another protester died of her injuries on 25 October.

10. Furthermore, the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement has been challenged in the east of the country. Several groups withdrew their support for the signing of the eastern track of the Agreement by the United People's Front for Liberation and Justice and the opposition Beja Congress, claiming that those two factions did not represent political forces on the ground. In Sinkat, Red Sea state, the nazirs (administrators appointed by the states) and independent chiefs of the Beja community held a three-day conference on peace, development and justice from 27 to 29 September. The participants called for the unification of all three eastern states into one region, as well as for the formation of a high coordination body composed of all eastern communities that was to agree, without external interference, on power-sharing arrangements and demands for self-determination. Their recommendations were presented to Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, Deputy Chair of the Sovereign Council, who attended the conference on its final day. On 8 October, the council of Beja nazirs reiterated its opposition to the eastern track of the Juba Peace Agreement.

11. Tensions persisted in the region and, in early October, protests led by members of the Beja community aimed at removing the interim Governor of Kassala, a member of the Bani Amir community, led to the closure of the port at Port Sudan and of the main highway to Khartoum. On 11 October, the Chair of the Sovereign Council met with a senior delegation of the Beja community and pledged to find a way forward that would satisfy all actors in Eastern Sudan and to reopen the eastern track of the peace process. Three days later, the Prime Minister, Abdalla Hamdok, dismissed the interim Governor. Nonetheless, communal tensions between the Bani Amir and the Beja escalated and, on 14 October, six members of the Beja tribe were killed and at least 20 injured in communal clashes in Port Sudan and Sawakin. Authorities in Red Sea state declared a curfew from 14 to 18 October. In response to the removal of the interim Governor, the Bani Amir community called for a protest to denounce the decision. Although initially peaceful, the protest, which took place on 15 October, turned violent after demonstrators proceeded towards the premises of the state government of Kassala to hand over a petition. The police reportedly opened fire,

killing seven demonstrators. One member of the Rapid Support Forces was also killed, while 19 people were injured.

12. On 3 September, Abdelaziz Al-Hilu, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) faction that bears his name, and Prime Minister Hamdok, signed a joint agreement on principles. On 8 October, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, in his capacity as Deputy Chair of the Sovereign Council, and Mr. Al-Hilu met in Juba, where they agreed that workshops would be organized to take stock and share best practices with participants from both sides, after which the talks would resume to discuss outstanding issues. This was a step forward, as on 20 August, Al-Hilu had withdrawn from earlier negotiations in protest against Mr. Dagalo's involvement in the peace talks. The first workshop was held in Juba from 29 October to 1 November with the participation of the transitional Government and the Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction. International experts gave presentations about the experiences gained by other countries in managing religious diversity. The workshop was aimed at developing mutual understanding on outstanding issues pertinent to the negotiations, such as the issue of religion and the State, with a view to finalizing the joint agreement on principles signed on 3 September and allowing formal negotiations to begin.

13. Despite attempts by the transitional Government to engage him in the formal peace process, the leader of the SLA-Abdul Wahid faction, Abdul Wahid al-Nur, continued to abstain from participating in formal negotiations. In Darfur, during the reporting period, there were incidents between nomadic and farmer communities, and intercommunal fighting broke out in various localities. Details are provided in the report on UNAMID (see annex).

#### **International relations**

14. The period under review saw significant developments regarding the country's international relations. On 19 October, President Trump of the United States of America announced his intention to remove the Sudan from his country's list of State sponsors of terrorism. Reportedly, the terms of the agreement reached between the Sudan and the United States about the removal included the Sudan paying \$335 million into an escrow account for families of the victims of the 1998 bombings of the United States embassies in Nairobi and Dar es-Salaam and the attack on the USS Cole in 2000. The Sudan is on track to be removed from the list in December 2020, pending a 45-day period for review by the United States Congress.

15. On 23 October, the Sudan agreed to establish ties with Israel in a conference call between the Chair of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Burhan, Prime Minister Hamdok, President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. Two days later, Israel announced a \$5 million aid package to the Sudan, while the United Arab Emirates delivered 67,000 tons of wheat in a move that was coordinated with the announcement. The Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs subsequently clarified that the Transitional Legislative Council, once formed, would need to ratify the decision to normalize relations.

16. The agreement on the establishment of relations with Israel gave rise to some political debate within the Sudan and some protests in Khartoum. The Sudanese Congress Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, SRF, the Democratic Forces Movement and the Republican Party all declared their support for the establishment of relations, citing long-term and short-term benefits. At the same time, the National Umma Party, the Sudanese Communist Party and the Nasserist and Baathist parties expressed their opposition. Some opponents to the move cited solidarity with the Palestinian people, while others, including FFC, expressed grievances over the process, citing a lack of consultations on the issue.

