



Security Council

Distr.: General
15 March 2021

Original: English

Letter dated 11 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Mr. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan; Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support; and Ms. Kholood Khair, Managing Partner of Insight Strategy Partners, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Mexico, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam in connection with the video-teleconference on “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan” convened on Tuesday, 9 March 2021. A statement was also delivered by the representative of the Sudan.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Council dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Linda **Thomas-Greenfield**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, Volker Perthes**

I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council. This is my first briefing to the Council. I am grateful for the confidence the Secretary-General and the Council have placed in me, and I hope I can count on your partnership in supporting the Sudan's transition.

I have been in the Sudan for five weeks. I have met with the transitional Government and the Sovereign Council and listened to a wide range of Sudanese on their aspirations and the challenges facing the Sudan's transition. I have also explained the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and discussed how we can best support the Sudan on the basis of resolution 2524 (2020).

We continue to make clear that the four strategic objectives of our mandate — namely, support for the political transition, for the peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements, for peacebuilding and for the mobilization of external resources — are interdependent. Advancing the political transition, peacebuilding and the protection of civilians requires economic resources, and vice versa.

The political transition process is moving forward. The Sovereign Council was expanded on 4 February to include three signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, and a new Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, was formed on 8 February. The Cabinet has a political, as opposed to technocratic, character. It is a broad coalition built on power-sharing among civilians, the military and armed movements. There are diverging views on the capability of this political Government, and it does not include all political forces. However, the representation of different political currents and movements, with their respective constituencies, has already made it possible for this Government to take and implement difficult decisions. Notably, this was demonstrated with the recent decision to float the exchange rate of the Sudanese currency.

This new Government has also agreed on five national priorities, that is, addressing the socioeconomic conditions; implementing the Juba Peace Agreement and resuming negotiations with the two non-signatories; security sector reform and the protection of civilians; international relations; and advancing the Sudan's democratic transition.

At the same time, important milestones foreseen in the Constitutional Document and the Juba Peace Agreement have yet to be reached, notably, the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council, with at least 40 per cent representation for women. The swift formation of a diverse, inclusive and representative Legislative Council is critical to broadening the support for the political transition.

There are fears that the gains achieved for women's rights in the Constitutional Document and the Juba Peace Agreement, such as the Gender Commission and the 40 per cent representation of women in the Transitional Legislative Council, might not be realized.

Sudanese youth have also expressed frustration over their lack of participation in transitional institutions. I can only underscore that an inclusive political process, including all segments of the Sudan's diverse society throughout the political transition, is essential for its success.

There has been recent progress on the economic reform agenda, and Prime Minister Hamdok's message is that the Sudan is becoming a country open for investment. The Government's decision to float the Sudanese pound was a courageous step that will unlock financial assistance, paving the way for debt relief and fostering private sector engagement. The investors' conference that will take place in May in Paris can help mobilize private foreign investment and partnerships, driving job creation and development. It is important that the international community support this and similar initiatives.

However, we cannot ignore that economic hardships are posing a risk to the Sudan's stability. Inflation stood at 304 per cent in January. The Sudan also suffers from large trade and fiscal deficits, high rates of unemployment and poverty. A quarter of the country's population — 13.4 million people — is projected to require humanitarian assistance, including 2.5 million internally displaced persons. The Sudan generously hosts 1 million refugees, including 70,000 recent arrivals from Ethiopia.

While the transitional Government launched the Family Support Programme on 24 February to ease the strain on large segments of the Sudanese population, the need for sustained financial and economic support to the Sudan cannot be overstated. I therefore urge the international community to step up its assistance to the Sudan.

The Sudan's Government has given priority to advancing the peace process with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction and the Sudan Liberation Movement Abdul Wahid Al-Nur faction. The recent meeting of the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah Burhan, with Mr. Al-Hilu and the declaration of the latter to unilaterally extend the cessation of hostilities for five months are clear signals of a common interest in resuming the peace process. I will continue to engage Sudanese stakeholders and parties to the peace process, and UNITAMS stands ready to assist ongoing efforts to realize a comprehensive peace settlement.

The protection of civilians remains one of our main priorities. In January, intercommunal clashes in El Geneina, West Darfur, left 165 people dead and over 100,000 displaced. Subsequent clashes in South and West Darfur underscore the risks of more intercommunal violence. During my team's recent visit to Darfur, displaced men and women expressed their fears of further violence and insecurity, including gender-based violence.

