



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

## 8931<sup>st</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 15 December 2021, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ousman/Mr. Abarry . . . . .	(Niger)
 <i>Members:</i>		
	China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Jürgenson
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Gasri
	India . . . . .	Mr. Raguttahalli
	Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Byrne Nason
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kimani
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. King
	Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ben Lagha
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mr. Pham

## Agenda

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2021/1015)

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21-39636 (E)



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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

#### Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2021/1015)

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, and Ms. Wafaa Saeed, Director of the Coordination Division, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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/2021/1015, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan.

At this meeting, we will hear a briefing by Mr. Haysom, Ms. Saeed and Ambassador Hai Anh Pham, Chargé d'affaires ad interim of Viet Nam, on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Haysom.

**Mr. Haysom:** I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief on developments in South Sudan.

During my last briefing (see S/PV.8859), I conveyed hope that South Sudan was ready to make significant strides in advancing the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. Since then, regrettably, there has been reduced momentum on implementing critical aspects of the agreement, albeit with some progress in the following areas.

On 29 November, South Sudan concluded its fifth national governors' forum. The forum brought together

leaders from all 10 states and 2 administrative areas to enhance policy coordination and best practices in governance. It marked the first high-level meeting of all members of Government since the signing of the peace agreement in 2018. I commend South Sudan's leaders for their commitment to dialogue in the forum, including debating contentious issues.

Parliamentary appointments have continued, with members of the Other Political Parties coalition resolving divisions over parliamentary seats, paving the way for the appointment of their members to the Transitional National Legislative Assembly and the Council of States.

By December, President Salva Kiir had reconstituted and appointed members of nine state assemblies, and while we commend the parties for achieving the required 35 per cent benchmark for appointing women in Central Equatoria state, a requirement of the Revitalized Peace Agreement, we note the shortfall in all the other states.

I welcome the adoption of the Constitution-making process bill by the Council of Ministers. Once approved by Parliament, it will guide the permanent constitution-making process — a prerequisite for elections.

We are encouraged by the conclusion today of a three-day conference on transitional justice. It provided an open forum for dialogue between State and non-State actors in identifying strategies for enhancing restorative justice and accountability.

On 4 November, the Government held its first ever interactive dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Separately, I note the 30 November launch of the joint committee to implement the action plan for the armed forces on addressing conflict-related sexual violence.

Furthermore, I welcome the Government's decision of November to rejoin the Sant'Egidio process and encourage the holdout groups, especially the National Salvation Front, to join the process without any preconditions.

The steps taken so far in the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement are welcome. However, they are not sufficient if the momentum to realize peace is to be sustained. The failure of the parties to reach an agreement on command ratios have promoted a fracturing of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-

IO). Since my last briefing, mediation efforts that began in Khartoum — seeking to bridge the divide on chapter II issues and to heal the SPLM/A-IO split with its Kitgwan faction — have been undermined by the political crisis in the Sudan.

Let me underline that Government bears a special responsibility to facilitate the establishment of the necessary unified forces, including through the provision of resources. This is only an initial step in a complex but essential process of constructing a national army that that is a symbol and mirror of the unity of its people.

On 8 December 2021, I met with President Salva Kiir and I raised concerns over the reduced momentum in implementation of the peace agreement. I am happy to announce that after our meeting, the Joint Defence Board announced progress on the implementation of the transitional security arrangements. Funds have now been released to the Joint Defence Board for screening soldiers at training centres preliminary to the graduation of unified forces. The delivery of food and medicines has also commenced.

The President has announced that elections will be held in 2023. While I note that members of the presidency are yet to coalesce around an electoral timetable, the next year presents a dramatic challenge if South Sudan is to graduate through its transition. It will require both technical and political preparations, including an agreement on the Constitution, as well as on the rules governing the election.

We expect the domestic political temperature to rise as elections draw closer. I am therefore deeply concerned at the restrictions on civic space, including in response to calls for non-violent demonstrations by the People's Coalition for Civil Action. I urge the Government to promote the fundamental human rights of all South Sudanese, including freedom of expression, to create a platform for democratic dialogue in a free and fair electoral process.

I am also concerned by the slow operationalization of Parliament. As the year concludes and South Sudan heads towards a legislative recess, there is risk of a logjam on critical bills to facilitate constitution-making, elections preparations, the establishment of national justice institutions, adopting the national budget and progressing public financial reforms. While a number of laws have been drafted and passed by the Council of Ministers, the standing committees to consider and

debate these bills are yet to be established. UNMISS and partners have already intensified support for legislative and constitution-making processes, including capacity-building support for women parliamentarians, the newly formed youth caucus and the national constitutional amendment committee.

We also continue to work on building the justice chain, including through the deployment of mobile courts, without which our efforts to promote criminal accountability and contain extrajudicial killings would be difficult.

It is clear that there are headwinds in all of these tasks. I call on the parties to muster a renewed sense of political will and build trust so as to avoid a state of paralysis and, in a worst-case scenario, a collapse of the peace agreement.

I am also concerned that multiple regional crises are reducing the political bandwidth for international attention on South Sudan, at a time when international support is urgently needed. This concern was shared at a recent conference held in Uganda, attended by key stakeholders and guarantors, including several Special Envoys on South Sudan. The subsequent decision of the President of Uganda to host a South Sudan leadership retreat in January is welcome and should be supported in order to give impetus to the peace process.

In regard to our concern over the protection of civilians, the permanent ceasefire is largely holding. In fact, partly because of UNMISS, the number of civilian casualties attributed to localized violence has been roughly halved this year, compared to the same period last year. Civilians still bear the brunt of conflict in South Sudan, perpetuating cycles of trauma and revenge that undermines the prospects for longer-term reconciliation and societal healing.

The Mission is doing all that it can, within our capabilities, to support the Government in its primary responsibility to protect civilians. Our concern is to rise above fire-fighting modalities and build more durable solutions to conflict.

The Mission continues to adapt its strategy of responding to conflict hotspots in an integrated manner, including through the flexible deployment of what we call temporary operating bases. These bases have enabled the Mission to deploy rapidly to hotspots for conflict resolution and create conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance, such as in

Tambura, Western Equatoria, or to provide a stabilizing environment, as in Warrap and Jonglei, or to provide a security umbrella for the safe and dignified return of displaced people, as in Koch, Unity state.

Meanwhile, UNMISS continues to oversee the protection-of-civilians site in Malakal. Planning continues for its eventual redesignation, but only once political and security dynamics allow. I am pleased to report a continuous reduction in restrictions on UNMISS patrols since the formation of a high-level coordination committee between the Mission and the Government of South Sudan earlier this year.

