



# Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

**8549**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Friday, 14 June 2019, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Alotaibi . . . . . (Kuwait)

*Members:*

Belgium . . . . .	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China . . . . .	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire . . . . .	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic . . . . .	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea . . . . .	Mrs. Mele Colifa
France . . . . .	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany . . . . .	Mr. Schulz
Indonesia . . . . .	Mr. Djani
Peru . . . . .	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland . . . . .	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
South Africa . . . . .	Mr. Van Shalkwyk
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Allen
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Cohen

## Agenda

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

Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2019/445)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

#### **Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2019/445)**

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

In accordance with article 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, and Mr. Andrew Gilmour, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/445, which contains the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

**Mr. Lacroix:** I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur in the context of the mandate renewal for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

One year on from the adoption of resolution 2429 (2018), I am honoured to bring to the attention of Council members a joint assessment of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on UNAMID, as submitted in their special report (S/2019/445) of 30 May 2019, in line with paragraph 7 of the resolution. I will also shed light on the impact of the political and security developments in the wider Sudan since 11 April on the projected trajectory of

UNAMID, which also led to the Council's decision to postpone the submission of the aforementioned report by one month.

The special report before the Security Council was finalized against the backdrop of significant political developments at the national level which led to the beginning of drastic changes in the 30-year-old system of governance in the Sudan. Since then, further developments have taken place, resulting in an increasingly unpredictable situation. What started in December 2018 as social unrest triggered by socioeconomic grievances led to the removal of President Al-Bashir on 11 April and the subsequent takeover by the Transitional Military Council, which is currently negotiating with the umbrella opposition group of the Declaration of Freedom and Change Forces on the nature and the structure of the governance system.

While the impact of the post-11 April events on the prevailing situation in Darfur has been so far moderate, the uncertainty of the negotiations' outcome may have repercussions well beyond Khartoum and lead to an escalation of violence. The 3 June attacks and killings of civilians, which the Council condemned, exemplify the risks. Further, the reported perpetration of such violence by actors such as the Rapid Support Forces, which are closely linked to Darfur, is worrisome for its civilian population there. I should add that while the Mission and its leadership are doing their utmost to maintain normal interactions with the current authorities, the prevailing fluid situation in Khartoum makes it more difficult for the Mission to pursue those contacts on a regular basis.

In that context, I would bring to the Council's attention two specific challenges faced by UNAMID to date that have unmistakably impacted its operations. These include, first, the looting of El Geneina super camp on 14 and 15 May by civilians and members of the Sudanese security forces, which was reported to the Security Council in detail; and secondly, the Transitional Military Council decree 102 of 2019, issued on 13 May, requesting UNAMID to hand over all camps to the Rapid Support Forces, which is in contravention of United Nations rules and procedures. Given those developments, we have had no choice but to suspend the handover of UNAMID sites to the Sudanese authorities until the Transitional Military Council's decree is rescinded. In the meantime, we are putting in place plans and measures to prevent future incidents similar to the El Geneina looting.

Against that backdrop, allow me to briefly introduce the main findings of the joint African Union-United Nations assessment, as reflected in the special report. The conflict trends in Darfur have remained the same since 2016. The only rebel group active there, the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid, is restricted to pockets of Jebel Marra, has limited operational capabilities and is increasingly fragmented by infighting factions. The other two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi and the Justice and Equality Movement-Gibril, while having lost their foothold in Darfur, remain active in the region and have become part and parcel of the Libyan conflict. While the assessment concluded that overall intercommunal violence has visibly declined, the conflict drivers related to access to land and resources, environmental degradation and human rights violations need to be further addressed.

The Darfur political process is in a stalemate, despite a brief breakthrough in December last year achieved through intensive negotiations led by the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security. In the meantime, the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur continued, albeit at a slow pace, and the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation process was completed in all Darfur states at the locality level, formulating specific proposals for durable solutions for internally displaced persons and sustaining peace in Darfur.

The current context features a limited capacity of law enforcement and rule of law institutions; a prolonged humanitarian crisis, with some 1.5 million displaced persons living in camps, 90 per cent of whom cannot afford more than one food basket per day; and few viable development programmes. This confluence of factors requires a comprehensive approach beyond peacekeeping. The Security Council has acknowledged this shift since the adoption of its resolution 2363 (2017), which called for the reconfiguration of UNAMID along the two-pronged peacekeeping and peacebuilding approach. Last year, resolution 2429 (2018) endorsed the transition concept and supported the State liaison functions as its implementation vehicle along four peacebuilding priorities, while further reducing the footprint of the peacekeeping component.

The special report reconfirms the continuation of those trends and concludes that peacekeeping is no longer the most appropriate tool to address the situation in Darfur, which will require UNAMID to appropriately adjust its posture, operations and capabilities towards

the final stages of its existence. The report's conclusions therefore point to the continuation of the UNAMID drawdown process and its exit in 2020, in line with one of the proposed options, which were carefully crafted to shape a gradual and responsible drawdown reflecting the current realities. In addition, to ensure that this process corresponds to evolving realities on the ground, the assessment report proposes a review by November 2019.

Moving forward, attention should be paid to the conflict drivers, namely, access to land and resources, climate change and environmental degradation, and human rights and protection. In that context, human rights violations, conflict-related sexual violence and sexual and gender-based violence remain a significant challenge, and for that reason the assessment report proposes specific medium- and long-term benchmarks. The State liaison functions framework, which the Council endorsed last year to focus on the rule of law, resilience and livelihood solutions, and immediate service delivery for internally displaced persons, will ensure the continuity of our intervention beyond UNAMID.

With the final exit in mind, the strategic assessment revisited UNAMID's priorities to focus on, first, the revitalization of the political process, including through an updated United Nations-African Union strategy on the Darfur peace process; secondly, the strengthening of the Sudan's rule of law institutions; and thirdly, support to long-term stabilization through durable solutions for internally displaced persons and a sustainable rights-based approach for the Darfur population. In that context, the Mission would enhance the role of the State liaison functions as an innovative integration mechanism of the whole-of-system approach.

Finally, we call upon Security Council members to carefully consider the options for the drawdown and liquidation of UNAMID, in accordance with the guidance provided in resolution 2429 (2018) and in the light of all the aforementioned considerations.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Gilmour.

**Mr. Gilmour**: It is an honour to brief the Council, building on the important briefing by Mr. Lacroix, with which we fully agree. I shall speak about the human rights issues impacting peace and security in Darfur.

Violence between armed militias and State security forces in Darfur, as well as among communities, has decreased. We welcome that. At the same time, we are concerned that the human rights situation in Darfur has continued to deteriorate in recent months, with increased reports of killings, abduction, sexual violence and other violations.

Since April, country-wide protests and political developments in the capital have had some ripple effect in Darfur, with thousands of protestors demonstrating in its major towns and a rise in the number of documented violations. Many of these protests in Darfur were violently repressed by State security forces, including Rapid Support Forces. In this connection, the human rights component of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) documented the killing of 47 and the injury of 186 civilians in various regions of Darfur between 11 April to 12 June. In Zalingei, Central Darfur, 10 civilians were killed and 93 injured as a result of what is seen to be excessive use of force.

There are reports that State security entities have resorted to arbitrary arrests and detentions to restrict freedom of movement and assembly, as well as to suppress dissent or acts of solidarity with the protest in Khartoum. In the past two months, 163 civilians have been arrested and detained in relation to protests in Darfur. The human rights section of UNAMID has received accounts of intensified attacks and harassment of civilians and the looting of houses and livestock by Rapid Support Forces. Those same forces are widely reported to have been involved in violent repression of the protests in Khartoum, which led to numerous deaths of peaceful protesters.

We believe that many cases in Darfur remain invisible and underreported due to lack of access to some parts of the region. In some areas of Jebel Marra, the sole representatives of Government present are the security forces, but they are reported to be the main perpetrators of violations against the civilian population — that is, the people they are there to protect.

Clearly, this does not lead to increased trust of the population in law enforcement bodies. UNAMID's presence and its important work on human rights and the protection of civilians have had a positive effect, as confirmed by internally displaced persons and local communities. During this period, UNAMID, including the human rights section, was able to act to defuse

conflict and violence through its interaction with the population and advocacy with State security forces and judicial authorities.

In an atmosphere of violence and uncertainty, upholding the priorities of the protection of civilians and of human rights in the mandate of UNAMID is of paramount significance, including through continued monitoring and reporting of the human rights situation in the whole of Darfur. We believe that the Mission's strengthened civilian presence will have a positive impact on protection of civilians. Meanwhile, the UNAMID human rights section continues to reinforce the capacity of national institutions to protect and promote human rights through State liaison functions.