In this regard, the United Nations is working to support the new Government to strengthen the protection of civilians. The Minister of the Interior and Head of the National Committee for the Protection of Civilians requested the United Nations assistance to strengthen policing capacity and early warning, and we are responding with technical advice and capacity building support.

Progress in the protection of civilians also requires strengthened legal frameworks for human rights and the rule of law. I welcome the Sudan's decision to adopt legislation to ratify the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Orders from the Sudan's Attorney General prohibiting arrest and detention by non-police forces is also a step in the right direction. Protecting the space for peaceful protests and civic activity will remain critical.

Peace will be sustainable only if the root causes and ramifications of the conflicts are addressed. The United Nations and its partners are implementing prevention and peacebuilding projects in Darfur and elsewhere, including projects started by UNAMID. The United Nations Mine Action Service and partners are

clearing unexploded ordinance and conducting demining in Darfur, and now in the Blue Nile state in the aftermath of Juba Peace Agreement.

UNITAMS is a small Mission with a broad mandate. Together with the United Nations country team, we are adopting an integrated approach to maximize our efforts and resources. We will shortly be launching the Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilization Programme, which is a framework between UNITAMS and the United Nations country team to jointly implement resolution 2524 (2020). We are grateful to Member States that contributed to the peacebuilding and stabilization window of the multi-partner trust fund.

Turning to regional engagement, I have had constructive discussions with the African Union (AU) representative in Khartoum on United Nations-AU cooperation. I will be briefing the African Union Peace and Security Council later this month. The increasingly complex geopolitical environment is another challenge for the Sudan, notably, the tensions along the border with Ethiopia, including intermittent clashes and exchanges of heated rhetoric between Ethiopia and the Sudan. Reports of the intensification of military operations in the border region are deeply concerning. There is a serious risk for miscalculation and escalation. It is imperative that the international community build on the Sudan's and Ethiopia's stated commitment for a diplomatic solution to support de-escalation and a peaceful resolution.

The Sudan is making significant advances in its transition. However, the remaining challenges are staggering. It is urgent to respond to the needs of communities across the country. UNITAMS, with an integrated country team, is committed to working closely with all components of the transitional authorities and other stakeholders to address these challenges and help realize the Sudanese people's aspirations and priorities. We are here for all of the Sudan. I am confident that, with the unified support of the Security Council, we will be able to make a difference.

Annex II

Briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare

I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to report on the progress in the drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

I visited the Sudan from 26 February to 7 March. I had the pleasure to engage with Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah Burhan, Chairperson of the Sovereign Council; His Excellency Mr. Abdalla Adam Hamdok, Prime Minister; as well as with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Cabinet Affairs and the Interior. I also met the Governors — Walis — of the Central and North Darfur states. These engagements took stock of the progress made thus far, discussed ways to resolve outstanding issues on the drawdown/closure of UNAMID and reflected on the post-UNAMID transition.

I wish to commend the efforts of the Government of the Sudan on its transitional path for assuming full responsibility for the protection of civilians, in line with its national plan for civilian protection. In particular, I applaud the high level of coordination between the joint task force and UNAMID to facilitate the drawdown process; the commitment from the Government on civilian end-use of sites handed over; the security arrangements to ensure the safe and dignified exit of UNAMID; and the facilitation of the administrative processes required. In this connection, I am particularly pleased to report that, during my visit, I signed the framework agreement requested by the Council formalizing this collaborative partnership with the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The mission is on-track in meeting the request of the Council to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel by 30 June 2021, other than those required for the mission's liquidation. Three of 18 contingents not being considered for a guard unit have been repatriated. An accelerated drawdown schedule will ensure the departure of all uniformed personnel by the end of May, allowing June as buffer for any unexpected contingencies and avoiding the onset of the rainy season. In addition, 24 per cent of 1,088 civilian personnel who will not be required for the mission's liquidation have already been separated/repatriated. The international staff footprint is kept to a minimum, with nearly 70 per cent of the remaining 825 civilian personnel being national staff. We seek the cooperation of the Government of the Sudan in the timely processing of all administrative requirements, such as the issuance of visas or customs/export approvals, to meet this aggressive drawdown timeline.

Turning to the Council's decision to retain a guard unit, the proposal for two formed police units takes into consideration the Government's primary responsibility for the protection of the United Nations premises in the post-mandate environment and envisages the deployment of complementary Sudanese security forces. The guard unit will be responsible for the protection of UNAMID's personnel, facilities and assets, strictly within the parameters of its sites. The Secretariat is preparing a detailed concept of operations and costing requirements, along with outreach to relevant police-contributing countries.