The briefing by the Director of the Coordination Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which the Council will hear shortly, will highlight the dire humanitarian situation, which in turn is reflected in anger and frustration of a politically and economically marginalized youth.

Recently, I visited Bentiu, in Unity state, which is reeling from the worst floods in six decades. The situation is truly shocking. Flood waters are not receding, and hundreds of thousands of people are displaced and in desperate need of assistance. I commend the tireless efforts of our UNMISS peacekeepers alongside the humanitarian community. All have been working around the clock since September to construct over 70 kilometres of dykes to keep the menacing water at bay and prevent a disastrous collapse of infrastructure.

All of that demonstrates South Sudan's high vulnerability to climate change. I can share with the Council that a newly established UNMISS-United Nations country team working group on climate change and security will develop integrated strategies to address such climate-related security risks.

In the broader Horn of Africa region, which is facing complex political, security and humanitarian challenges, it is essential now more than ever to ensure that South Sudan remains stable. I am pleased to mention that, during my engagements with the African Union Commission and the African Union Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan in Addis Ababa last week, there were strong commitments made to re-engage, at the highest levels, in support of the peace process.

What is at stake here is the continued viability of the Revitalized Peace Agreement. Allow me to reaffirm the commitment of UNMISS and the entire United

Nations family to the Government and the people of South Sudan to that endeavour.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Haysom for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Saeed.

**Ms. Saeed:** I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council today.

Since the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs briefed the Council in September (see S/PV.8859), the humanitarian situation in South Sudan has deteriorated. Special Representative Haysom just outlined the political and security dynamics. I will focus on the drivers of humanitarian needs, the response by humanitarian partners and the action required to alleviate the suffering of millions of South Sudanese as we move into 2022.

The people of South Sudan have faced the highest levels of food insecurity since independence in 2011 and the renewed conflict, which began in 2013. According to the latest Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, between April and July of this year, at the height of the lean season, 7.2 million people were estimated to be at crisis phase — Integrated Phase Classification 3 or above — 2.4 million of whom are at the emergency phase — IPC 4 or above. There are also 108,000 people in six counties — namely, Akobo, Pibor, Aweil South, Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South — facing catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity. In five of those locations, conflict was the major driver of displacement leading to the loss of lives, livelihoods and assets.

Increased food insecurity, illness and poor access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation heightened malnutrition levels among children under 5 years old. About 1.4 million children under the age of 5 and 480,000 pregnant or lactating women were estimated to be acutely malnourished and in need of treatment in 2021 — the highest number since 2013.

Insecurity and subnational violence continued to disrupt the lives of hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese. According to the International Organization for Migration's displacement tracking matrix, around 300,000 people were newly displaced between March and October of this year, bringing the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to 2 million.

Women and girls continue to face extreme levels of gender-based violence, exacerbated by armed conflict, organized violence, coronavirus disease restrictions and forced displacement due to flooding. Much of the violence goes underreported, with limited response services available to survivors.

In Tambura county, Western Equatoria, while the situation is improving with security provided by the Government, 13 of the 20 health facilities are not operational due to violence by armed actors, and only eight out of 53 schools in the county are open. In the Maganis area of Upper Nile, fighting between the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition has displaced people, including into the Sudan. Around 70,000 South Sudanese have crossed over into the Sudan this year, driven by food insecurity and violence.

The effects of climate change are also being felt in South Sudan, with flooding and dry conditions disrupting livelihoods and food security and increasing the risk of displacement and violence, as we have also just heard from Special Representative Haysom. Since May, humanitarian needs have been exacerbated by catastrophic flooding for the third consecutive year, impacting some 835,000 people in 33 of 78 counties. More than 80 per cent of affected people are in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states.

Nyawuora, a 40-year-old mother of nine children, is one of many whose life and livelihood are devastated. She moved to the Bentiu IDP camp in July with her family after floods destroyed their house and all their belongings. Nyawuora and her children are now depending on humanitarian assistance to survive. She is one of some 19,000 people displaced by flooding who have sought refuge alongside town residents and more than 100,000 internally displaced people in the IDP camp. In what is essentially an expanding city, tens of thousands of people are already facing a hepatitis-E outbreak and the serious risks of an increase in water-borne diseases due to poor sanitation conditions.

Conflict, as well as violence directed at aid workers and their assets, operational interference, bureaucratic impediments, and physical access challenges continue to impact the humanitarian response. South Sudan remains one of the most dangerous places in the world for aid workers. After several days of violence in Leer, Unity state, a nutrition aid worker was killed a few days

ago. The total number of aid workers killed in 2021 so far is four.

Following earlier suspension due to the interference by armed youth, humanitarian partners were able to resume aid operations in Pibor and Renk as a result of intense engagement by members from the community and the Government. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan facilitated humanitarian access through long-range patrols and the setting up of temporary operating bases in several locations, as per the examples provided by Special Representative Haysom.

Humanitarian partners assisted some 5 million people across the country between January and October with food, medical and nutritional care, water and sanitation, protection support and shelter. Humanitarian partners also conducted a massive multisectoral response that averted famine. More than 500,000 people across the six food-insecure counties were provided with food assistance, protection, health and water, hygiene and sanitation services. More than 46,000 children under the age of 5 and pregnant and lactating women received therapeutic nutritional services.

To enable that response, humanitarian partners were compelled to reprogramme in-country support, which saw the reduction of food rations to IDPs, refugees and communities at crisis level — IPC 3 — outside of the six at-risk counties.

The delivery of adequate basic services, particularly health, education and the expansion of social protection, is vital to sustain livelihoods, strengthen resilience and enable the conditions for those who wish to return to their areas of origin.

However, we must also realize that, for many of the now 2 million people who have been displaced over the years, return might not be an option. The possibility that many internally displaced persons — including those in former protection-of-civilian sites such as Bentiu and Malakal — might choose to remain could see those sites becoming permanent urban or suburban settlements. That needs to be recognized, and steps should be taken to support people wherever they chose to stay. Long-term planning will be required to address this new phenomenon.

The scope and the scale of the humanitarian needs and the challenges I have outlined are outstripping our ability to adequately respond. Although the 2021 South Sudan humanitarian response plan is funded at

about 68 per cent, that belies the fact that many sectors, such as health, nutrition, protection, water, hygiene and sanitation, are severely underfunded.

The pooled fund mechanisms are playing an essential role, with \$35 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund and \$69 million from the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund provided this year. I thank those donors that have supported us so generously this year. More is needed by more donors to act as champions for South Sudan and to provide early funding to the 2022 humanitarian response plan, which requires \$1.7 billion to support 8.4 million people in need.