17. The eruption of armed clashes in the Tigray region of Ethiopia on 3 November between the Ethiopian National Defence Forces and the Tigray People's Liberation Front prompted the transitional Government to announce the closure of the eastern border with Ethiopia. Despite the closure of the border, the transitional Government has allowed humanitarian access to all Ethiopian asylum seekers by granting prima facie recognition while upholding the principle of non-refoulement. As at 23 November, more than 40,000 refugees had arrived in Eastern Sudan from Ethiopia. Prime Minister Hamdok offered to mediate between the parties in his capacity as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

### **Socioeconomic situation**

18. The economic situation continued to deteriorate during the reporting period. Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in a severe decline in economic activity, a lowering of the gross domestic product and the loss of approximately 42 per cent of fiscal revenue. In urban areas, the pandemic also had a negative impact on the large informal economic sector, increasing the precarious situation of daily-wage earners, especially women, who grapple with poverty. Given its payment arrears, the Sudan has not been able to avail itself of debt relief. Combined with increased spending on emergency health programmes and a decline in public revenue, this has led to a budget deficit of approximately \$250 million per month. The annual inflation rate reached a record 212.29 per cent in September, from 166.83 per cent in August, driven by increased food and transport costs. On 10 September, the deteriorating economic climate led the authorities to announce a state of economic emergency.

19. Demonstrations against the dire economic situation and related hardships continued throughout the reporting period. Given continuing queues for bread, fuel and cooking gas, the resistance committees announced the escalation of mass protests. Demonstrations took place in the states of Khartoum, Red Sea, Al-Gazira, Gedaref, Southern Kordofan, North Darfur, among others, with protesters demanding the dismissal of the Minister for Trade, whom they blamed for the shortages.

20. It was in that economic environment that a national economic conference was held in Khartoum from 26 to 28 September, after repeated postponements related to pandemic. The conference was originally proposed to facilitate a dialogue between the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Office of the Prime Minister and FFC on the 2020 budget, given their differing views on issues related to subsidies and exchange rate policies. During the conference, FFC and the resistance committees opposed the lifting of subsidies, decided earlier by the transitional Government. Recommendations made at the conference included the separation of fiscal policy from monetary policy, granting the Central Bank of the Sudan full autonomy from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, and a commitment to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing. No consensus was found on the issues of subsidies, reviewing civil service salaries or rationalizing the size of the civil service.

21. In an important development towards debt relief, on 23 September, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund endorsed a staff-monitored program. Pending arrears clearance with the international financial institutions, the implementation of the programme will make the Sudan eligible for more than \$1.5 billion per year in direct development grants to stimulate investment and revive the economy. Demonstrated progress in the implementation of the programme is also an important requirement for the Sudan to become eligible for bilateral debt reduction under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. The 12-month programme will serve to support the transitional Government's home-grown programme of reforms aimed at stabilizing the economy, improving competitiveness and strengthening governance. To that end, several key steps have already been undertaken, including the drafting of a law establishing an anti-corruption commission and another law to

reform the governance of State-owned enterprises. The transitional Government is also rationalizing expenditures in order to improve financial accountability through major reforms of public financial management.

22. Some of the most critical reforms that the transitional Government agreed to implement as part of the staff-monitored program relate to the removal of subsidies and exchange rate reform. These reform measures are expected to impose a significant economic burden on the public as the fundamental characteristics of the country's economy are restructured. On 12 October, the Government announced that it would liberalize fuel prices and align the domestic price of fuel with international prices; on 28 October, fuel prices approximately doubled.

23. On 8 October, the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank Group endorsed a new country engagement note for the Sudan, which was focused on helping the transitional Government to stabilize the economy and accelerate progress towards addressing the country's debt challenges. The Board also approved a \$200 million pre-arrears clearance grant for the Sudan Family Support Programme, a quasi-universal basic income programme of cash transfers established by the World Bank and managed by the Government that is intended to mitigate the social impact of the Government's economic reform agenda. The grant comes in addition to a previously approved amount of \$170 million provided through trust fund contributions of the European Union, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden that will be managed through a multi-donor trust fund set up to finance the Programme. This first disbursement from the World Bank trust fund represents a part of the pledges in support of the Programme secured at the high-level Sudan Partnership Conference held online from Berlin in June. On 23 October, the World Bank hosted a round-table discussion on supporting the country's transition. The meeting, held online from Washington, D.C., on the margins of the annual meetings of the World Bank Group, commenced with the signing of the Programme, which signalled its official launch. The World Food Programme put in place the necessary support and technical assistance and started the first pilot phase of the Sudan Family Support Programme at the end of September, providing support to 20,000 families in and around Khartoum.

#### **Situation regarding human rights and the rule of law**

24. The signing of the Juba Peace Agreement was a milestone for human rights and the rule of law in the Sudan. It reinforced the centrality of justice, accountability and reconciliation to the country's transition process. The Agreement provides for institutional reforms to create more representative and responsive rule of law institutions in conflict-affected areas. In it, the signatories reaffirm their commitment to nationally led transitional justice processes and accountability mechanisms, including through the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission (in which it is agreed that there should be at least two women) and the Special Court for Crimes Committed in Darfur, and recognize the important role of the International Criminal Court in that process. In addition, the Agreement creates a comprehensive regime for the consideration of land ownership and *hawakeer* (lands traditionally used by a particular tribal group), with a strong emphasis on issues affecting internally displaced persons and refugees in Darfur. Furthermore, the national Security and Defence Council is entrusted with devising a plan for the transformation, development and modernization of the security sector, and the transformation of the security sector is identified as a priority agenda item for the upcoming constitutional conference.