Of particular note is the positive collaboration we have with the National Human Rights Commission, with which UNAMID has established a framework of cooperation to further build the national capacity to protect human rights. UNAMID, through its human rights component, is closely engaging with the Sudanese Armed Forces, in particular in North Darfur, and the Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Commission to mainstream human rights in their activities.

The violence and uncertainty that have erupted in Darfur in the past few months are unfortunately likely to continue until the root causes — what Mr. Lacroix has just called the “conflict drivers” — of the conflict are addressed. The tragic incident in Deleij village, in Central Darfur, on 9 and 10 June that resulted in deaths of at least 17 persons related to intercommunity violence, but involving State actors, illustrates that point, as well as the direct link between human rights and security.

We strongly hope that any transition road map will include measures that permit the population of Darfur to regain confidence in law enforcement bodies, the rule of law and broader State institutions, as well as a belief that there will be some accountability for excessive use of force and serious human rights violations.

To conclude, we strongly support what yesterday's communiqué issued by the African Union Peace and Security Council on Darfur called “the imperative for the Republic of Sudan to ensure the full protection of civilians and respect for human rights and freedoms”.

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



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

**Mr. Allen** (United Kingdom): Let me, too, thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their briefings this morning.

Let me speak a little, first, about the wider situation in the Sudan and its impact on Darfur and then, secondly, on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and our approach to the upcoming mandate renewal.

We meet again during uncertain times in the Sudan. When we last met in the Chamber on this issue (see S/PV.8513), I said that the Transitional Military Council had a choice. It could choose to deliver on the legitimate demands of the Sudanese people for a political system that is inclusive, respectful of human rights and the rule of law. It could choose to engage with the international community to gain the support that the Sudan desperately needs as it seeks to turn around decades of economic mismanagement and to help resolve conflict.

Instead, the Transitional Military Council chose brutal violence that resulted in the deaths of over 100 peaceful civilian protesters and the injury of hundreds more. Through our press statement this week (SC/13836), we in the Council strongly condemned that violence and urged the authorities to immediately end the use of violence, fully respect human rights and ensure justice and accountability. I am sure that will be the clear and unambiguous message that will be sent by members of the Council today.

We note that, today, the Transitional Military Council has acknowledged the violations committed by the security services on 3 June and said that an investigation is under way. The United Kingdom urges the military authorities to ensure that the investigation is transparent and ensures the accountability that the military authorities have a responsibility to deliver for the Sudanese people.

May I also say how strongly we support the position of the African Union (AU). The African Union has demonstrated strong regional leadership in response to the situation in the Sudan. We fully support its efforts to find a peaceful and swift resolution to the current crisis and we call on all international partners to show their support for those AU efforts.

Unfortunately, the violence, human rights violations and abuses perpetrated in Khartoum on and since 3 June are all too familiar to the people of Darfur. As Andrew Gilmour referenced, there remain serious human rights and protection concerns in Darfur. The very forces that perpetrated the recent violence in Khartoum, the Rapid Support Forces, have targeted and continue to target civilians in Darfur. That includes indiscriminate shooting, the looting and burning of villages and sexual and gender-based violence, among other crimes.

As noted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten, in her statement on the Sudan yesterday, the Rapid Support Forces have “consistently been listed by the Secretary-General in his annual report on conflict-related sexual violence”. Let us not forget that the Rapid Support Forces came from the militia known as the Janjaweed. This militia was responsible for a conflict which the United Nations estimates left 300,000 people dead and 2.5 million displaced. It should be of great concern to us all that the Rapid Support Forces currently occupy most of the team sites that UNAMID has vacated to date. The Transitional Military Council has shown no signs of abiding by previous agreements on the handover of UNAMID team sites for civilian use. As Under-Secretary-General Lacroix stated, it has gone so far as to explicitly demand by decree that UNAMID’s remaining team sites be given to the Rapid Support Forces.

UNAMID team sites must not be handed over to the Rapid Support Forces. That would not only violate existing agreements on the handover of the sites, as well as United Nations principles, financial rules and regulations, it would also be grossly negligent. We would risk enabling violence against civilians. Since the events of 11 April, Darfur has witnessed a spike in violence in camps for internally displaced persons, intercommunal clashes and attacks on humanitarian actors. This week, UNAMID verified intercommunal clashes in central Darfur that resulted in the deaths of 17 people, 15 injured and more than 100 houses burned. Following the incident, UNAMID plans to intensify its confidence-building measures to promote intercommunal dialogue. That is just one example of the important role that UNAMID continues to play in Darfur, despite its limited footprint.

The other obvious impact of the wider situation is on the Darfur peace process, which is currently stalled. The Transitional Military Council previously stated that

resolving the Sudan's internal conflicts would be its top priority, and at the time that was a welcome statement. However, its recent actions severely undermine that commitment. The United Kingdom therefore calls on the military authorities to undertake confidence-building measures, including agreeing to an independent and transparent investigation of the violence in Khartoum.

The United Kingdom remains committed to the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur, and if it is to succeed a number of conditions should be met. UNAMID's departure must be undertaken responsibly, without creating security and protection vacuums. For peacebuilding to be sustainable, the international community requires a willing and able partner in the host State. Unfortunately, the current conditions do not lend themselves to that. As a result, we in the Council have a responsibility to step back, take stock of the current situation and consider how that affects the assumptions that we have all previously expressed and shared about UNAMID's immediate future.

I would like to say that as we have been since UNAMID first deployed to Darfur 15 years ago, the United Kingdom remains firmly committed to supporting efforts to build peace and stability in Darfur, and that commitment guides our approach to UNAMID's mandate renewal. The United Kingdom and Germany believe that the most prudent approach would be a technical rollover of UNAMID's mandate, which would provide time for progress on the broader political situation. It would give time for the issue regarding the handover of UNAMID's team sites to be resolved, and it would enable the United Nations and the African Union to develop a political strategy to address the outstanding challenges that will remain following UNAMID's departure.

I take note of the communiqué of the African Union issued yesterday, and in particular its clear rejection of any handover of assets to the Rapid Support Forces under any circumstances, and its demand that the decree issued by the Transitional Military Council be repealed. Along with Germany, we will engage with all our colleagues on the Council and especially our African Union friends with regard to the details of the proposed technical rollover.

In conclusion, we will be watching the actions of the Transitional Military Council in the coming days and weeks. It still has a choice to make. The international

community should be united in demanding that it make the right choice. That would require immediate steps to establish a civilian-led transitional authority that in turn would pave the way for peace in Darfur. Moreover, it has an obligation to the people of the Sudan, who have shown tremendous bravery and perseverance in their dignified and legitimate demands for a better tomorrow.

**Mr. Schulz** (Germany): Let me also thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their briefings.

We continue to follow the situation in Khartoum very closely and support the mediation efforts of the African Union and Ethiopia, which should pave the way to a civilian-led transition. Negotiations should be resumed as soon as possible. We echo the clear statement issued by the Council earlier this week (see S/PV.8543). We strongly condemn the violence against civilians and call for respect for human rights and for accountability for the violence committed by security forces. We are also concerned about the reports alleging that serious human rights violations have been committed by elements of the Rapid Support Forces and militias since 3 June and in the aftermath of the attacks on the protest area. We join Special Representative Patten in urging for an investigation of all credible allegations of sexual violence and for accountability for those responsible.

Let me also say that we very much agree with Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and thank him for his view that the team sites of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) cannot and will not be handed over to the Rapid Support Forces, but rather only to civilian institutions, as agreed. The mission needs a willing and civilian partner for peacebuilding in Darfur, and we do not see that that is the case at the moment.

With regard to the future of UNAMID, as we have heard from Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour, the protection needs in Darfur are unfortunately growing, not declining. We hear reports about increasing intercommunal violence in central Darfur and we have had to witness the looting of UNAMID team sites. We strongly condemn any violence or threats of violence against UNAMID by anyone. The mission has a Chapter VII mandate that provides for robust self-protection and protection of its mandate, and despite its limited capacities, UNAMID continues to play an important role in protecting civilians, fostering the rule of law and tackling the root causes of the conflict. Germany

continues to believe that we should transition from peacemaking to peacebuilding in Darfur, in accordance with the benchmarks and indicators, as agreed by the Council, and that the transition should be done in an orderly, dignified and sustainable manner. We do not see that the circumstances right now can allow such an approach to be rapidly implemented.