In conclusion, I wish to highlight three key points.

First, adequate and early funding is required to sustain the gains made so far, particularly in averting catastrophic food insecurity levels.

Secondly, the Government and non-State actors need to abide by their obligation to facilitate safe and unhindered access and to protect aid workers.

Lastly, while the implementation of the peace process has brought about some positive impact, it remains slow. And I think Special Representative of the Secretary-General referred to the momentum of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. As such, violence continues to erupt, and all actors with influence must work to ensure the protection of civilians across South Sudan.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Saeed for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Pham.

**Mr. Pham** (Viet Nam): On behalf of His Excellency Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, I have the honour to brief the members of the Security Council since the Chair's previous briefing to the Council on 15 December 2020 (see S/2020/1237). In my statement, I intend to provide a brief overview of the developments in the Committee since the beginning of 2021, notably the visit by the Chair and his delegation to South Sudan in mid-November of this year.

To date, the Committee has met in person on three occasions during informal consultations, and also on three occasions in closed video-conferences (VTC).

On 29 January, during a closed video-conference, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts, in a meeting open to South Sudan and regional States, regarding the Panel's interim report (see S/2020/1141).

On 26 February, during a closed VTC, the Committee received a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

On 26 March, again during a closed VTC, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts on the Panel's final report (see S/2021/365), which was submitted pursuant to paragraph 18 of resolution 2521 (2020), and discussed the recommendations contained therein.

On 18 June, the Committee held its first in-person meeting since February 2020, during which the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts, in a meeting open to South Sudan and regional States, concerning the Panel's final report.

On 15 October, during informal consultations, the Committee received a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Finally, on 2 December, during informal consultations, the Chair briefed the Committee on his most recent visit to South Sudan, which took place from 16 to 20 November.

In relation to the Chair's visit to South Sudan, the Chair and his delegation met with relevant stakeholders in South Sudan, including His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit, First Vice-President Riek Machar Teny, Vice-Presidents, the Speaker of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, members of the Council of Ministers, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, diplomatic missions and civil society representatives, including women's groups and religious leaders, both in Juba and Wau.

Most of the discussions focused on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, in particular chapter 2, on the security arrangements, as well as the implementation of the key benchmarks set by the Security Council in paragraph 2 of resolution 2577 (2021), in which the Council requested the South Sudan authorities to report to the Committee no later than 15 April 2022 on the progress achieved.

Since the beginning of 2021, the Committee has received one exemption request to the arms embargo, which was granted. Also, two exemptions requests were received concerning the travel ban and assets freeze measures, all of which were granted.

In conclusion, the Chair of the Committee would like to take this opportunity to express his gratitude to the members of the Committee, South Sudan and regional countries for their active engagement in the work of the Committee under his chairmanship. He would also like to thank the Secretariat, particularly the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch, for its invaluable assistance with the everyday work of the Chair. He wishes all the best to the incoming Chair of the Committee.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Pham for his briefing.

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

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom and Ms. Saeed for their presentations. And I thank my colleague from Viet Nam for the briefing, and I welcome South Sudan's presence in our discussion today.

We want to begin by conveying our deepest appreciation to the troops, police and civilians who serve, under great personal risk, to protect civilians in South Sudan.

Today I would like to address three aspects of the situation in South Sudan: the humanitarian needs, the subnational violence and the erosion of civic space, and the slow progress towards implementing the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

First, the catastrophic floods in South Sudan have endangered over 850,000 people. When that flooding is paired with food insecurity, ongoing violence, mass displacement and a global pandemic, it creates a dire humanitarian situation. We encourage the international community to support the United Nations and humanitarian partners and address gaps in humanitarian funding and resources. We also urge national and subnational levels to do everything possible to facilitate humanitarian access and protect workers who deliver aid.

Secondly, the United States remains deeply concerned by the ongoing subnational violence in Upper Nile, Unity, Warrap, Lakes, Jonglei and Western and Central Equatoria states. The violence has led to looting, mass displacement and hundreds of civilian deaths. We are disturbed by human rights abuses reported in Lakes, Warrap and Tambura, including killings on the basis of ethnicity.

The recent report by an international non-governmental organization detailed horrifying attacks on civilians, including the murder and mutilation of pregnant women, the killing of the elderly and disabled and the murder of civilian captives. The Government of South Sudan must hold those responsible accountable — not only those who perpetrated these abuses, but also those who mobilized and ordered the fighters to carry out these gruesome attacks. The Government must take measures to protect civilians, humanitarian and development workers, journalists, internally displaced persons, women and children.

The United States is also concerned about the eroding civic space in South Sudan, which has forced human rights defenders and other activists to flee the country. The targeting of civil society discourages participation in the participatory processes outlined in the 2018 agreement, including transitional justice, constitutional development and preparations for elections. We call on the Government of South Sudan to respect the rights of all citizens in accordance with the Transitional Constitution.

Thirdly, and finally, it has been more than three years since the signing of the peace agreement, and its signatories have been slow in making progress. We urge the Government of South Sudan to fully implement the agreement. That means swiftly implementing an inclusive constitution-drafting process, public financial management reform, transitional security arrangements and transitional justice mechanisms, including the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, in order to ensure free and fair elections in 2023.

We stress that elections need to be preceded by an inclusive, transparent constitution-drafting process. The result should be free and fair elections that reflect the will of all South Sudanese, including women, youth, people with disabilities, displaced persons and members of all political groups.

Let me be clear — the provisions of the arms embargo are not responsible for delays in the training

and graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces. The purpose is to create space to advance the peace process and for South Sudanese civil society to participate in its own democracy and governance. The arms embargo helps protect civilians by curbing the flow of weapons into the country.

Should the South Sudanese Government require any arms or materiel in order to implement the peace agreement, there are clear exemption procedures in place. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, received only one arms-embargo exemption request this year, as Council members just heard, and that request was granted.

We regret that the Panel of Experts could not participate in the Committee's trip last month because the slate of proposed candidates has been on hold since June. The Panel's reporting is vital to the work of the Committee.

The United States remains committed to the people of South Sudan and to working closely with the transitional Government, our fellow Council members and all stakeholders to enable peace and prosperity for the country and the region.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): It is an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council — Kenya, the Niger and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1). We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Ms. Saeed, Director of the Coordination Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and His Excellency Mr. Hai Anh Pham, on behalf of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, for their detailed briefings. We welcome the presence of the representative of South Sudan. We also note that the Security Council has been receiving periodic written reports from the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, for which we are grateful.