25. Faced with persistent demands for reform, the transitional Government continued its progress towards the ratification of key international human rights treaties and establishing constitutionally mandated commissions in line with its commitments under the Constitutional Document. On 6 October, the Council of

Ministers approved the ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. In addition to the establishment of the Commission for Reform of the Legal and Justice System in July, draft laws to establish the Transitional Justice Commission and reform the National Human Rights Commission were under consideration. These Commissions, together with the Peace Commission, the Constitutional Commission and the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, among others, will be critical to facilitating national dialogue, fostering reconciliation and implementing the Juba Peace Agreement and advancing the political transition. On 19 November, the Council of Ministers decided to remove the country's previous reservations with regard to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, thus further strengthening the protection of children.

26. Notwithstanding these positive developments, communal clashes and violence continued in Eastern Sudan and Darfur, including conflict-related sexual violence, particularly against women and girls (see annex for more details related to Darfur). At the demonstrations in Khartoum of 21 October, renewed demands were voiced for the transparent and fair investigation of violations and abuses under the former regime and for the killing of civilian protesters on 3 June 2019. On 11 November, the public prosecutor announced that mass graves had been discovered and later stated that they would be exhumed. Meanwhile, the persistent intercommunal clashes in Darfur highlighted the need to intensify efforts to strengthen protection and build trust between communities and law enforcement, while also improving rule of law institutions and systems under the national plan for the protection of civilians (see [S/2020/429](#), annex) to match the strong commitment of national and local authorities to ensure basic security and protection across the Sudan. In that regard, the appointment of new judges and prosecutors following the termination from service of 151 judges and 21 prosecutors on 23 August by the national committee on the dismantling of the former regime remained pending.

### **Humanitarian situation**

27. Humanitarian needs continued to grow owing to the economic crisis, food insecurity, severe flooding, outbreaks of disease, intercommunal violence and prolonged displacement. A record number of people were in need of urgent humanitarian food and livelihood assistance from June to September 2020; an estimated 9.6 million people – 21 per cent of the population – were at crisis levels of acute food insecurity or worse. Humanitarian access continued to improve as the transitional Government pursued its reform of the humanitarian framework in the Sudan. Humanitarian workers were able to access previously inaccessible areas under the control of armed groups in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

28. Since the beginning of the year, over eight million people have received some form of assistance. Across the country, approximately 3.68 million people received humanitarian assistance between July and September 2020. A total of 2.5 million people received food and livelihood assistance; 1.44 million people received water, sanitation and hygiene assistance; 1.13 million people received education assistance; 708,000 people received health-care services; and 29,000 survivors of gender-based violence were provided with services. Children also received essential nutrition and protection support. Between 7 and 23 November, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the transitional Government's Commissioner for Refugees registered 41,193 Ethiopian refugees arriving in Kassala, Gedaref and Blue Nile states. The United Nations and its partners have provided life-saving assistance including food, water, sanitation and hygiene services, as well as psychosocial support.

29. Humanitarian assistance does not cover the 15.9 million people who have minimal adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without stress-coping strategies. The situation is likely to be exacerbated by the persistent macroeconomic crisis and reforms such as the lifting of fuel subsidies, which occurred at the end of October. On the other hand, the first round of financing was approved for the Sudan Family Support Programme, targeted at 11,800,000 people in the states of Khartoum, Red Sea, South Darfur and Kassala. The Programme is expected to provide \$5 per person per month for six months. Net payments, which will be made to beneficiaries in the local currency, will depend on the exchange rate, which underscores the need for exchange rate reform.

30. At the same time, the Sudan continued to be affected by the worst floods since 1988. At least 16 states experienced water levels unseen in nearly a century. By October, close to 900,000 people were affected in all 18 states and more than 170,000 houses had been destroyed or damaged, and 559 schools, more than 2,600 health-care facilities and more than 1,800 water sources had been damaged. Floods affected 2,988,445 people in almost 600,000 farming and pastoral households, of which 42 per cent were female-headed. About 2.2 million hectares of land were flooded in 15 states, representing 26.8 per cent of the cultivated areas, and 108,000 head of livestock belonging to 20,521 households were lost. The states most affected were North Darfur, Khartoum, Blue Nile, West Darfur and Sennar. The humanitarian community supported the transitional Government with a flood response effort, reaching close to 400,000 people with assistance. A total of 170,000 people received emergency shelter and non-food items. Ahead of the rainy season, the United Nations and its partners had prepositioned stocks to facilitate aid delivery for up to 250,000 people. During the response effort, 43 partners provided food, emergency shelter, non-food items, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene support to people affected by floods. In anticipation of potential disease outbreaks, 50 cholera modules were prepositioned in different states. Vector-control activities and spraying were also carried out following the increase in the number of malaria cases.