I would like to say a few words with regard to suggestions on the way ahead. We, the United Kingdom and Germany, will suggest a way forward for the upcoming mandate renewal that reflects the current fluid situation. We believe that as the Council we cannot follow a trajectory on autopilot, disregarding the real situation on the ground. How would we explain that to the people in Darfur? We have the responsibility to adapt our approach in the light of the major shifts we have seen in the Sudan, which are already having clear repercussions in Darfur.

We also took note of the discussion in the African Union Peace and Security Council yesterday, which expresses similar concerns and calls for a suspension of UNAMID's drawdown. That is why we believe that the best way forward at this moment, as my British colleague said, is with a technical rollover for UNAMID. A technical rollover would enable UNAMID to continue its important work at the intersection of peacekeeping and peacebuilding for the time being. It would give the United Nations and the African Union time to come up with a political strategy for Darfur, as suggested in the special report of both organizations (S/2019/445). It would also allow all the relevant stakeholders to agree on a political way forward, including on the peace process in Darfur, which is currently stalled. The United Kingdom and Germany will engage with all Council members in the coming week to discuss our suggestions in detail, and we look forward to constructive engagement and discussions.

**Mrs. Gueguen (France)** (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank both briefers for their insights and analysis, and we echo what my colleagues from the United Kingdom and Germany have just said. I would like to focus on three points. They are our concern about the situation, the urgent need to do everything we can to prevent Darfur from again relapsing into conflict and the call for suspending the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), given the current circumstances.

I should first explain our deep concern about the situation in the Sudan. France strongly condemns the violence in the Sudan in recent days. Peaceful demonstrators were repressed with severe brutality. Such disproportionate use of force is unacceptable. We urge all actors to exercise restraint and not to resort to violence. The Transitional Military Council has the primary responsibility to ensure the safety of all Sudanese people. In the light of Pramila Patten's very worrying statement, France calls for a full investigation into the abuses committed, including sexual violence, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

The challenge today in the Sudan is the resumption of political dialogue and the negotiated transition to civilian-led rule. We call on all parties to resume talks, to show restraint and openness and to seek compromise. We recall that the deadline agreed by the African Union for the transfer of power to a civilian-led transitional authority will expire on 30 June.

France welcomes the African Union's firm and clear position. We hope that the United Nations can fully back the mediation efforts of the African Union, with the support of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. This is what France has called for in recent days, including at the meeting between the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in Paris on 11 June.

In that regard, I welcome the mission entrusted by the Secretary-General to his Special Adviser, Nicholas Haysom, to support the African Union mediation. The initial results are encouraging; the mediation has brought both parties back to the negotiating table, which is a very positive step. We call on all partners of Sudan, particularly the countries of the region and Sudan's closest partners, to join their energy to support an African Union mediation. The stability of the Sudan can be ensured only if we all work toward the same goal and speak with one voice.

My second point is that we must do all we can to prevent Darfur from being set ablaze again. We are extremely concerned about reports of violence in Darfur in recent days, particularly in Jebel Marra, which show that the situation today is once again very volatile. As we know, Darfur remains a fragile region, where the root causes of the conflict, including access to land and the future of 2 million displaced persons, have not really been settled. We must do everything we can to prevent the region from collapsing again.

UNAMID must therefore remain in the strongest position to enable it to carry out its missions, particularly the protection of civilians. We were particularly shocked by the attack on and looting of the El Geneina camp in mid-May. The involvement of members of the Sudanese defence and security forces is unacceptable. We call on the authorities to shed full light on those acts and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

In addition, I would like to reiterate the importance of combating impunity in Darfur. Serious crimes, including those against children and sexual violence, have been carried out for a long time and continue. I recall that all parties to the conflict have an obligation to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and its Prosecutor, in accordance with resolution 1593 (2005).

Finally, in the current context, we must defer any decision on the withdrawal of UNAMID. It is more necessary than ever to advocate for a responsible and prudent withdrawal of the mission. We must postpone any decision on its withdrawal for several months, for two reasons.

First, we cannot, in the space of two weeks, decide to transfer the remaining 15 bases to the Sudanese authorities when we have no legitimate and reliable interlocutor in the Government in Khartoum. On the contrary, last week's violence compels us to exercise the utmost caution. UNAMID was right to freeze the transfer of its bases as long as the decree by the Transitional Military Council last month — which said that UNAMID camps should be handed over to the Rapid Support Forces — is in effect. That decree contravenes the agreements concluded between the Sudan and the United Nations and must be annulled, as stated in the communiqué issued yesterday by the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Finally, the situation in Darfur is so unstable and volatile at the moment that the presence of UNAMID will still be necessary in the coming months. I am thinking in particular of the mission to protect civilians, report human rights violations, resolve intercommunal conflicts, facilitate humanitarian access and protect humanitarian personnel. Given the current conditions, my delegation supports the proposal of the United Kingdom and Germany for a technical renewal of the mission's mandate.

**Mr. Adom** (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation congratulates Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and

Mr. Andrew Gilmour for their enlightening assessments of the current situation in Darfur. We also welcome their relevant recommendations.

Despite the joint efforts of the United Nations and the African Union within the framework of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the political and security situations in the region remain volatile and are a matter of major concern for the international community.

While we are seeking ways and means for an orderly withdrawal of UNAMID, the political crisis and recent events in the Sudan have only exacerbated our concerns. It is undeniable that the current situation in this brotherly country is particularly concerning, as the Sudan is an essential element in the frameworks of efforts to establish lasting peace, security and stability in Darfur.

Fully aware of the Sudan's essential role as a subregional actor, my country urges all Sudanese parties to engage in an inclusive dialogue in order to achieve a bold solution to the crisis that transcends short-term political interests. In that regard, my country expresses its full support for the African Union's initiatives, as well as for the mediation and good offices of His Excellency Mr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and truly hope that their efforts will allow us to create the conditions for a peaceful transition in the Sudan.

My delegation believes that any deadlock in the current crisis is likely to undermine the fragile peace process and reconciliation process in Darfur and will significantly diminish the prospects of a UNAMID withdrawal in June 2020.

With regard to the situation in Darfur, my delegation notes that, despite encouraging progress, the parties have not yet reached a final agreement on a cessation of hostilities, which would constitute an important step towards peace. While my country welcomes the progress made in power sharing, it remains convinced that the diligent implementation by all Sudanese parties of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur is critical to breathing new life into the current political process. Only then will the quest for peace in Darfur continue to mobilize the multifaceted support of the international community, particularly that of the United Nations and the African Union.



Like all peacekeeping missions worldwide, UNAMID is not intended to drag on indefinitely in Darfur. However, Côte d'Ivoire believes that any decision on a reduction of UNAMID's presence and a permanent withdrawal from Darfur should be taken in the light of a realistic assessment of the sociopolitical and security situation. Given the current fragility in Darfur, that position is in keeping with the gradual approach proposed by the African Union Peace and Security Council and confirmed by its latest communiqué, adopted on 13 June — in which the Council insists that any decision to reduce troops or withdraw UNAMID must be based on a sober evaluation of the situation on the ground in order to avoid a security vacuum that would expose civilians to the risk of violence from armed groups.

Côte d'Ivoire therefore supports the conclusions of the strategic assessment team and calls for an orderly withdrawal. We are in favour of a phased approach, reflecting security trends and allowing reserve capacities to be maintained until the end of the mission. With that view, my delegation urges UNAMID to continue to support the political process of crisis resolution and reconciliation, and to continue its conflict prevention and civilian protection activities, with a focus on priority actions in Jebel Marra.

UNAMID remains a virtuous model of cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization. The political and security challenges that remain in Darfur cannot hide the specific and encouraging progress, albeit fragile, that UNAMID has made.

Côte d'Ivoire sincerely hopes that the gains that have been made are maintained and that we do not move hastily, but rather step by step with UNAMID, and we call upon the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to remain firmly committed to peace and stability in the Sudan and Darfur.

**Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Mr. Andrew Gilmour for their briefings.

I will divide my statement into two parts: first, on the general situation in the Sudan, and secondly, the impact of that situation on Darfur and on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

We are shocked by the recent developments in the Sudan. Since 3 June, the international community has witnessed deliberate attacks against civilians carrying out peaceful protests. Belgium strongly condemns that violence, which led to the deaths of more than 100 people and caused a great number of injured, not to mention cases of sexual violence.