Today's meeting takes place exactly one month following the visit by members of the Security Council to South Sudan. We extend our gratitude to all those who made the visit a success, especially the warm hospitality of the people and the Government of South Sudan, Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy and his team, as well as the support of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Secretariat.

Furthermore, we appreciate the opportunity to obtain first-hand experience of the situation on the ground and engage directly with relevant stakeholders, including His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit, members of the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly and the Council of Ministers, UNMISS, diplomatic missions and civil society representatives, including women's groups and religious leaders.

The A3+1 welcomes the ongoing progress in South Sudan and recognizes the existing challenges and opportunities, most of which are reflected in the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2021/1015). We also offer the following perspectives.

First, the advances on the political front during the past three years following the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan are promising. In that respect, we urge all relevant stakeholders to continue with the full implementation of the revitalized agreement and underscore the importance of the principle of inclusivity in representation in governance institutions, including the minimum 35 per cent quota for women's participation, along with youth representation.

We also commend the Government for the reconstitution and appointment of members of the State assemblies in various regions, as well as the Council of Ministers for the review and adoption of the Constitution-Making Process Bill 2020/2021. The adoption of the Bill is a first and significant step. We encourage the authorities to make headway in fully operationalizing the Transitional National Legislative Assembly in order to ensure that the permanent constitution-making process can move forward and that other critical legislations are enacted.

Secondly, we are pleased that the permanent ceasefire continues to hold, but we note worrisome incidents of ethnic and intercommunal clashes in some parts of the country and tensions among factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition. It remains necessary that security measures be strengthened and enhanced, specifically advancing transitional security arrangements, including the unification of the armed forces and the graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces, as well as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

Thirdly, the security challenges cannot be delinked from the prevailing socioeconomic and humanitarian



difficulties. The dire humanitarian situation has been exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the adverse effects of climate change, which have resulted in devastating flash floods that contributed to new mass displacements, waterborne diseases and increasing food insecurity. Those challenges underscore the deeply enmeshed root causes of South Sudan's crises and the need for urgent, yet durable, responses and solutions. Accordingly, we applaud the continuing efforts of the Government to tackle those underlying issues and the support provided by the international community.

The aforementioned also leads us to repeat our call for full respect of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and compliance with the status-of-forces agreement. We commend all humanitarian partners, agencies and their workers for their efforts in delivering assistance to those in need, and we urge the Government to ensure their protection so that they can conduct their work in a secure and safe environment. Similarly, we call for the consideration of the lifting of all sanctions and other unilateral coercive measures in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic to enable the Government to meet the people's needs.

South Sudan's transition is at a very important stage, and it will benefit tremendously from the inclusion of those who remain on the periphery. The A3+1 therefore looks forward to the non-signatories resolving differences and joining the peace process. We also reiterate our full support for the meaningful work of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Community of Sant'Egidio to assist in that regard.

Having recently commemorated its tenth anniversary of independence, South Sudan continues to demonstrate its commitment to achieving the aspirations of its people. Undoubtedly, structural problems linger, and challenges lie ahead. As the country transitions to peace, accelerating and scaling-up the implementation of the revitalized agreement remains key, especially advancing decisively with regard to security and transitional justice arrangements.

In the area of transitional justice, we are satisfied that the Cabinet approved the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and believe that it is of the utmost importance to assist the country in implementing chapter V of the Agreement vis-à-vis truth, reconciliation and reparations. The establishment

of truth-seeking mechanisms and providing reparations for victims will help to reconcile and unite the South Sudanese people.

The continued engagement and support of the international community, regional organizations and South Sudanese partners, in particular the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, are also crucial in carrying forward the common objective of helping South Sudan to close important gaps that conspire against its peace, sustainable development and stability.

We also take this opportunity to commend and reiterate our support for UNMISS in its instrumental role in promoting South Sudan's long-term stability and socioeconomic development. To be very clear, the Government holds the primary responsibility for protecting civilians. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the significant and complementary role that UNMISS has played in the areas of protection and security. We also remain confident that UNMISS will be able to implement its three-year strategic vision. However, that can be achieved only if the Mission is made to be fit for purpose, including through concrete support towards the implementation of the revitalized agreement.

In conclusion, Kenya, the Niger, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirm our commitment to continue accompanying the sisterly nation of South Sudan in its journey towards lasting peace, sustainable development, stability and prosperity.

**Ms. Byrne Nason** (Ireland): First, I want to join others in thanking Mr. Nicholas Haysom and Ms. Wafaa Saeed for their briefings this morning. I think they were refreshingly clear and were illustrative of both the challenges overcome and those remaining, which are concerning. I would also like welcome our colleagues from South Sudan to the table today. I also express our appreciation to Viet Nam for its briefing on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, and for the excellent chairmanship of the Committee for the past two years. Its leadership and collegiality were very much appreciated.

While I will not delve into the issue of sanctions here, it would be remiss of me not to mention the recent visit of the Sanctions Committee to South Sudan. The main message relayed during that visit by interlocutors — at all levels — is that the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the

Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan has been too slow. We have heard it consistently in this Chamber over the past few months, and we heard it again today. I think that we can all see that this needs to change.

Slow implementation of the peace process, as described in concerning detail again this morning by the Special Representative, is contributing to catastrophic outcomes. We are concerned about the persistent pattern of subnational violence and the impaired security apparatus. We regret the culture of impunity around conflict-related sexual violence and serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions. These are facilitated by a lack of sufficiently robust accountability mechanisms and inadequate support for survivors. They urgently need to be addressed. Slow implementation also inflicts additional trauma on a population that has already endured more than enough. It also compounds efforts to address a dire humanitarian situation, as we heard this morning — now exacerbated by record levels of flooding.

We know that around the world climate-related risks directly translate into peace and security threats. The prolonged and intense flooding experienced in South Sudan this year, the worst in decades, is a case in point. It has led to population displacement, the disruption of agriculture and altered cattle migration patterns. All of that risks accentuating or provoking violence. Ireland welcomes the role of United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in engaging in innovative community peacebuilding measures, which can mitigate such risks and help to prevent violence. We are also proud to have contributed to efforts to strengthen the Organization's capacity to address those climate-related security risks in South Sudan through our support for a climate security adviser with the Climate Security Mechanism.

In September (see S/PV.8859), Ireland emphasized the need to look to the future in order to grant the people of South Sudan, and its youth in particular, what they should legitimately expect — the freedom to protest in safety, to go to school, to work and, above all, to thrive. It is time for those with power, authority and resources in the country to deliver for the citizens of South Sudan. It is certainly high time for all to move from rhetoric to reality.