31. The reporting period also saw an increase in the number of suspected viral haemorrhagic fever cases. As at 25 October, 2,305 cases and 64 deaths had been recorded by the federal Ministry of Health, almost all in Northern State. 250 cases of chikungunya had also been reported in West Darfur, South Darfur, East Darfur and North Darfur. About 78 per cent of those cases occurred in West Darfur. By the end of October there were 1.5 million malaria cases, breaching the epidemic threshold in 15 of the 18 states. The Sudan was facing a polio outbreak, the first in more than a decade, affecting nine states across the country. Nearly 10 million doses of polio vaccine arrived in Khartoum in October. After delays due to a lack of funding to cover the rising transportation costs, the vaccination campaign was scheduled to start at the end of November.

### **III. Update on the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan**

32. The UNITAMS start-up team began to deploy in October, following the completion of the work of the Sudan planning team, which included submitting the Mission's first annual budget, for 2021. It is led by an Officer-in-Charge who will concurrently serve as the Director of the Office of Support to the Political Transition at UNITAMS. The start-up team also includes the Chief of Staff ad interim, the Chief of Mission Support ad interim and other priority substantive mission support and security personnel. Planning for the recruitment of personnel for 2021 and onwards has commenced so as to ensure that UNITAMS will have an adequate footprint and achieves both a gender balance and geographic diversity in its staffing, a priority of UNITAMS.

33. The start-up team met with the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Chair of the Executive Committee for Coordination with UNITAMS, and other cabinet members, civil society representatives, resident ambassadors, the Head of the African Union Liaison Office in Khartoum, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Sudan and representatives of armed groups to discuss UNITAMS activities. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), discussions around integration continued with the United Nations country team, while the Development Coordination Office started a mapping and gap analysis exercise with the country team to ensure the complementarity of its work and that of UNITAMS. Discussions also started on an integrated strategic framework to ensure that the planning processes of UNITAMS and the country team were synchronized. The Mission continued to engage with partners on the development of the clear and measurable core and contextual benchmarks and indicators requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#).

34. As UNAMID prepared to draw down, coordination with UNAMID and the African Union continued throughout the reporting period to ensure the smoothest possible transition. Coordination meetings were held at the leadership level on a regular basis, and a formal coordination mechanism was established between the UNITAMS start-up team and UNAMID senior leadership as requested by the Security Council in the resolution. On 5 November, UNITAMS, UNAMID and the United Nations country team held a workshop to ensure that the efforts of the United Nations in the Sudan were aligned to support the transitional Government in the area of peace implementation and the implementation of its national plan for the protection of civilians. Participants agreed on actions that would guide the two Missions and relevant United Nations country team partners to mitigate the gaps and challenges that would remain after the departure of UNAMID and would actively be consulting relevant partners in the transitional Government to ensure close coordination.

35. Efforts commenced to support the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. At the request of the Joint Peacebuilding Steering Committee (in which the transitional Government is represented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the national Peace Commission, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Federal Governance), work has begun to develop two programmes to support the implementation of the Agreement and the ongoing negotiations. UNITAMS is in separate consultation with the parties involved to determine the best way to support the ongoing negotiations in Juba with the SPLM-N Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction.

36. Pursuant to the UNITAMS peacebuilding mandate, the start-up team continued to explore in close coordination with the United Nations country team, the repurposing of an existing multipartner trust fund to support catalytic priority peacebuilding activities in Darfur, the Two Areas and Eastern Sudan. In doing so, it was working closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Peacebuilding Fund and resident United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes. The trust fund would support an “all-of-United Nations” programme that responds to critical gap areas in peacebuilding as the country focuses on medium- and longer-term sustainable development. The Joint Steering Committee of the Peacebuilding Fund also requested the development of a programme in 2020 to support the development of a baseline survey on Sudanese refugees. The survey was initially to be focused on Chad, on internally displaced persons and on peace advocacy in refugee camps in Chad. Under the auspices of UNITAMS and the country team, work is currently under way to develop both programmes.

37. Efforts also continued on operational arrangements for the deployment of UNITAMS. The lease agreement for the interim UNITAMS headquarters in Khartoum was finalized and resources are currently being mobilized for the necessary

infrastructure, information and communications technology services and security enhancements. Joint support systems are currently being established with the country team as a combination of common services agreements, including potential co-location in El Fasher, Zalingei, Nyala, Kadugli, Kauda, El Damazin, Kassala and Port Sudan. The existing support capacity of UNAMID is also being leveraged in El Fasher to support UNITAMS. UNITAMS and UNAMID are synchronizing their operations to ensure that the anticipated drawdown of UNAMID coincides with the expansion of UNITAMS, while useful assets, such as vehicles and other equipment, are transferred to UNITAMS in an organized and timely manner. The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) will also provide support in Kadugli on a cost-recovery basis. Several service level agreements are being finalized for integration and coordination modalities for the provision of logistic support and transactional services with the country team, UNAMID, UNISFA, the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and the Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy. Meanwhile, discussions are ongoing with the transitional Government on the status-of-mission agreement.