The Transitional Military Council is responsible for the protection of civilians and the security of all Sudanese. The members of that Council must uphold the individual rights of the Sudanese people, including the right to freedom of assembly and expression, and release political detainees.

That unacceptable violence threatens the entire political process for a civil transition. Belgium welcomes the strong decision that the African Union made on 6 June and calls on all members of this Council to respect the African Union's ownership of the response to that crisis. Like the African Union, Belgium calls for the immediate resumption of negotiations, without preconditions, among all Sudanese stakeholders with a view to establishing a transitional authority under civilian direction, in strict compliance with the decisions of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. We also support the Council's request for an investigation into the deadly events of 3 June. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General's Envoy, the African Union Special Envoy and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to help resolve the current crisis.

In short, a peaceful and orderly transition with the objective of transferring political power to a civil, democratic and representative power is the only sustainable way out of the current crisis and pattern of violence before it becomes uncontrollable.

The situation in Darfur cannot be isolated from the situation of the rest of the Sudan. There is ample evidence of that. First, the political process has been at a standstill since last January. Secondly, ongoing human rights violations are being committed by the Rapid Support Forces in Darfur, including sexual violence. Thirdly, it is difficult for the courts to operate in the absence of clarity in Khartoum. Lastly, a cumbersome system of approvals and authorizations hinders the delivery of humanitarian aid.

We are especially concerned by the Transitional Military Council's decree indicating that all UNAMID bases should be handed over only to the Rapid Support

Forces — the same Forces responsible for the violence in Khartoum and which, according to some reports, have set fire to some 62 villages in Jebel Marra since October 2018. How can we even imagine handing over UNAMID sites to the same people who created the situation for which UNAMID was deployed in 2007? It is crucial for those sites to be handed over only to civilian end-users, as required by the June 13 communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

Darfur remains a fragile region, where the root causes of the conflict, including access to land and the future of the displaced, have not been fully addressed. The Security Council will need to continue to monitor the situation closely and assess how the situation in the rest of the country is affecting the UNAMID exit process, particularly in the light of the mandate review scheduled for this month. The current situation requires us to be cautious about the timing of UNAMID's withdrawal, taking into account the situation on the ground. Exit benchmarks should be streamlined and clarified to guide the withdrawal.

Belgium calls on all the members of the Security Council to set aside their differences and reach a consensual vision and strategy for Darfur. The Council must take its time to consider all the options. That is why we must envisage a technical renewal of the mandate for several months so that we can better understand the implications of the developments on the ground and give the region some time to get closer towards a solution. The last thing that we want is for Darfur to slide back into conflict after UNAMID exits.

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the timely convening of this meeting and the important briefings delivered by Mr. Jean Pierre Lacroix and Mr. Andrew Gilmour.

The Government of Peru has strongly condemned the recent acts of violence and the excessive use of force by the Sudanese military forces against the civilian population, which resulted in numerous casualties in Khartoum, and conveys its full support for the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to suspend the Sudan's participation in all its activities until a transitional civilian Government is established. In that regard, we believe that it is crucial for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Sudan to be respected.

While the latest reports of the Secretary-General showed gradual improvements in safety and security in Darfur and relative stability, today it is not possible to continue with that same optimism. The current uncertain political situation in the country has a definite direct impact and poses new challenges for Darfur. That is why a reassessment is needed of the timing and the most appropriate strategy for the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), so that it takes place in a careful and responsible manner and does not jeopardize the gains that have been made.

With regard to the reconfiguration and downsizing of UNAMID, it suffices to mention that the special report (S/2019/445) indicates that human rights violations and abuses continue to occur in areas from which UNAMID has already withdrawn, such as Jebel Moon, where an attack in January led to deaths and new civilian displacements.

Also, as Mr. Gilmore mentioned, human rights violations continue in Darfur, particularly in the Jebel Marra area. The main victims of the frequent cases of conflict-related sexual violence have been internally displaced persons, especially women and girls. An aggravating circumstance is that many of those attacks are organized by Government forces and affiliated forces, especially the Rapid Support Forces.

Faced with the difficult political situation in the Sudan, we believe that it is essential to return to the agreements reached and put a stop to the violence. In that regard, we welcome Ethiopia's mediation efforts for the Transitional Military Council and the opposition to resume negotiations on the creation of a transitional authority.

We welcome UNAMID's work and collaboration with national and local authorities, the country team and other partners aimed at facilitating mediation mechanisms and seeking sustainable solutions to the root causes of the conflict, such as access to land and resources. We also condemn the looting that occurred at the UNAMID West Darfur headquarters in El Geneina on 14 May, and we reiterate the importance of the mission being able to exercise its mandate throughout Darfur, especially in the area of Jebel Marra.

On the other hand, we welcome the work of the State liaison functions in the UNAMID transition process. We highlight their importance in maintaining

the progress achieved in the areas of protection, rule of law, human rights and lasting solutions for internally displaced persons and communities throughout Darfur.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our support for the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the United Nations system and UNAMID. We encourage them to join efforts to help the people of Sudan to shape their own future. It is equally important that the countries of the region continue to support the peace process in Darfur, avoiding the proliferation of initiatives and deterring disruptive elements, with the ultimate goal of achieving the sustainable peace and stability in Darfur that we all desire.

**Ms. Wronecka** (Poland): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their detailed and informative presentations.

Allow me now to share our thoughts with the Council — first, on the situation in Sudan in general, and secondly, on Darfur.

Poland strongly condemns latest use of violence by the Sudanese security forces against demonstrators in Khartoum, which led to deaths and injuries. There is no justification for the use of force against peaceful protesters. All violence against the Sudanese people — including extrajudicial, arbitrary and summary killings, beatings and sexual and gender-based violence, arrests and disappearances — must stop.

We believe that all human rights violations and abuses committed must be investigated in an independent and transparent manner and that perpetrators should be held accountable for their actions. It should be emphasized that the Transitional Military Council is currently the body accountable for ensuring security and rule of law in the country.

Consensus that enables transfer of power to a civilian-led authority remains a matter of priority. We expect the Transitional Military Council to respect the aspirations of Sudanese society and provide for freedom of expression and assembly and freedom of the media, civic space and access to the Internet, without any threat or use of violence. We support the position of the African Union in that regard.

When it comes to the situation in Darfur, we note with regret that violations of human rights, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, continue

to occur across the region. We strongly condemn the targeting — including by Government security personnel and the Rapid Support Forces — of the civilian population, especially those who are most vulnerable, namely, women, children and internally displaced persons (IDPs). We believe that the authorities should spare no effort in holding the perpetrators accountable and do their utmost to fight impunity in Darfur.

A lot remains to be done in addressing the root causes of the conflict and instability, including building effective rule-of-law institutions and creating the conditions for millions of Darfuri IDPs to return to their homes. The question of land ownership remains one of most pressing issues in that regard.

We reiterate our position that there can be no other solution to the conflict in Darfur than a political one. We regret that the latest internal situation in Sudan has led to a loss of momentum in the peace process, but we believe it can be resumed in the near future.

At the same time, we follow with concern the activities of the Darfuri rebel groups in neighbouring countries. As Chair of both the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, and, together with Germany, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, we intend to hold a joint meeting of the three Sanctions Committees next week in order to provide the Security Council with the space to discuss this issue in depth.

Let me conclude by addressing the issue of the renewal of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Poland looks forward to the discussions on the new resolution. We are willing to engage in the negotiations, but while doing so we will be closely following the developments in Khartoum, which in our opinion have a direct effect on Darfur and its future.

**Mr. Wu Haitao** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their briefings.

In recent years, with the joint efforts of the Sudan, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and international partners, the situation in Darfur has improved substantially. Since the second half of last year, when UNAMID began

to implement the transition plan through gradual reconfiguration and drawdown, the situation in Darfur has continued to be stable. That fully demonstrates that the Sudanese Government has the capacity to assume its responsibility to maintain peace and security on its own. The international community should continue to provide assistance to Darfur through bilateral and multilateral channels so as to consolidate the results achieved and to advance peace and reconstruction in the region.

China would like to emphasize the following three points.

First, we should always respect the leadership of the Sudanese Government on the issue of Darfur. The Sudanese Government bears the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in Darfur. When helping solve the Darfur issue, the United Nations and the international community should effectively strengthen communication and coordination with the Sudanese Government, earnestly heed their opinions and suggestions and focus on supporting the Sudanese Government in strengthening security and capacity-building.