Five of the 15 team sites have been handed over to their rightful owners. All team sites — except at El Fasher, the Khartoum Liaison Office and Port Sudan — will be handed over by end of May. During my visit, I took the opportunity to tour Sortony, North Darfur, and observed preparations for its handover. I also participated in a round table discussion on the future civilian end-use of the Zalengei site with the state authorities, local communities and the United Nations family in Central

Darfur. I witnessed how all the necessary clean-up, refurbishment and environmental restoration had been completed and jointly inspected with the Government authorities before handover. Sites are handed over in working condition and transferred with appropriate functional assets for the benefit of civilian end-use.

I wish to highlight the bioremediation and site restoration efforts of the Chinese Engineering Company, first deployed during the peak of the coronavirus crisis in May 2020. I applaud our troop-contributing country, the People's Republic of China, in the deployment of well-resourced engineers, who were further guided by the mission and have been instrumental in the environmental work. I commend the consultative process in identifying civilian end-use and the Sudanese authorities' firm commitment in such usage.

I join the Secretary-General in condemning the looting of Saraf Umrah, the first site handed over after the adoption of resolution 2559 (2020). It is with regret that I note that unknown assailants have dashed the opportunity for the site's intended usage as a vocational training centre. We call on the Sudanese authorities to investigate the incident, and similar incidents at Nyala and El Geneina, and ensure security and the preservation of facilities handed over for civilian end-use. I have been assured by the leadership of the Sudan that such incidents will not be allowed to recur in future.

Closing 14 team sites and separating and repatriating more than 7,000 uniformed and civilian personnel within the drawdown period of six months is in itself a complex task. It is made even more challenging by having to respond to unpredictable, unforeseen developments. For example, we have just received a request from the Government of the Sudan to delay the closure and handover of team sites in Kalma and Sortony, which were planned, respectively, for 11 and 28 March. We intend to respond positively to the Government's request, particularly in order to facilitate a smooth handover. Nevertheless, I remain concerned about the continued presence of uniformed personnel, a formed police unit in Kalma and a military contingent in Sortony, both from Pakistan.

Looking beyond the drawdown period, after 30 June 2021, the outstanding liquidation tasks will not be any less challenging. In the liquidation period, the skeletal liquidation team will need to clean up and environmentally restore El Fasher, dispose of any remaining United Nations-owned equipment, close out outstanding contracts and financial commitments and enable the administrative closure of the mission.

During my meetings with Sudanese authorities, I stressed the distinct drawdown and liquidation periods. I recall and underscore that resolution 2559 (2020) stipulates a six-month drawdown, followed by an undefined liquidation period, which we estimate to be 12 to 18 months in length, to reasonably perform all the liquidation tasks for a mission the size and scale of UNAMID. I was assured by the leadership of the Sudan, both at the central and state levels, that all efforts will be deployed by them to make this drawdown and liquidation an example of effective collaboration between the United Nations and the Sudan.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the African Union, which is our partner in this endeavour. One of my first meetings in Khartoum was with the representative of the African Union (AU). Both our organizations attach high importance to the responsible and accountable drawdown and closure of UNAMID. His Excellency Mr. Smaïl Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, will be visiting the Sudan, including Darfur, with the AU Peace and Security Council from 30 March to 1 April, and a visit by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission is also being planned. I have assured the African Union that, within its limited resources, UNAMID will support these visits.

Annex III

Briefing by the Managing Partner of Insight Strategy Partners, Kholood Khair

My name is Kholood Khair, and I am a researcher and analyst running a think tank in Khartoum and a broadcaster on a political talk show. Although civil society is not homogenous, I hope to shed some light on the possible implications of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) on the civil society space in my country and the importance of civil society buy-in during the transition period.

First, I must thank the organizers for giving a voice from Sudanese civil society the space to be heard at a meeting like this one. It is a very welcome and necessary affirmation of the role of civil society in “civilianizing” the Sudan and helping the country make the transition into democratic governance. It is also a recognition of the leading role that Sudanese civil society continuously played in the run-up to the 2018 revolution and continues to play throughout the fragile transition.

This transition is not merely about the mechanics of civilian democratization; it is also about engendering the governance practices necessary for a vibrant democracy. The past 30 years saw a tireless and sustained attempt to limit civil space in order to control and coerce the Sudanese people. Undoing this will necessitate similarly tireless and sustained engagement with civil society actors in order to expand the civic space. Only then will the national projects of “civilianizing” and democratizing the Sudan stand a chance of success.