#### **IV. Observations**

38. The Sudan continues to make progress in its democratic transition. I commend the courageous steps the parties have taken by signing the historic Juba Peace Agreement and committing to its effective implementation. The Agreement is a milestone for the promotion of human rights and the rule of law in the Sudan. It could be a major first step in efforts to address the root causes of instability and armed conflict. The timetable is ambitious and significant challenges lie ahead with regard to financial resources, outstanding security concerns and continuing trust deficits, among others. I encourage all parties to remain steadfast in their commitment to peace and I call on the country's partners to provide the necessary support to the implementation of the Agreement.

39. Peace in the Sudan will not be complete until all conflicts come to an end. I welcome the engagement between the transitional Government and the SPLM-N Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction. This is a positive step aimed at addressing historic grievances for the sake of the future of all Sudanese people, and I encourage the parties to reach an agreement on outstanding issues without delay. I also call on those armed movements that remain outside the peace process to join the forces committed to a successful and peaceful transition in the Sudan.

40. The United Nations reaffirms its strong commitment to supporting the Sudanese people in the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. I encourage the signatories to engage with the United Nations and the international community to identify the scope of the strategic, technical and planning support they may require in order to avoid any delays and to ensure coordinated support.

41. Peace needs to be sustained. Therefore, creating the conditions to avoid a relapse into conflict and supporting peacebuilding will be critical. I call on Sudanese stakeholders and their international partners to further invest in the stabilization of former conflict areas. The United Nations will seek contributions to a multi-partner trust fund to support peacebuilding activities during the transitional period. I encourage partners to contribute to this trust fund to demonstrate the support of the international community for this new era in the Sudan.

42. The protection of civilians must continue to be a priority. With the anticipated end of the UNAMID mandate, the transitional Government must be ready to fill the gap that the departure of the Operation will create on the ground. While UNITAMS will be there to assist the authorities, it will not be able to replace UNAMID in

providing physical protection. I urge the transitional authorities to expedite its preparations to protect civilians in line with its own national plan for the protection of civilians, with the support of the United Nations and the international community. It will also be critical for the Government and the United Nations to move forward on the implementation of the framework of cooperation on conflict-related sexual violence signed in March 2020.

43. I commend the transitional Government for its efforts to undertake legal reform, strengthen institutions and ensure the meaningful representation and participation of women in decision-making structures. I also encourage the transitional Government to continue its steps to ensure the ratification of the international conventions for the protection and promotion of human rights and deliver justice for victims of past crimes and of the events that occurred in Khartoum on 3 June 2019. As it proceeds with the transition, I encourage the transitional Government to continue to hold inclusive consultations and dialogues with a broad range of stakeholders, including women and civil society.

44. I commend the transitional Government for the steps it has taken to implement difficult but critical economic and financial reforms. I urge the international community to support the Sudan in its implementation of a social safety net and other measures for the benefit of the population. In that regard, I welcome the intention of the United States to remove the Sudan from its list of State sponsors of terrorism, a change that will play a significant role in unlocking the country's access to important international financial mechanisms and assistance.

45. The humanitarian situation remains extremely concerning, with the country experiencing worsening food insecurity and historic levels of flooding that have destroyed people's homes and livelihoods. In addition to more economic and development support, which is critical to address the economic crisis that is driving the population's needs and to allow durable solutions for those who have been displaced, additional support is needed for the humanitarian response. I welcome the improvements in the ability of humanitarian workers to reach more people with assistance, while noting the importance of continued and sustained access to all people in need.

46. The planning for the establishment of UNITAMS has been conducted in unprecedented circumstances and has posed new challenges not seen before in the deployment of a mission. I would like to express my gratitude to my Special Adviser on the Sudan for leading this planning process to a successful conclusion and for his tireless efforts in support of the transition in the Sudan. I am also grateful to the personnel of UNITAMS who are deploying to the Sudan, as well as to UNAMID for the support the Operation has provided for the establishment of UNITAMS over the past months.

## Annex

### **Report on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 2525 (2020)**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The present update is submitted pursuant to paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 2525 (2020), by which the Council requested the Secretary-General to provide an update on the implementation of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) mandate every 90 days as an annex to the regular report requested on United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). The present annex provides an update on the situation in Darfur for the period from 1 September to 23 November 2020.

#### **II. Update on the situation in Darfur and implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur**

##### **A. Political situation**

2. On 3 October, the transitional Government, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Minni Minawi formally signed the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, witnessed, among others, by representatives of the United Nations and concluding 12 months of negotiations. On 8 October, the parties arrived in Khartoum to discuss the implementation process, and on 12 October, in a joint meeting, the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers endorsed the Agreement.

3. On 18 October, the transitional Government approved the incorporation, as an integral part, of the Juba Peace Agreement into the Constitutional Document of 17 August 2019. However, there have been delays in the implementation of some key elements of the Agreement, including the appointment of the representatives of the signatory movements to the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers, and the establishment of critical coordination and implementation mechanisms.