Looking to the future, the holding of inclusive and democratic elections in South Sudan is a welcome prospect, but one that is reliant on the full implementation and operationalization of the peace

agreement. While the reconstitution of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly is a positive step in that regard, its inaction to date has been a disappointment, illustrating that token implementation does not work.

Not long ago, the Council marked South Sudan's tenth anniversary since independence with statements reflecting the great hopes of a nation. Those hopes can transform into the better future we all strive for, but only when trust in the State exists. However, trust must be earned. Through delivering on basic needs and social services and protecting and promoting human rights, we know that South Sudan can move forward.

Finally, I wish to affirm Ireland's praise of, and gratitude for, the work of UNMISS in taking the first crucial steps in readying the country for elections, and I wish to assure the Special Representative that we will stand by him and his team as he face the challenges ahead in meeting that important responsibility.

**Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Representative Haysom and Ms. Wafaa Saeed for their briefings this morning. We also warmly congratulate Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy and his team for their diligence in leading the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015), concerning South Sudan, as well as for their leadership in the Committee's successful mission to South Sudan last month, despite the inexplicable and persistent obstacles with regard to the situation of the Panel of Experts.

Mexico recognizes the important role played by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in the coordination of the strategic vision and for the support it is providing to conduct elections at the end of the transition period. We will closely follow the progress in the establishment of the electoral assistance team, and we hope that an inclusive and legitimate organizational process will lead to free, fair, credible and peaceful elections.

In that regard, we note that the establishment of the specialized committees is necessary for the Transitional National Legislative Assembly to move forward and adopt the law for the constitution-making process, which is a prerequisite for holding elections. We call for increased efforts to ensure that the National Assembly and state assemblies operate without impediments and with a minimum 35 per cent women's participation.

Progress must also be made in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, which has thus far been minimal and selective. We call on the Government of South Sudan to accelerate measures, particularly in the area of security, such as the unification of forces and aspects of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. Progress is also needed in passing legislation to make available the necessary resources to implement those provisions.

In short, claiming to justify delays in the implementation of the Agreement by invoking the arms embargo merely casts doubt on the Government's sincerity in complying with the Revitalized Peace Agreement.

As mentioned previously, South Sudan is unfortunately prone to constant flash floods, which this year have affected nearly 850,000 people. The magnitude of these events makes recovery impossible before the next rainy season hits the country, which triggers a domino effect of growing numbers of internally displaced persons, worsening food insecurity and clearly increasing disease. That of course exacerbates intercommunity tensions and clashes over scarce resources.

Precisely because of the seriousness of this situation, as Ms. Saeed has explained to us, the increase in the number of humanitarian-access-related incidents is alarming. We deeply regret the threats of destruction and looting of humanitarian supplies and resources in Pibor, Renk and Tonj. We urge the authorities to redouble their efforts aimed at ensuring the security of and unhindered access for humanitarian personnel.

In conclusion, my country expresses its concern about the reports of extrajudicial executions in Lakes and Warrap states, as well as widespread acts of sexual violence and human rights violations. We demand that the authorities respect the human rights standards and norms set forth in the international instruments to which South Sudan is a party and strengthen the rule of law in general.

The progress in setting up the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing is certainly a positive sign, and we encourage further progress on this and the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan. In the end, the creation of spaces in which the plurality of South Sudanese people can express their

rights freely and without fear of reprisal will be vital in the run-up to the electoral process.

**Mr. Raguttahalli** (India): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Director of the Coordination Division, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Hai Anh Pham for his overview of the developments in the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) since last year. Vietnamese Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy led the Committee for last two years with distinction and conviction. I would like to put on record my delegation's appreciation for Ambassador Quy and his team. I also welcome the presence of the representative of South Sudan at today's meeting.

The last three months have seen notable progress in South Sudan. The Council of Ministers reviewed and adopted the Constitution-Making Process Bill 2020/2021. Now, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA) must consider the Bill. New members of the TNLA have been appointed, and 9 out of 10 ten state assemblies have been reconstituted — all of them, except the state assembly for Western Bahr el-Ghazal. We welcome these developments and hope that, in the coming months, the TNLA will move forward with critical next steps, establish specialized committees and frame legislation related to election preparation and the Constitution-making process. We also note that, during the reporting period, political violence has decreased, and the parties have been, by and large, faithful to the revitalized agreement. It is also encouraging that the economic situation has remained stable, and that economic activity has recovered across the country.

A visit by the 2206 Committee to South Sudan last month, under the chairmanship of Viet Nam, provided an opportunity to better understand the situation on the ground in the country. South Sudan has clearly made positive progress in the last few years, which is also evident in the increased economic activity in Juba. We continue to underscore that the Security Council must do all it can to promote and consolidate the progress made so far. In keeping with the Revitalized Peace Agreement signed three years ago, the end goal remains conducting free, fair and credible elections in the country.

On the security front, it is encouraging that the ceasefire continues to hold. Localized violence persists, although it has decreased by 53 per cent compared to

last year. However, persistent violence underlines the importance of the early establishment of the unified command of the military and the graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces, which is a critical aspect of the Agreement. The implementation of the transitional security arrangements remains critical for the electoral process at the end of the transitional period, as is the early resumption of the Rome mediation efforts by the Sant'Egidio community with the Agreement's non-signatories. Early action on these aspects is important.

The humanitarian situation has been affected by recent floods. The international community, including the United Nations, needs to step up its efforts to bridge the resource and capacity gaps faced by the Government. The 2021 humanitarian response plan has a shortfall of nearly 33 per cent, amounting to \$550 million.

With regard to the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), we have noted the improved communication between UNMISS and the Government. This development is having a positive impact on the facilitation of Mission's operations, which is evident from the decrease in status-of-forces-agreement violations. We also take note of the integrated cross-mission approach, including the setting up of temporary operational bases.

Since the Mission's establishment a decade ago, India has been one of the largest troop contributors to UNMISS. At present, we have nearly 2,300 troops serving in the country. The Indian contingent in UNMISS is also contributing to the sustainable development and welfare of the people of South Sudan. Earlier this month, our battalions organized computer training and veterinary assistance camps in the places of their deployment.

In this transformative phase, we believe that South Sudan requires the wholehearted support of the international community, including from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and the United Nations. On the bilateral front, India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan, visited South Sudan on 20 to 22 October 2021. He held discussions with South Sudan's leadership, including the President and Foreign Minister, on advancing bilateral relations, particularly with regard to trade and investment. India is committed to working with the Government of South Sudan in its quest for peace, progress and prosperity.

**Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia):** I want to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Ms. Saeed, and Ambassador Pham for their briefings.

I would like to start by commending the improved overall communication between the Government and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the positive actions by the Government designed to advance the transitional-justice agenda. We hope that the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan as well as the Compensation and Reparation Authority will follow suit, as stipulated in the Revitalized Peace Agreement.

For the entirety of our membership in the Security Council, we have been asking for the swifter implementation of the Peace Agreement. It is still delayed, and this eventually makes the leaders lose credibility. The reunification of armed forces provided for in the Peace Agreement, which is crucial to a stable South Sudan, is totally stalled due to the huge level of mistrust among the political actors of the country and the militia-led conflicts. We need to see more positive developments in reality, not just on paper. Contrary to what some believe, delays in the graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces are not related to the arms embargo. There are provisions in resolution 2428 (2018) that allow the Government to move on with the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Although the parliament was inaugurated on 30 August, it has made minimal progress so far, which in turn delays the passage of critical legislation. The parliament's work is of crucial importance, if South Sudan is to have free, fair and credible elections.

With regard to future elections, the crackdown on civic space and the harassment of human rights activists are unacceptable. All civil society organizations must be able to express their views freely and without fear of retaliation. We remain concerned about the extrajudicial executions carried out in Warrap and Lakes states. We call on the Government to investigate those killings, and to do so in compliance with its international obligations under international human rights law. We need to see improvements in the human rights situation within the country, especially concerning conflict-related sexual violence.

Sadly, the humanitarian situation is catastrophic, with more than 60 per cent of the population in need of humanitarian aid. The country is experiencing its worst food crisis since its independence, with thousands of

people facing famine-like conditions in several areas of the country. Record floods and the socioeconomic impact of the coronavirus disease are further exacerbating the dire situation. We continue to call on the Government to better protect the humanitarian workers, as they are fighting for the lives of many South Sudanese.

In conclusion, I want to thank Nicholas Haysom, UNMISS and the relevant United Nations agencies for their invaluable work in South Sudan. Moreover, my thanks also go to Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield and the United States for their penholdership and Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy and his team for their impeccable leadership as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): Let me thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom and Ms. Saeed for their briefings and tireless work of their teams in and on South Sudan. Let me join other colleagues in thanking Viet Nam for its leadership of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan, including today's briefing and the recent visit.

I would like to make three key points in response to what we heard earlier.

First, as we have heard from the briefers, the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan remains too slow. We understand the challenges, but the lack of progress has real and grave consequences for the people of South Sudan. The United Kingdom joins others in calling on politicians to redouble their efforts in 2022.

Recent progress on public financial management shows what can be achieved when South Sudan works in partnership with the international community. We now urge the Government to adopt the delayed annual budget. Improving economic transparency and tackling corruption will support South Sudanese livelihoods and will help make the country more attractive to international investors.

The United Kingdom is pleased that the graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces is imminent. We do, however, reject the argument that the arms embargo was responsible for the lengthy delays in graduating its members. The exemptions procedure exists to ensure that the arms embargo does not constitute an obstacle

to South Sudan's legitimate security needs. In noting the briefing by the representative of Viet Nam, let me underline the importance of unblocking nominations to the Panel of Experts so that the Committee can fulfil its mandate.

Secondly, with regard to human rights, the situation in South Sudan remains of grave concern. As we have heard today, civilians, journalists and civil society organizations continue to face restrictions on their freedom of speech and association. Silencing those voices is not the way to deliver peace and stability, nor is it conducive to a pathway towards transparent and inclusive elections. We are also disturbed by continuing credible reports of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated in South Sudan. South Sudan's action plan on conflict-related sexual violence for the armed forces must urgently move from planning to implementation.

Lastly, I underline the urgency of strengthening the response to South Sudan's severe humanitarian crisis. We have heard today how climate shocks are compounding already-high levels of humanitarian need. I urge South Sudan's leaders to take immediate action to tackle barriers to access and threats to humanitarian workers.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating our call on South Sudan's leaders to implement their commitments. Our sincere hope is that, with the support of the international community, they will show their people in 2022 that they are serious about delivering progress for all.

**Mrs. Gasri** (France) (*spoke in French*): I too thank Nicholas Haysom and Wafaa Saeed for their briefings and Viet Nam for its work at the helm of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan over the past two years.

I will focus on three points.

We regret that the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan has lost momentum over the past months. There has been some progress, such as the appointment of nine state legislative assemblies by President Salva Kiir, the convening of a governors' forum in Juba and a reduction in the restriction of movement of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The work of the Parliament has yet to begin, although several priority bills await to be considered and adopted.

The implementation of security arrangements also remains stalled. We regret the fact that the arms embargo is being used as a pretext to justify the delays. The command of the unified forces must be formed without delay and the soldiers must complete their training.

We take note of the UNMISS briefing on its strategy for supporting the security sector reform process. France stands ready to support those efforts, including through the implementation of innovative methods for the reintegration of former combatants. We are also poised to strengthen the technical assistance mandate of UNMISS, provided that the Government meets the goals set by the Security Council.

The authorities must redouble their efforts in view of the general elections. It is imperative to immediately put in place the relevant security arrangements and constitutional and legislative framework for elections, operationalize the national electoral commission and allocate the necessary resources for the holding of elections.

We call on all parties to prioritize unity. The fragmentation of some of the signatory parties to the revitalized peace agreement poses a dangerous threat to adhering to the ceasefire. We welcome the efforts of regional actors in supporting the peace process. In particular, we encourage the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union, Kenya and Uganda to remain engaged in facilitating dialogue among the Southern Sudanese parties.

My last point is that international humanitarian law and human rights law must be upheld. We expect the South Sudanese authorities to guarantee human rights, in particular the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly. We are also concerned about the extrajudicial executions carried out in Warrap and Lakes states and call on the South Sudanese authorities to fight against impunity for the perpetrators of those violations.

Lastly, we condemn attacks on humanitarian and medical personnel. Those violent acts must not go unpunished, and it is important that the Council hold their perpetrators accountable.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing. We support his work and the activities of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. We listened to

the representative of Viet Nam report on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan and Ms. Wafaa Saeed of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the humanitarian situation in that country. We also welcome the representative of the South Sudan to today's meeting.

We paid close attention to the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/1015). The Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan continues to work. The country has appointed state assemblies and a bicameral parliament has been formed. A draft law on the Constitution has been prepared for consideration. We also welcome the South Sudanese leadership's commitment to holding elections in 2023.