Secondly, we should continue to promote the peace process in Darfur. China hopes that all parties concerned in Darfur will continue to exercise restraint and call on the opposition parties and armed groups that have not yet joined the political process to effectively abandon the military solution, resolve disputes and differences through dialogue, consultation and other political means and work together to safeguard peace and stability in Darfur.

Thirdly, we should continue to provide humanitarian and economic assistance to support the peacebuilding efforts of the Sudanese Government in Darfur. The current focus is to help facilitate the return and settlement of internally displaced persons in Darfur. China welcomes the efforts of the United Nations Development Programme, the Peacebuilding Commission and others to provide the necessary support for the construction and development of Darfur.

China commends the contributions of UNAMID to the maintenance of peace and stability in Darfur and supports the extension of its mandate. China welcomes the recent joint submission to the Security Council by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission of the UNAMID strategic assessment report (S/2019/445). The report indicates

that the overall security situation in Darfur is stable and suggests that, in accordance with resolution 2429 (2018), the drawdown of UNAMID should continue. We hope that Council members will attach importance to the recommendations in the report and, on the basis of respecting the will of the Sudanese Government, make proper arrangements for the future mandate of UNAMID to make sure that the mission will complete its withdrawal as planned, in 2020.

China has always supported the peace process in Darfur. As one of the major troop-contributing countries for UNAMID, over the years we have made positive contributions to the maintenance of peace and stability in Darfur. China is ready to work with the rest of the international community to continue to play a constructive role in realizing peace, stability and development in Darfur.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his briefing on the state of affairs in Darfur and on the main conclusions of the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We also listened carefully to Assistant Secretary-General Andrew Gilmour's report on the human rights situation in the region.

We share the conclusions in the joint strategic assessment of the Secretariat and the African Union Commission regarding the fact that there is a noticeable improvement in the security situation in Darfur. The various clashes with the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid in Jebel Marra do not change that. We are also seeing a degree of normalization on the humanitarian front. The overall trend in the situation in the regions that the Blue Helmets have already left has not changed.

We believe that all of those arguments confirm that the Security Council was right in its decision to reduce the military component of UNAMID with the aim of fully drawing down the mission by the end of 2020. In proposing a technical rollover for UNAMID, the representatives of the United Kingdom and Germany even referred to the African Union Peace and Security Council's communiqué, but for some reason quoted it selectively. I would like to point out that in paragraph 10 of the communiqué, the Peace and Security Council approves the strategic assessment and the mission's future drawdown. I see no reason why we should call for any other course of action. I ask our colleagues



to follow the spirit and letter of Security Council resolution 2429 (2018) and discuss the parameters for the peacekeepers' withdrawal. Nor can I ignore the fact that the discussion of their proposal for a technical rollover has only just begun at the expert level. We have not yet been able to engage in support of their text. Why should they fly in the face of Security Council practice by announcing this in an open meeting and anticipating the experts' work? It does them no credit and makes our work considerably harder. Moves like these display all the signs of megaphone diplomacy, which we thought we had all decided to do away with.

I would also like to focus on another aspect. The ongoing discussions in the United Nations about the Organization's difficult financial situation are constant. The Secretary-General is openly sounding the alarm, calling for us to work together to deal with it. The budget deficits for peacekeeping operations are growing steadily. And what do we see? Despite all of that, some of our colleagues are calling insistently for putting the drawdown of an operation that costs more than half a billion dollars on hold. As a comparison, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, whose closure our Western colleagues have been calling so loudly for despite the continuing tensions there, costs less than \$40 million. What kind of savings is that?

We are realists, of course. We understand that Darfur is facing many complex challenges. There are questions and problems that must be resolved. However, that is a job for peacebuilding, not peacekeeping. UNAMID was first deployed 12 years ago and has helped to deal with the acute phase of the crisis. An analysis of its activities will be extremely important for future peacekeeping operations. But the time has come to concentrate on the restoration and economic development of the region. That should be the international community's priority now.

We are once again astonished to see a number of our colleagues around this table using this agenda item not to discuss the parameters for withdrawing a peacekeeping operation but to voice their opinions of the domestic political situation in the Sudan, despite the fact that only a few days ago there was a clear appeal for refraining from any external interference in the agreed Security Council press statement (SC/13836) as well as the African Union communiqué. It seems it is just those sections of the communiqué that our Western colleagues have decided to ignore.

I would like to emphasize that we believe that the resolution of the internal crisis in their country is a matter for the Sudanese people themselves. Outside pressure, ultimatums and open support for one of the parties in the negotiations, let alone blatant interference in a sovereign State's internal affairs, are absolutely unacceptable and will only exacerbate the disagreements. However, we were pleased to see a positive trend on the ground in the context of Ethiopia's mediation initiative. We should support African efforts rather than telling the Sudanese people what to do and how to do it when they are in a difficult situation. Believe me, they will reach an agreement much more quickly without lectures from outside.

In conclusion, I would like to ask Under-Secretary-General Lacroix two questions. Besides decree 102 of the Transitional Military Council, which he mentioned, are there any other technical obstacles to UNAMID's drawdown? Also, in the Secretariat's view, what is the time frame needed for UNAMID's withdrawal and complete closure? I would be grateful for his answers.

**Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We also thank the briefers for the comprehensive briefings, which have highlighted a number of key issues that still require our firm commitment. I would like to focus on two key issues, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the political situation in the Sudan. However, at the outset I want to note that South Africa deplores the loss of innocent lives that took place in the past few days in Zalingei. We express our condolences to the families of the deceased and wish the injured a speedy recovery.

Turning to UNAMID, we would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative and Head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and the UNAMID team for all their efforts in difficult conditions, which have so far resulted in the drawdown of 4,000 troops.

We also welcome UNAMID's continued work with national and local authorities, as well as with the United Nations country team and other partners, to facilitate mediation and address the underlying issues of access to land and resources. While noting the significant progress that has been made in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in Darfur, we are concerned about the security challenges that persist, as well as the human

rights violations highlighted in the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General (S/2019/445). The violence against civilians is particularly unacceptable. Furthermore, women and children continue to be the most vulnerable members of the population and the most affected by sexual violence, which is still a weapon of war in the conflict.

With regard to the proposed drawdown, we would like to reiterate the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union of 13 June. It is our view that in line with the strategic assessment of UNAMID of 1 June, and given the unfolding situation in the Sudan, the drawdown and liquidation process should be carried out in a responsible manner, and UNAMID troops should be relocated to the remaining team sites that have been identified as security hotspots until such time as the situation is stabilized. It should be systematic, taking into account the security conditions on the ground and in the Sudan as a whole. It should also ensure that no vacuum is created, which could hamper the progress already made as well as undermining the protection of civilians. We support UNAMID in making continued efforts to address the security concerns of the local communities and internally displaced persons, particularly given the current volatile situation.

Perhaps it is time to ask some questions. Should we stick to the original drawdown time frames? Should we not reassess the situation and then recalibrate? The situation has evolved. It is not the same in the centre of the Sudan, and we cannot proceed as if nothing has happened. Darfur is also part of the greater Sudan and is implicated in that regard. There is too much contestation of power and too much mistrust. An assessment of the drawdown is urgently needed, and the Security Council should reject the Transitional Military Council decree on handing over its team sites to the Rapid Support Forces. We should call on the Transitional Military Council to rescind that decision immediately and without conditions and to allow UNAMID to hand over identified assets to civilian entities.

With regard to the attacks on UNAMID and United Nations agencies and the looting of their property, we want to reiterate our reminder to the Republic of the Sudan of its primary responsibility to provide protection to both the civilian population and United Nations property, and we call on the Sudan to investigate and bring to account the people who have been committing those crimes.

With regard to the political situation, too many people have lost their lives in the political circumstances that have created so much uncertainty. In that regard, in line with the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) of 13 June and the 3 June press statement by the three African members of the Security Council, we strongly condemn and lament the tragic and unjustified loss of life and remind the transitional authorities in the Sudan of their obligation to protect civilians and respect their fundamental rights.

We urge the Transitional Military Council to return to the internal dialogue with the aim of responding swiftly and effectively to the legitimate aspirations of the Sudanese people, as well as to the framework established by the African Union. We underline the primacy of African-led initiatives in the quest for a lasting solution to the crisis in the Sudan. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to bring the parties back to the negotiating table in an approach consistent with that of the AU communiqué of 6 June. It is key that the Sudanese chart their own path to peace, devoid of interference, and that is also vital to ensuring that the substantial progress in peacebuilding that has been achieved in Darfur is not reversed. We also welcome all other efforts being undertaken at a bilateral level.