4. SLA-Abdul Wahid continued to reject the peace process. On 10 November, its deputy head, Abdalla Haran Adam, arrived in Juba, reportedly to brief President Salva Kiir of South Sudan on the group's plan to achieve peace in Darfur while remaining outside the Juba peace process. On 13 November, the group's head, Abdul Wahid, arrived in Kampala to announce the initiative as part of what he referred to as an African tour to promote an intra-Sudanese dialogue conference.

##### **B. Security situation**

5. The overall security situation in Darfur was marked by persistent intercommunal conflict in West, South and Central Darfur, intermittent clashes in the Jebel Marra area between SLA-Abdul Wahid and forces of the Government, and infighting between SLA-Abdul Wahid factions. Another source of continued serious challenges was the civil unrest caused by the deteriorating economic situation and limited capacity of local authorities to protect internally displaced persons and farmers, including children, from attacks.

### **Fighting between forces of the transitional Government and armed movements**

6. During the reporting period, 21 incidents of armed conflict were recorded that resulted in 23 fatalities, compared with 48 incidents of armed conflict and 115 fatalities recorded from 1 June to 31 August 2020. During the reporting period, SLA-Abdul Wahid elements attacked the base of the Sudanese Armed Forces in Boulay, south of Sortony, the observation post of the Sudanese Armed Forces on Arafat hill, south of Golo, and Boldong base near Nertiti. The attack against Boldong on 27 September reportedly resulted in three SLA-Abdul Wahid elements being killed and one soldier of the Sudanese Armed Forces being severely wounded.

7. Infighting within SLA-Abdul Wahid also continued, with new clashes between the Mubarak Aldouk and Saleh Borsa factions taking place between 1 and 6 September in Hussein, Flow, Komy and other villages near Golo, resulting in one civilian fatality and causing new displacements. Infighting on 30 September and 12 October between these two factions in Dwo and surrounding villages in East Jebel Marra, South Darfur, over the control of artisanal gold mines near Kidingir and illegal tax collection in East Jebel Marra resulted in at least seven civilians being killed and 525 families, mainly women and children, being displaced. On 16 November, SLA-Abdul Wahid commander Mubarak Aldouk and 14 other commanders presented a signed statement to UNAMID in which they announced their split from the group, citing grievances including discrimination, extortion, the torture of detainees and the murder of dissidents.

### **Intercommunal conflict and land issues**

8. Intercommunal violence continued across Darfur. UNAMID recorded 15 intercommunal clashes with 29 fatalities, compared with 15 intercommunal clashes and 126 fatalities in the previous reporting period, from 1 June to 31 August 2020. Land-related conflicts also persisted, with 57 incidents and 14 fatalities, compared with 85 land-related conflicts with 17 fatalities in the previous period.

9. Intercommunal clashes resulted in six fatalities in Central Darfur and three in West Darfur. In Central Darfur, in particular Nertiti, intercommunal conflicts involved multiple parties, including young people, internally displaced persons, farmers and nomadic herders, resulting in a deteriorating security situation. On 10 September, protests by young internally displaced persons against the perceived lack of action by security forces led to an attack on the police station in Nertiti during which the police opened fire, killing two people. The Wali (Governor) of Central Darfur engaged the local authorities and stakeholders and requested the deployment of additional armed forces to de-escalate the tensions.

10. During October, in Graidia, South Darfur, conflicts between the Fallata and Masalit communities affected 16 villages and caused the displacement of up to 20,000 people to Goghan al-Zarqa'. Several homes were burned. On 20 October, a group of Masalit also burned several houses and shops in Dika village, South Darfur, over the return of a number of Fallata families, with the Fallata retaliating by attacking the Masalit in Graidia East. As a result, seven Masalit were killed, 25 injured, several Masalit houses were burned and government security forces were deployed.

11. On 20 October, clashes in Saraf Umrah, North Darfur, between the Awlad Janoub clan of the Northern Rizeigat and the Rapid Support Forces over the accidental killing of a Rizeigat man protesting the confiscation of firearms led to the partial burning of the garrison of the Rapid Support Forces in retaliation. The Sudanese Armed Forces were deployed to de-escalate the tension and prevent further confrontations.

### **Incidents against United Nations personnel and installations**

12. During the reporting period, 12 mostly criminal incidents were recorded in which United Nations and humanitarian personnel and premises were targeted, a

noticeable reduction from the 65 incidents reported from 1 June to 31 August 2020. The decrease may be due to several factors. One is that demonstrations in June and July, in Nyala in South Darfur, El Geneina in West Darfur and Ed Daein in East Darfur by security guards of a private security company contracted by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes may have contributed to the higher number of criminal attacks during the previous period. Another may be the positive impact of the ongoing firearms collection campaign conducted by Sudanese authorities.

13. On 16 November, outside the logistics base in El Fasher, North Darfur, a group of former members of UNAMID national staff who had been protesting against a perceived lack of payment of financial entitlements since 10 August 2020 blocked all entry and exit gates. The following day, protesters attacked UNAMID police removing vehicles blocking the gates. UNAMID police fired tear gas and six officers sustained minor injuries.