At the same time, we believe that the security environment — which, despite the general decline in violence, remains challenging — will play a decisive role in achieving further results. We are concerned by reports of ongoing local armed clashes between Government troops and opposition formations; of a split in the camp of the South Sudanese Vice-President, Riek Machar, against whom a number of influential field commanders have spoken out; and of sporadic intercommunal armed conflict in parts of South Sudan. The situation in both Equatorias is of particular concern.

Given those circumstances, it is important to ensure the acceleration of the formation of the Necessary Unified Forces. We call on the non-signatories of the revitalized peace agreement to join in the State-building process. It is necessary to continue the dialogue initiated with the Kitgwang faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition, as well as the negotiation process through the Community of Sant'Egidio.

We believe that only the swift and full implementation of the agreements reached will help the parties to increase mutual trust and avoid the repetition of past mistakes. We pay tribute to the mediation efforts of Mr. Haysom, as well as the work of the African Union and the States members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to assist the country in the implementation of specific provisions of the peace agreements.

We are convinced that, as the situation in South Sudan returns to normal, a review of the sanctions regime in place against the country will be required. We

hope that, in order to ease the arms embargo, the South Sudanese authorities will be able to make significant progress in implementing the benchmarks stipulated in resolution 2577 (2021).

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm the readiness of our country to continue to provide the necessary support to South Sudan in the establishment of its statehood.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I thank Special Representative Haysom for his briefing and, not least, his efforts. I also thank Ms. Wafaa Saeed for updating us on the dire humanitarian situation and the representative of Viet Nam for his briefing on the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan. We welcome the representative of South Sudan to today's meeting.

Norway remains deeply concerned about the situation in South Sudan. People continue to suffer. The humanitarian situation has never been worse and is now aggravated by heavy flooding, as we heard in vivid detail from the briefers. Yet the main obstacle to a better future is the slow implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. A collapse of the peace agreement will have dire consequences for the whole region.

We welcome the recent reconstitution and appointment of members to most of the state assemblies and we urge the Government of South Sudan to finalize that process. We also welcome the President's decision to resume the Rome talks with non-signatories.

However, South Sudan's leaders must demonstrate real determination to make the whole agreement work. We stress the need to finalize the implementation of chapter 2 on security arrangements. It is also urgent to nominate members to the Transitional National Legislative Assembly's specialized committees and accelerate the passing of critical legislation. Delays will jeopardize the process towards free and fair elections. It is crucial that the constitutional reform process be inclusive and led and owned by the people of South Sudan.

Norway is deeply concerned by the shrinking political space in South Sudan. Attempts to silence civil society activists and the media through arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention run counter to the spirit of the peace agreement and the rule of law. Furthermore, the

full, equal and meaningful participation of women will be essential to building a peaceful and democratic South Sudan. They must be included in all spheres, from politics to decision-making and peacebuilding. In that respect, we continue to call for adherence to the 35 per cent quota for the representation of women at a minimum. We welcome the workshops organised by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for women members of Parliament.

Norway is deeply troubled by the many subnational conflicts, including in Tambura, Warrap and Jonglei. We reiterate that it is the Government's responsibility to protect all civilians. Violence is the main cause of the high levels of food insecurity and increased humanitarian need. Violence and conflict, including direct threats by youth groups, also prevent the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

It is deeply alarming that violations and abuses against children continue and have indeed increased in the third quarter of 2021. Those appalling acts have been committed by all parties, including Government security forces. We urge all parties to comply with their obligations under international law and make all efforts to end and prevent the six grave violations against children.

We welcome the protection of civilians and peacebuilding work of UNMISS, in particular through the temporary operating bases. We want to note the marked improvement in access for peacekeepers. Norway remains committed to supporting UNMISS and we are pleased that Ms. Christine Fossen was appointed UNMISS Police Commissioner.

Public financial management reforms aimed at curbing corruption and improving non-oil revenue are also crucial for the implementation of the peace agreement and international support. We call on the Government to invest more in key reforms that will bring transparency and accountability to the country's public finances.

Finally, the region continues to play an invaluable role in supporting peace efforts in South Sudan. We support Uganda's initiative to organize a leadership retreat. As we close out this year, let me place on record our hope that 2022 will bring improvements to the lives of the South Sudanese people.

**Mr. Pham** (Viet Nam): I thank Special Representative Haysom and Ms. Saeed for their

comprehensive briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representative of South Sudan in today's meeting.

Throughout the year 2021, South Sudan has continued to achieve progress in the peace process as the nation marks its tenth anniversary of independence and the third anniversary of the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. While various challenges remain, it must be recognized that, overall, South Sudan is one of the African issues on the Council's agenda that has seen positive developments in the past two years. In that connection, I wish to highlight the following points.

First, we call on the Government of South Sudan and the relevant parties to continue to advance the implementation of the revitalized agreement in order to sustain a peaceful transitional period, culminating in national elections. In that regard, it is important imperative to speed up the constitutional reform process and transitional security arrangements.

We note with appreciation the efforts of the Council of Ministers to review and adopt the constitution-making process bill and hope that it will soon be approved by the Transitional National Legislative Assembly. We also call on the Government to further facilitate women's participation and leadership to reach the 35 per cent goal in line with the peace agreement.

All relevant parties in South Sudan must continue to resolve their differences and engage in dialogue and confidence-building. We commend and call for the continued efforts of the United Nations, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other international partners in promoting peace and development in South Sudan. We look forward to the positive contribution of the UNMISS Integrated Electoral Assistance Team.

Secondly, it is critical to continue to uphold the permanent ceasefire. We urge the Government of South Sudan to make stronger efforts to effectively and sustainably address intercommunal violence, particularly in tackling the root causes of this issue. It is also critical to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers and facilities.

We commend and reiterate our support for the work of UNMISS, particularly in the protection of civilians.

Viet Nam will continue to actively contribute to the work of UNMISS and further promote the participation of our female peacekeepers in the Mission. We also commend the continued efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service in mine clearance and risk-education activities in the country.

Thirdly, it is critical to tackle the increasing economic and humanitarian challenges. It is concerning that the high level of food insecurity continues to affect more than 7.2 million South Sudanese — over half of the country's population. We call on the Government of South Sudan to continue to make its best efforts in promoting the livelihood of its population and on the international community to strengthen its support to South Sudan in averting food insecurity and addressing natural disasters and the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Finally, as this is the last time that Viet Nam will speak on this agenda item, we would like to stress the importance of regular review of the sanctions regime related to South Sudan, especially the implementation of the key benchmarks established in resolution 2577 (2021). Throughout last month's visit of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan, we were particularly encouraged by the willingness expressed by the Government of South Sudan to meet these benchmarks. It is our hope that the Government will continue to cooperate with the Committee and the Council in this process, which will create the basis for the Council to review and consider the lifting of measures in 2022.