South Africa furthermore stresses how important it is that UNAMID continue to provide technical and logistical assistance to the Sudan's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission in disarming and demobilizing armed combatants. We urge the Transitional Military Council, the Declaration of Freedom and Change forces and the country's political parties to engage in constructive dialogue with a view to restoring peace and stability in the Sudan. Given the volatile state of the region, that is also vital to regional stability. The Sudan remains a key strategic country on the continent, and it is bordered by seven countries — Egypt, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Libya. Instability in the Sudan will have a negative effect in the region.

In conclusion, the socioeconomic challenges in the Sudan are part of the root causes of the broader challenges it faces. We should therefore focus our support on economic development and home in on financial mobilization to support the country in its economic recovery. We commend the countries that have contributed in that regard.

**Mr. Djani** (Indonesia): I would first like to join others in expressing my appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their comprehensive briefings. We also thank the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their special report on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2019/445).

We have all said time and again that the overall security situation in Darfur has remained relatively stable. To borrow the language of paragraph 40 of the special report, there has been “no strategic reversal of the positive trajectory with regard to Darfur since the previous mandate renewal”. Indeed, the improving security situation has enabled the start of the phased withdrawal of UNAMID, including the handover of two UNAMID sector headquarters in the past month. My delegation is encouraged by the continued decline in intercommunal conflicts made possible by the active engagement of State and local authorities, supported by UNAMID. However, we note with concern the recent loss of innocent lives in the village of Delej in Central Darfur, and commend UNAMID’s swift response in dispatching an assessment mission. Today I would like to make three important points.

First, we must ensure UNAMID’s responsible drawdown and exit. I would like to stress the word “responsible”. We concur that UNAMID’s exit should not create a vacuum and expose the country’s long-suffering civilians to renewed risks. We regret that some of the team sites that have been handed over are not being used for civilian purposes, have been abandoned or are becoming unusable. We also deplore the looting of UNAMID sector headquarters in El Geneina during its handover to the Sudanese authorities last month, which is unacceptable and put United Nations personnel at grave risk. The Sudanese authorities and UNAMID must take measures to strengthen the protection of UNAMID premises and personnel so as to prevent similar incidents from occurring. We are nevertheless pleased to learn that UNAMID’s withdrawal from areas previously under its control has had only minimal adverse effects. The Council’s deliberations on UNAMID’s further drawdown should be guided by the options presented in the special report and take into consideration the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) of 13 June.

Secondly, addressing the persistent challenges in Darfur is a huge undertaking and requires sustained international engagement. The support of UNAMID, the AU High-Level Implementation Panel and the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa is crucial to advancing the Darfur peace process. All the parties on the ground should end hostilities and direct their energies to the negotiating table.

We note with concern that human rights violations continue to occur across Darfur and tend to be underreported. UNAMID should continue its instrumental role in supporting capacity-building and strengthening rule-of-law institutions. Greater efforts must be made to ensure that the Government is able to bear its primary responsibility to protect civilians. Promoting socioeconomic development is equally critical to prevent a relapse into conflict in Darfur. Durable solutions are desperately needed for the 1.8 million internally displaced persons in Darfur, and the humanitarian actors must be given the space to deliver assistance to those in need. Indonesia would like to highlight the best practices of State liaison functions in enabling UNAMID, the United Nations country team and the Sudanese authorities to work together on peacebuilding in Darfur. Support for State liaison functions should be among the main focuses of UNAMID’s mandate in its final year.

That brings me to my third point. My delegation continues to observe the developments in the Sudan and their potential impact on the security situation in Darfur very carefully. Indonesia reaffirms its principle of non-interference and respect for Sudanese sovereignty. We underline the primacy of African-led initiatives in the quest for a lasting solution in the Sudan. My delegation would also like to commend the role of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia in assisting the Sudanese stakeholders in resuming their talks. In the meantime, we urge all stakeholders to exercise calm and maximum restraint, and act in a way that supports a climate of peace in the country and preserves the gains made so far in Darfur.

We are now at a critical phase of UNAMID’s drawdown. Indonesia is proud to have been a troop- and police-contributing country to UNAMID since 2008. There is no doubt that its work has achieved a great deal in Darfur. Some ongoing challenges remain, but there is a limit to what the mission can do. For Indonesia, the priorities now are to build on the work of UNAMID and support the transition to peacebuilding. Indonesia was

a member of the Security Council during UNAMID's creation in 2007, and in 2019 is proud to be a part of the Council that will hopefully bring UNAMID's mandate to an end. I also hope that the mission will be a success story in the annals of the Council in bringing peace to the people of the Sudan.

I would like to add that no military or police personnel anywhere in the world want to be in a conflict, but if need be they will put their lives in harm's way for the cause of peace. As a diplomat, I for one would be glad to bring our women and men home safely from a mission that has done well. We therefore hope once again that peace will continue in Darfur. I would like to conclude by reaffirming our support for our Sudanese brothers and sisters in taking ownership of their destiny and in their quest to find a peaceful solution for their country.

**Mrs. Mele Colifa** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Andrew Gilmour for their pertinent briefings.

The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is extremely concerned about development of events in the Sudan — a historic land to which we can wish only peace and prosperity. We reiterate our strong national belief in the position of the African Union with respect to unconstitutional changes of Government. We deplore the acts of violence that serve only to undermine peace in the country, thereby endangering the lives of the Sudanese people.

We commend the work that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has conducted since its deployment to date, in an environment that bears no resemblance to the one that existed when its mandate was established. In particular, we are especially satisfied with the weapons-collection programme. The full implementation of that programme is essential not only for maintaining the current peace in Darfur but also with a view to establishing definitive and lasting peace, in particular in the zone of Jebel Marra, where pacification is crucial. We encourage UNAMID to extend the weapons-collection campaign to rural areas.

Similarly, we deplore the slow progress of the political process underway on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. We should encourage greater support for the political process led by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

Although today's meeting concerns Darfur, we cannot ignore the events taking place in Khartoum. My country welcomes and applauds the firm stance taken by the African Union and its institutions, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that the will of the noble Sudanese people is carried out. My country, together with its African brothers and colleagues, South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire, already issued a joint communiqué last week in which we made our position quite clear. We will reiterate it here today.

Equatorial Guinea appeals to the sense of historic responsibility of the Transitional Military Council to rise to the occasion by facilitating a democratic transition led by civilians. It is imperative not only to put an end to the violence but also to ensure the protection of civilians and their fundamental rights. The disproportionate use of force, in particular when it leads to indiscriminate deaths, is unacceptable and cannot go unpunished. We call on the Sudanese authorities to return to the road map outlined by the African Union. Any course of action taken must fit within the parameters set by that regional organization. In that regard, we applaud the rapprochement between the parties in conflict that has taken place in recent days and hope that it will continue in the same vein.

In the light of the renewal of the UNAMID mandate, which is due to expire shortly, my delegation, like others, advocates treading cautiously. It would be counterproductive to reconfigure the mission or continue with plans previously made. Therefore we support a technical extension of the mandate for a few months until the dust settles, which we hope will be soon.

We would like to conclude by demanding that the international community refrain from interfering in the political process taking place in the Sudan. Any action by third parties, including this Council, must be in line with the interests of the Sudanese people and within the parameters set by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

**Mr. Singer Weisinger** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to thank Mr. Lacroix and Mr. Gilmour for their briefings.

The Dominican Republic fully supports the press communication of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki on 3 June, given the recent developments and tense situation in the country. The mandate of the African Union-United



Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) indicates that its priority is its responsibility to protect the civilian population. Based on that premise and in line with the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/445), which outlines the moderate impact of incidents in Khartoum on the security situation in Darfur, it is understood that the mandate is being implemented.

Regrettably, Darfur remains an area plagued by injustice, human rights violations, primarily against children and women, unresolved intercommunal conflicts, with more than 2 million internally displaced persons and an area where humanitarian and information access is routinely restricted. In addition, there are reports that Government forces and associated militias have destroyed and burned villages in Jebel Marra. Unlawful killings, sexual violence, systematic looting and forced displacement have been documented.

Against that reality, we are on the cusp of UNAMID's mandate renewal, and there are many and frequent questions regarding the future of the mission and when and how it will exit. It is clear that for some that time has come. But for others like Adam, a 54-year-old displaced person in Sortony, the presence of UNAMID is a threat to the security forces who wish to mistreat the people and commit atrocities. In some areas of Darfur, such as Jebel Marra, UNAMID's protection is urgent and essential.