### **C. Protection of civilians**

14. During the period under review, the UNAMID military component conducted 4,273 patrols, of which 1,091 were dispatched to protect civilians, and facilitated 39 humanitarian escorts. The police component conducted 607 patrols, comprising 254 confidence-building patrols to camps for internally displaced persons, 95 patrols to protect civilians gathering firewood or grass, 30 market patrols, 116 village patrols, 98 town patrols and 14 migration route patrols to respond to the security needs of internally displaced persons, particularly those engaged in livelihood activities outside their camps, including women and children. Formed police units provided three humanitarian escorts to personnel of the World Food Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund and UNAMID. UNAMID police also conducted 87 joint patrols with the Sudan Police Force in camps for internally displaced persons, gathering areas for internally displaced persons, villages, farming areas, markets and towns around the 11 team sites. General explosive hazard assessments were conducted in 230 villages across Darfur including in the Jebel Marra area, resulting in the clearance of 43 reported dangerous areas and the safe disposal of 2,144 (1,684 items of unexploded ordnance and 460 items of shelf-life expired ordnance) and 110,377 rounds of small arms ammunition.

15. During the reporting period, UNAMID hosted a meeting attended by the Government and the United Nations country team to strengthen coordination of the protection of civilians and develop recommendations to accelerate implementation of activities hampered by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Government agreed to provide armed escorts in locations from which UNAMID had withdrawn and encouraged implementing partners to conclude their project implementation activities in time.

16. The Operation continued to conduct, in collaboration with the United Nations country team, capacity-building workshops and trainings targeting civil society and Sudanese authorities, including in West Darfur (150 participants, of whom 64 were women), East Darfur (105 participants, of whom 87 were women), South Darfur (70 participants, of whom 36 were women), North Darfur (164 participants, of whom 114 were women) and Central Darfur (160 participants, of whom 25 were women). The activities were focused on the role of women in reconciliation mechanisms and decision-making, the protection of women's and girls' rights, the promotion of human rights in camps for internally displaced persons, early warning mechanisms for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, harmful social norms such as those regarding genital mutilation and child marriage, and accountability and the rule of law by, among other means, trial monitoring and support to prison administrations. Activities also included continued advocacy for the inclusion of women in traditional

conflict-resolution mechanisms through the training of 20 women among a group of 64 native administration personnel.

17. UNAMID police continued to conduct daily patrols and outreach programmes in support of the physical protection of civilians and to facilitate humanitarian assistance, including by following up with the Sudan Police Force about crimes reported and progress made with investigations. The police component continued training of trainers on crises and public order management for the Sudan Police Force. In September, UNAMID police leadership attended a workshop with the Sudan Police Force on the protection of civilians in Khartoum in support of the national plan for the protection of civilians of 21 May 2020 (see [S/2020/429](#), annex). UNAMID police, in collaboration with the Sudan Police Force, also launched a joint patrol strategy to build trust and confidence between internally displaced persons and the Sudan Police Force.

#### **D. Humanitarian situation**

18. In September and October, intercommunal conflict and clashes among SLA-Abdul Wahid factions caused the displacement of some 27,445 people in the Jebel Marra area in Central and South Darfur.

19. On 15 September, some 760 people (152 households) were displaced from the Sortony gathering site, in North Darfur, to Toga and 930 people (186 households) from Sortony to the Savanga site for internally displaced persons in Golo, Central Darfur. In October, some 1,900 people (392 households) arrived in Toga and Savanga from Sortony. An inter-agency team undertook a needs assessment from 11 to 17 October, and a humanitarian response effort in the area is ongoing. During October, an estimated 3,800 people were also displaced from Daya, Central Darfur, to Arsheen and Mohamedeen villages in northern Jebel Marra.

20. On 4 October, the Humanitarian Aid Commission reported that some 3,000 people had arrived from Feina village to Kidingir, Keila and Mershing villages in South Darfur, having fled infighting between factions of SLA-Abdul Wahid that started in July. An inter-agency needs assessment was conducted from 11 to 16 October. On 20 October, the clashes mentioned earlier between the Fallata and Massalit in Graida, South Darfur, led to the displacement of 20,000 people to Goghan al-Zarqa'. Humanitarian partners undertook an inter-agency mission from 9 to 12 November to assess humanitarian needs.

21. A flood response effort is ongoing, with humanitarian partners reaching 33,350 people (6,670 families) with distributions of non-food items in Kabkabiyah, North Darfur. In the camp for internally displaced persons in Kass, South Darfur, an inter-agency needs assessment team identified 2,405 affected people (481 households). In the Otash camp for internally displaced persons, 7,685 people (1,537 households) were affected. In Central Darfur, community leaders reported that some 400 houses had been damaged by floods in Kwila, Central Darfur. Some 18,000 people (3,600 households) were affected in the Hamidiya camp for internally displaced persons, Central Darfur, and 12,500 (2,500 households) were affected in Nertiti, Central Darfur. Efforts to provide shelter and distribute non-food items are ongoing in those areas.