To conclude, we would like to reiterate our strong support for the pursuit of peace, stability and development of South Sudan and its people.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom; Director of the Coordination Division, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Saeed; and Ambassador Hai Anh Pham for their briefings. As always, I welcome the presence of the representative South Sudan at today's meeting.

South Sudan has continued to make some progress during the recent period in implementing the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. President Kiir Mayardit has reconstituted State assemblies and the Government adopted the Constitution-Making Process Bill 2020/2021. We hope that the signatories to the agreement will strengthen engagement, enhance



mutual trust, resolve their differences properly through dialogue, expedite the implementation of the agreement and maintain political stability in South Sudan.

South Sudan faces a number of practical difficulties in implementing the agreement, which cannot be resolved in one fell swoop. The international community must demonstrate the necessary patience and provide the needed support and should try not to resort solely to finger-pointing and putting pressure on the parties concerned. China commends the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and the regional countries to facilitate the implementation of the agreement and calls on the international community to maintain its support for the work of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission.

During the reporting period, the ceasefire in South Sudan was able to hold by and large, but factional and intercommunal clashes continued to occur from time to time. The holdout groups that have yet to sign the revitalized agreement must renounce the use of violence and join the political process without delay. Unifying military forces and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process will help improve the security situation in the country. China calls on the international community to provide financial support, as is needed, for this purpose.

South Sudan's intercommunal conflict has a long history. It should be addressed appropriately through a holistic approach that combines prevention, mediation, justice and other means.

Armed conflict, floods and other events have conspired to drive a sustained rise in South Sudan's humanitarian needs, especially food insecurity. While increasing its humanitarian assistance, the international community should help South Sudan develop its economy and unleash its potential in agriculture, energy and other areas.

At the recent eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, China's President His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping unveiled nine projects to be implemented with Africa in such areas as health, poverty reduction, trade and investment, which we believe will lend fresh impetus to the development of South Sudan and other African countries. China calls on the countries concerned to lift their unilateral coercive measures against South Sudan without delay.

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), led by Special Representative Haysom, has done a huge amount of work to help implement the agreement and to protect civilians. In accordance with the statement by the President of the Security Council S/PRST/2021/20, the Secretary-General is requested to establish an Integrated Electoral Assistance Team for South Sudan's 2023 elections, which will be led by UNMISS. The elections are a matter of peace and stability for South Sudan, and the international community must fully respect the country's ownership in this respect.

During the reporting period, there was a significant reduction in violations of the status-of-forces agreement, which is ample proof that enhanced engagement and communication between United Nations missions and their host countries helps to create conditions that enable missions to implement their mandates.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Security Council should assess, on the basis of facts, how South Sudan has been implementing the benchmarks necessary for adjusting the sanctions measures, lift sanctions against South Sudan as soon as possible and help its Government strengthen capacity-building in its security sector.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now call upon the representative of South Sudan.

**Mr. Madut Agok** (South Sudan): At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. My delegation assures you of its support.

Allow me to welcome Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, to this briefing, as well as Ms. Wafaa Saeed and the representative of Viet Nam on his visit to South Sudan.

My delegation takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan, as issued in document S/2021/1015, of 7 December.

Since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, in 2018, the country has continued to experience relative peace and security in the greater part of the country.

It is common knowledge by now that the implementation process of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan is slow, but steady, with all the parties committed to its full implementation in both letter and spirit, notwithstanding factors that hinder its smooth implementation.

We are aware of the widespread intra- and intercommunal conflict that continues to adversely affect communities in the country. These conflicts are caused by different reasons and factors, among which was the vacuum by lack of state Governments because of delays in the implementation matrix for the distribution of states among the parties to the agreement, as agreed in the revitalized peace agreement. However, since the formation of the state Governments, such conflict has started to decline, especially special in the states of Warrap and Lakes.

Those positive changes were demonstrated by the statement of His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit in his closing remarks at the just-concluded governors' forum in Juba, when he congratulated His Excellency General Rin Tuony Mabor, the Governor of Lakes state, on the efforts that he had made for the pacification of the state, which allowed for the free movement of people and goods without fear.

The leadership of the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly is working on the formation of a leadership team in the Assembly, including the establishment of the leadership of the various committees and the subcommittees. Once those are finalized in due course, the Assembly will commence with the consideration of items in its order of business, as required by the revitalized agreement.

The reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, claiming that the implementation of the transitional security arrangements, especially the unification of forces and their deployment, was lacking in progress by, while the leadership of the armed forces is preparing to graduate the forces, needs more clarity. The processes are ongoing and will be completed once the arrangements are finalized.

Over the years, His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit has remained the main champion of peace, stability and reconciliation in South Sudan. He

remains a pillar of peace and compromises, not only within his party, but he also often extends his good offices to other parties whenever they have an issue. That was demonstrated by his involvement in resolving differences both in the Other Political Parties, a political organization that is a coalition of other parties to the agreement, over the selection of members of Parliament to the reconstituted Transitional National Legislative Assembly and within another coalition when it could not agree on who should be the preferred candidate for the position of Vice-President. Therefore, it is in that same understanding and spirit that His Excellency President Kiir Mayardit sent his envoy to meet with the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition Kitgwang faction to call for calm and restraint from measures that would inflict further suffering on the South Sudanese. It should therefore be seen more as a preventive measure than a violation of the terms of the peace agreement.

Climate change is a reality in South Sudan, with ever-longer periods of drought or heavy rainfall, which often result in flooding or a great deal of water coming from the islands, which causes a lot of floods. Those floods have caused a great deal of displacement and suffering to people in areas that have been affected. The ramifications of that will be greater than the Government can afford. We therefore call on the international community to assist the Government not only with the immediate needs of the affected population, but also with the long-term consequences through adaptation and mitigation measures. South Sudan is a strong participant in all climate change-related forums because our commitment is driven by the impact that we feel.

In conclusion, we call on the Security Council and the international community at large to stop sitting on the fence and cherry-picking, while it remains actively seized of the matter. The financial burden of the revitalized agreement is too heavy to be left for the parties to fund alone. Let us put the money where our mouths are.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): There are no more 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 11.45 a.m.*