That urgency is compounded by recent events in Khartoum, where the Rapid Support Forces attacked protest sites and opened fire on protesters, killing more than 100 people. We are concerned that that same militia, responsible for the atrocities committed in Darfur, is part of the Transitional Military Council.

The Sudan is in the midst of a political crisis that requires that we proceed with caution and not rule out the possibility of an increase in violence against civilians in Darfur. A clear sign that the architects of the violence in the Darfur conflict still retain political and military power is the issuance by the Transitional Military Council of decree 102, instructing the handover of UNAMID team sites to the Rapid Support Forces, in violation of Khartoum's commitments, including the status of forces agreement between UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan. In that regard, we welcome the decision by the United Nations to suspend the handover of those facilities, which should be made to

the appropriate institutions for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of the civilian population.

Twelve years after the deployment of UNAMID, the conflict in Darfur seems to be continuing. Despite the relative calm achieved, recent events in Khartoum have accentuated the political and logistical challenges on the ground. The death toll, human rights violations, the displacement of people, food insecurity and the effects of climate change continue to require a strong international response that fulfils the mandate to protect the civilian population, and an effective commitment by the Government to the well-being of the Sudanese people.

In that regard, we are concerned, on the one hand, about the devastating effects of climate change and environmental degradation as a multiplier of conflict. In the case of the Sudan, if the drought trends continue, the country will face significant food shortages and large-scale migration due to the loss of livelihoods, which would aggravate the already difficult situation facing the Sudanese people.

Moreover, we are alarmed by the growing trend of conflict-related sexual violence, many cases of which go unreported. Of the reported cases, 80 per cent are rapes, of which 30 per cent are carried out by members of the Rapid Support Forces militia and the armed forces. It is imperative to ensure the monitoring, analysis and reporting of these cases, even after UNAMID's departure from Darfur, with the deployment of women's protection advisers on the ground.

We need to rethink the exit strategy and focus on preserving the mission's capacities to protect civilians and monitor human rights abuses and then, after a reasonable time, resume talks on a gradual withdrawal of UNAMID.

The recent events in Khartoum open up a range of opportunities for transparent, political, civilian-led negotiations through open dialogue, with the participation of all actors, for the restoration of order and peace for the Sudanese people. Above all, those negotiations must facilitate a process of accountability that brings to justice those responsible for acts of violence against the civilian population and that enables an independent investigation of such acts.

If a peaceful Sudan is to resurface, those responsible for atrocities must be brought to justice. The dignity, respect and democratic aspirations of the Sudanese

people must be ensured, but above all, Sudanese women must be made whole and their participation in decision-making must be ensured.

**Mr. Cohen** (United States of America): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their briefings on the latest developments in Darfur and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Since our last briefing in April (see S/PV.8513), the United States has become increasingly concerned that political uncertainty in Khartoum is adversely impacting the situation in Darfur. Stability there is intertwined with the rest of the country and the region, as other speakers have noted. The gravity of several recent incidents in Darfur is especially troubling. These incidents call into question the commitment of the Transitional Military Council to respecting the rights of Darfuris and to acting in good faith to find durable peace. In that regard, reports of an attack on civilians in Deleij in Central Darfur on 9 June are deeply disturbing. That attack resulted in a number of casualties, and we call on UNAMID to investigate.

Beyond Darfur, the Sudan's security forces' reported use of violence last week to break up a peaceful sit-in is also alarming. The incident outside of the Sudanese armed forces headquarters in Khartoum killed more than 100 unarmed protesters and wounded hundreds more. Reports that the forces of the Transitional Military Council have directed such violence against civilians, obstructed medical care, blocked access to the internet and restricted media and civil society raise serious questions about the its willingness to negotiate a transition to a civilian-led Government.

The United States strongly condemns the killing, beating and sexual assault of protesters and other civilians. We call on the Transitional Military Council to stop these attacks and create a more conducive environment for renewed political negotiations with the Declaration of Freedom and Change Forces coalition. Continued international support for UNAMID must be considered in the context of good faith efforts by the Transitional Military Council to responsibly maintain basic services for the people of the Sudan and its progress in facilitating a sustainable political solution for the country.

The Transitional Military Council can take steps to show that it is ready to negotiate. Allowing for an

independent investigation of the events in Khartoum and holding accountable those responsible for the recent violence would be a welcomed first step. Beyond this, allowing all political voices to freely express their opinions and withdrawing the Rapid Support Forces and other militia from Khartoum would demonstrate further good will.

The United States supports the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council's 6 June communiqué, the AU's decision to suspend the Sudan's membership and its strong message on the need to transition quickly to a civilian-led Government. We also welcome the recent diplomatic initiative by the Ethiopian Prime Minister, undertaken along with the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to engage the Transitional Military Council and the opposition. Those efforts will help encourage a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

We urge all parties to continue the process towards a civilian transition in an atmosphere of calm, and we are ready to work with our partners in the Council and the region to support these efforts.

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

At the outset, I thank Mr. Lacroix and Mr. Gilmour for their briefings. In my statement, I will focus on three basic issues: the situation in Darfur, the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the upcoming mandate renewal.

On the situation in Darfur, the joint strategic assessment report (S/2019/445) reaffirms the continued security stability in Darfur while excluding the possibility that the UNAMID exit strategy would affect the situation there. That makes us in the Council responsible for preserving the Mission's gains and encouraging the steps taken by the Sudan to extend its authority throughout Darfur.

As to the drivers of the conflict, these could be addressed through means other than peacekeeping. Issues related to land and its ownership, climate change and the safe, voluntary and dignified return of internally displaced persons should be the core of post-conflict peacebuilding. Peacekeeping is no longer the optimal way, as it was in the past, to address the situation in Darfur. Accordingly, we call on UNAMID to maintain the current course, as set out in resolution 2429 (2018) and in the Council's 2018 presidential statement S/PRST/2018/19.

On the withdrawal of UNAMID, we commend the Mission's innovative use of State liaison functions, which contribute to its smooth and gradual exit through enhanced cooperation with the United Nations country team in the area of peacebuilding.

The Mission's report of two months ago (S/2019/305) and the most recent report under discussion today contain calls for streamlining the benchmarks and indicators, a majority of which have been achieved in Darfur. Since the Doha Agreement for Peace in Darfur remains the reference point for a political solution in Darfur, and since most legislative frameworks have been established, we believe that the priority political solution in Darfur is being applied as required. However, its implementation could have been better managed in the light of the reluctance of some parties to join the political process. The Mission and its exit strategy cannot remain hostage to the willingness of those parties to cooperate. The Government of the Sudan has cooperated in this regard, supported by UNAMID through the Joint Special Representative and thanks to the laudable efforts of the State of Qatar and the Federal Republic of Germany.

On the upcoming mandate renewal, we will work over the next two weeks on a new mandate for the Mission. We hope that it will be succinct and clear in laying out the exit options and specifying the priority areas, such as capacity-building, promoting the rule of law, strengthening national ownership and enhancing cooperation and coordination with the United Nations country team in Darfur. We thank the brotherly Sudan for its cooperation and look forward to more cooperation during the drawdown, withdrawal and liquidation phases of the Mission in a smooth and safe manner.

We are closely following developments in the Sudan. We call on all parties to exercise calm and restraint, denounce violence and pursue dialogue in order to ensure the success of the peaceful transitional process. We hope that the measures taken to address those developments will help achieve security and stability in the Sudan in a manner that fulfils the hopes and aspirations of its brotherly people. We call on all Sudanese to place the interests of the nation first, above all other considerations, for the unity, sovereignty, stability and territorial integrity of the Sudan.

We stress once again that what is happening in the Sudan is an internal affair that does not merit interference, in accordance with the Charter of the

United Nations. We call anew for compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council on the Sudan and for the discussion to be restricted to the subject matter on our agenda, including UNAMID today. Current developments should not be used to change courses that have been agreed by the Council in previous resolutions.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

**Mr. Ahmed** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to tell you, Mr. President, how happy we are to see your brotherly country preside over the Security Council for this month. I also would like to convey our thanks to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Gilmour for their briefings.

I further thank the strategic assessment team for its efforts. The team visited Darfur to assess the situation on the ground and has presented a highly professional report (S/2019/445). We have read the report on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which confirms that there is an ongoing improvement of the security situation in all Darfur states, which enjoyed security and stability over the past period, while looking forward to the new era that began in the Sudan on 11 April.