22. The number of outbreaks of disease has risen after the flooding season, with the State Ministry of Health reporting 277 suspected chikungunya cases in West Darfur since the end of September. Humanitarian partners are supporting case management, vector control and health promotion activities, and the World Health Organization has provided insecticide and fogging machines. Cases of dengue fever have also increased in number, reaching 19 in West Darfur and 13 in North Darfur during the reporting period.

## **E. Human rights situation**

23. While there has been an improvement in the overall human rights situation, the vulnerability of civilians in Darfur remains a concern. In September and October, UNAMID documented 47 alleged human rights violations and abuses involving 169 victims, of whom 19 were women and 13 children, compared with 93 cases involving 403 victims, of whom 40 were women and 28 children, documented from 3 June to 8 September 2020. In total, six cases were reported to the Sudanese police, resulting in seven arrests. The investigation and prosecution of cases continued to be hampered by capacity challenges of law enforcement and judicial authorities.

24. Women and children continued to be vulnerable to human rights violations and abuses, particularly sexual violence and conflict-related sexual violence. During the reporting period, UNAMID documented 21 cases of sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence affecting 22 survivors, compared with 20 cases affecting 28 survivors from 1 June to 31 August 2020. Access to comprehensive services for survivors of sexual violence continues to be challenging owing to stigma, access constraints for remote areas and reluctance by survivors to report incidents. UNAMID verified 17 incidents of grave violations affecting 36 children, of whom 14 were girls, which reflected a decrease in the number of children affected by intercommunal violence compared with the 364 incidents of grave violations affecting 77 children, including 40 girls, during the previous reporting period (1 June–31 August 2020). The documented human rights incidents may not reflect the actual number of possible cases owing to several factors, including the impact of COVID-19-related restrictions on fact-finding and community engagement activities.

25. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, visited the Sudan from 17 to 20 October, during which time she held consultations with high-level government officials and other stakeholders on the prosecution of those suspected of having committed war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity in Darfur. During the visit, the transitional Government reiterated its readiness to cooperate with the Court in connection with cases in Darfur.

## **III. Coordination with the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and transition planning**

26. In collaboration with the United Nations country team, UNAMID continues to support the operationalization of the interim Mission headquarters in Khartoum as part of the start-up of UNITAMS. It is envisaged that UNITAMS will benefit from assets that can be transferred from UNAMID following its eventual drawdown and closure.

27. On 25 October, the transitional Government, the African Union and the United Nations held a meeting of the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism in Khartoum. The meeting was attended by the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smaïl Chergui, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare, and the Joint Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for UNAMID, Jeremiah Nyamane Mamabolo. The participants acknowledged the position of the transitional Government on the termination of the UNAMID mandate by 31 December 2020 and reaffirmed the commitment to facilitate the Mission's orderly drawdown and liquidation.

## IV. Financial aspects

28. The General Assembly, in its resolution 74/261 C of 30 June 2020, appropriated the amount of \$240.2 million for the Operation for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2020. As at 8 October 2020, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNAMID amounted to \$168.7 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to \$2,723.3 million. Reimbursement of troops and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 December 2019, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has also been made for the period up to 31 December 2019, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

## V. Observations

29. I congratulate the transitional Government and the signatory groups on the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement, which is the culmination of a year of constructive talks on the country's future and a testament to the commitment of the parties to peace. I also commend South Sudan for its mediation effort, which has been critical in facilitating the progress made. To those who remain outside the peace process I reiterate that now is the time to come together and settle differences through dialogue in the spirit of compromise and in the interest of their constituencies. I urge the transitional Government and the parties to move forward swiftly with the implementation, including by setting up the critical institutions envisaged in the Agreement.

30. For the people of Darfur, the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement represents the promise of peace. Nonetheless, much work remains to be done to ensure security throughout the region. Intercommunal violence continues to be a concern across Darfur, with internally displaced persons and others voicing legitimate concerns regarding their safety. Clashes involving SLA-Abdul Wahid with government security forces, as well as infighting among the group's factions, are an ongoing source of suffering for civilians in the Jebel Marra area, causing significant displacement. In that context, I commend the transitional Government for the commitment it has made to protecting civilians in Darfur, both through the provisions of the Juba Peace Agreement and through the implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians. Meeting those protection goals will be a vital piece of Agreement's success.

31. With discussions ongoing on the drawdown and closure of UNAMID, it is critical that the Operation act quickly in transferring knowledge and other support to the institutions that will remain to support peace in Darfur. For the remainder of its mandate, the Operation will continue to support the Sudanese authorities in their protection and peacebuilding efforts. I am encouraged that engagement between UNAMID and the transitional Government to that end has continued during the period covered by the present report. The Operation will also place a major focus on helping to bring UNITAMS up to full capacity in the region and on continuing its collaboration with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

32. I wish to express my appreciation to the Joint Special Representative for his leadership and dedication. I also extend my sincere gratitude to all UNAMID civilian and uniformed personnel, the troop- and police-contributing countries, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community for their invaluable support to peace in Darfur.