The strategic assessment team notes in the report before the Council that the current situation in Darfur requires a transition from peacekeeping to a new approach based on economic recovery, development and stability. We highlight the pivotal role that the United Nations can play, along with all its institutions and agencies, including the United Nations country team in Khartoum, to address the remaining manifestations of the conflict, which UNAMID is definitely unable to do with its current components and capacities.

During the past period, there was a focus in all Darfur states on boosting security and stability issues through the weapons collection campaign, strengthening the authority and control of the State to guarantee the voluntary return of internally displaced persons and working to ensure the success of the agricultural season, which we hope will contribute to improving the security situation and living conditions.

I would like to emphasize that the Sudan looks forward to continued cooperation with the United Nations and the members of the Security Council to achieve and implement the exit of UNAMID, in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the strategic assessment report. This report was jointly adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union yesterday and by the Council in resolution 2429 (2018). The content of the resolution is in line with the report before us with respect to the specified stages of UNAMID's withdrawal from Darfur.

It has been reaffirmed that the Sudan is fully committed to facilitating the work of UNAMID in Darfur until its withdrawal. In that regard, allow me to highlight the following points.

First, the Sudan is an independent State with full sovereignty over its territories. That is a right guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter guarantees the Sudan the right to benefit from the resources available within its borders, in line with the general interests of the Sudanese people.

Secondly, the Sudan is committed to all the agreements it has signed with the United Nations and UNAMID concerning the use and handover of UNAMID sites to the Sudanese Government, pursuant to a memorandum of understanding agreed and signed as usual by both sides, the Sudanese Government and UNAMID.

Thirdly, I would like to draw the Council's attention to a decision taken by the Transitional Military Council yesterday to withdraw all armed forces and other security forces from the sites that the Government of the Sudan has received from UNAMID and to suspend the implementation of decree 102, issued in May. I repeat: The Transitional Military Council has decided to withdraw its armed forces and other security forces from the sites received by the Sudanese Government from UNAMID and to suspend the implementation of decree 102, issued in May, requesting the handover of the sites to the Rapid Support Forces. We will provide the Council with a copy of the text later.

Based on the aforementioned information and the outcome of the strategic assessment report, it is necessary to proceed with the implementation of the proposals contained in the team's report before the Council, as adopted by the Secretariat. As those present know, the deadline suggested and asserted in

the report for UNAMID's drawdown is June 2020 and its liquidation in December of the same year.

I would like to reaffirm that the categorical position of the Sudanese Government is to move forward with the exit of UNAMID according to that time frame, and we categorically reject any attempt to postpone or cancel the exit of UNAMID. We reject the option of UNAMID troops remaining in Darfur, given that there is no need, justification or reason for their presence there, in line with the conclusions of a previous report, issued a year or two ago, on the importance of withdrawing peacekeeping forces from Darfur in order to allow for the achievement of development, stability and investment there. The Council must continue to look at the situation with an open mind and evaluate the implications of any attempt to hamper or postpone the drawdown according to the time frame set out in the report of the strategic assessment team, which visited Darfur and saw the situation on the ground.

As I have said before, the position in favour of proceeding with the withdrawal of UNAMID is in line with the nature of the situation in Darfur, which requires a new course of moving forward towards normalizing life and sustaining peace there, especially following the great political change. Some Council members said that the political process is not moving forward. However, the political transformation that started on 11 April has paved the way for the participation of armed movements in the political process. They had refused to participate, but now they can freely participate in building and shaping the future of the Sudan. They have the full right to do so and to be present in the political arena.

I would like to draw the attention of everybody in general, and the Security Council in particular, to the importance of taking advantage of this opportunity before us in the Sudan. Darfur has not been affected by the political developments in Khartoum. We need to exploit this opportunity to achieve a comprehensive peace that reflects the success of UNAMID in Darfur, as well as its role, which the Council, the African Union and the Sudanese Government have fully supported. That would meet the aspirations of our people to sustain peace and security in Darfur. UNAMID's exit would mean that the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union to keep and maintain peace in Africa was a success. As the three African countries represented here in the Council will agree, the success of UNAMID's exit strategy would affirm a principle that we hold dear in Africa: the principle of African



solutions to African problems. We must support and protect this principle within the Council.

The Sudan welcomes the extensive efforts undertaken to complete the peace process and we again welcome the dawn of peace and peacebuilding in Darfur. This means development, which will in turn lead to the eradication of all manifestations of the conflict. My country's delegation thanks UNAMID for its efforts across various fields and the peacekeepers who have given their lives for security and peace in Darfur. We, the entire Sudanese people, pay tribute to them and acknowledge their sacrifices over the years. We also thank all UNAMID troop- and police-contributing countries. We reaffirm the Sudan's readiness to cooperate with all regional and international partners until the last UNAMID component exits the territories of my country.

Allow me to add a few observations that I did not originally plan to make. Some members of the Council, however, have discussed the Sudan's internal political affairs and therefore I am obliged to make some clarifications. I hope Council members will listen to me with open minds and hearts. It appears that certain members of the Council continue to think with the historical mindset that my country and Africa in general have been liberated from for decades. They are wrong if they believe that they can use this forum and this agenda item of the Security Council to discuss an issue that has nothing to do with the matter at hand. The procedures of the Security Council reject this, as does the Charter of the United Nations, which specifies first and foremost when the Security Council can and cannot interfere in the internal affairs of a country.

I would like to clearly note that the events that have been taking place in the Sudan since December 2018 remain, to this very day, an internal affair that neither the Council nor any of its members has any mandate or right to discuss. As the Council is well aware, this is pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations and I do not need to explain that the mandate of the Security Council is limited to the Darfur states. I recall and emphasize that this meeting, pursuant to the Council's agenda, should focus only on the situation in Darfur in relation to the UNAMID strategic assessment report.

Allow me also to mention the efforts of the African Union, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in mediating and finding common ground between the

Sudanese political parties and their different positions. This mediation has led to rapprochement that we hope will lead to a final agreement in the coming days so that we can achieve, in the near future, a democratic, civil State that will continue to contribute to building sustainable peace in Africa and the world. Therefore, I hope that the Council will not interfere in the efforts of the African Union and IGAD, as that would have a negative impact on the ability of the Sudanese political components to reach an agreement as swiftly as possible.

Regarding the tragic and regrettable events that took place on 3 June, we pray for the victims and hope that those who are injured will make a swift recovery. However, discussions of these events are inaccurate and the statistics that have been cited are false. Therefore, allow me to announce that the Transitional Military Council has established a military commission to investigate these events, the findings of which will be announced tomorrow, Saturday, 15 June. The Prosecutor General of the Sudan has established a judicial committee to investigate these events and to bring the perpetrators to account. They will be justly prosecuted.

This demonstrates the resolve of the Sudanese authorities to fight impunity. We are waiting for these investigations to be completed and their findings to be announced. Therefore, I hope that members of the Security Council will not jump to conclusions and instead wait until the Sudanese authorities — which have the competence, the capability and the determination to carry out this task — finalize their investigation and hold the perpetrators accountable.

I hope that the Council will not interfere in the political internal affairs of the Sudan. Its members can rest assured that the noble Sudanese people, with our deep-rooted civilization and love for our country, can achieve the objectives of our great revolution. The Sudanese people can build a promising future in the service of humankind.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix to respond to the comments and questions raised.

**Mr. Lacroix**: I will be very brief. The representative of the Russian Federation asked a question regarding technical issues that could have an impact on the drawdown process. So far, UNAMID has been able to carry out the drawdown as decided by resolution 2429

(2018). A number of technical issues must be resolved, of course, but we are familiar with them and they have not prevented the drawdown process from taking place. At the same time, we have had to deal with logistical constraints and sometimes lengthy procedures, but those are things that we have been handling in cooperation with our Sudanese interlocutors.

Based on that, the time frame within which we are usually able to redeploy our units out of the country is between six and nine months, more or less. That includes moving the contingents out of their camps and regrouping their equipment to El Fasher before eventually bringing them to Port Sudan and making sure that the necessary clearances are forthcoming. As I said, none of that has ever been completely easy, but we have been able to handle it so far. Of course, the interaction

with the Sudanese authorities is very important in that context, and the fluid situation in Khartoum has had some impact on that, as I mentioned in my statement. Whatever potential impact that fluid situation may have on the overall security situation, not just in Darfur but in the rest of the country, may also potentially have an impact on the proceedings that I have briefly described. That is essentially what I would like to say in response to my Russian colleague's question.

**The President** (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Lacroix for his clarifications.

There are no names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at noon.*