Previous experience with transition — and the Sudan has been here before, after all — tells us that transitions live and die by the space that diverse civil society actors are able to carve out at the national, subnational and local levels. We are learning from the past. This time around, a more concerted effort by transition partners aimed at engaging civil society consistently and intentionally across governance structures — from supporting the Federal Government to maintaining momentum in neighbourhoods — is the best chance that we have. Let us hope that the third time is the charm, as we may not get another opportunity such as this one anytime soon.

Sudanese civil society is a broad umbrella, and that is its strength. From women’s rights groups, resistance committees and research centres to women’s community initiatives and organizations fighting for justice, the reach of civil society is often vastly wider than the State’s, and significantly deeper than that of international actors. Over the past few years, the country’s civil society has responded to local demands for change and created more space for meaningful grass-roots engagement outside of the aid space.

After decades of resistance against autocracy and of heavy suppression under the previous regime, civil society, in many of its guises, must now be given the room to function as is absolutely necessary: as a key partner in the civilian transition. In order to do that, there are several issues related to the operationalization of a mission such as UNITAMS that will need to be addressed so as to ensure civil society buy-in.

The Mission itself has been up and running for just over two months, and the eventual start of its activities is welcome. However, since the Mission’s inception, some challenges have been apparent. Most of these challenges are related to potential difficulties in navigating the Sudan’s enduring power imbalance at the heart of Government, between, broadly, armed components and civilian components.

In addition, there are some not insignificant concerns on the impact of this tumult on the civil society space as the foundation of the democratic transition.

Within the as-yet unclear terms of engagement between the civilian Government and UNITAMS, a mission upon which civilians may increasingly heavily rely, there must be due consideration of what the impact on civil society space might be and consequently the building of a burgeoning social contract. In this regard, chiefly, UNITAMS must learn the lessons of the missions that came before it, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The challenges specifically related to these governance dynamics are, broadly speaking, how UNITAMS will be both the follow-on mission to UNAMID as well as a mission with a wholly different mandate — one that, crucially, does not contain as many provisions for the protection of civilians as the previous missions did, which is nevertheless an increasingly urgent priority in Darfur and elsewhere; how UNITAMS will build consensus across its broad mandate with the different strands and structures of Government as well as with such alternative governance structures as the native administrations and resistance committees, both at the national and subnational levels; how the Mission, as a political mission, will resist co-optation by different political interests both within Government and outside of it; how UNITAMS will manage the very great expectations of both the Government and the public; how UNITAMS will balance role assignments: without a strong governmental counterpart, and a reliance instead on the Cabinet as a counterpart, the Sudanese public may not know where the Government starts and UNITAMS ends, which will not help the Government to build the relationship it wants and needs to build with the public; and lastly, how UNITAMS will work to fulfil its objectives beyond directly supporting the Government, such as through highly specialized disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programming.

If the fate of the success of UNITAMS is directly tied to the Government's ability to implement — an ability that is impeded by several factors, not least competing interests within the broader Government for capacity and funding — then UNITAMS will not be able to play as supportive a role as it would like. And therein lies the contradiction of an integrated mission intended to support a less-than-integrated Government — in fact a divided one, and not only along civilian and military lines but also along rebel lines.

Civil society actors can bolster and even lead coordinated efforts in the difficult work of ensuring the protection of civilians, a key priority in parts of Darfur right now, and make use of over a decade of civil society engagement on protection of civilians, peacebuilding initiatives and conflict prevention across the country. Engaging civil society actors is also crucial ahead of elections, and it needs to start now, preferably at the local level, in order to demonstrate the value of a process that has suffered much public disparagement from its nominal implementation during the Al-Bashir regime.

Crucial State-building exercises that finally have some hope of being credible — for example, the constitution-drafting processes, election-related initiatives and making the peace deal viable — are all currently led by international actors, with civil society playing a supporting role. This should be the reverse. Sustainability is an ever-present concern, and only increased and broad civil society engagement with both the Government and the United Nations can facilitate enhanced Government-United Nations cooperation.

For its part, the civilian Government should recognize that a broad and varied civil society is its army and its domestic support system in the fight against autocracy; expand its transition priorities and mitigate its capacity issues by working with civil society, particularly outside of Khartoum; learn the lessons of previous transitions and broaden the political space to a more diverse range of constituencies

and avoid redrawing the fault lines between political groups based on competition for power and resources; and rely less on personal politics and institutionalize some of its engagement with civil society.

The foregoing will allow the Government, for example, to increase the level of representation of women in line with its own quotas and catalyse some of the slow progress that has been observed on such key issues as justice. It will also allow for better feedback from the public. Currently, mass protest against specific issues is the only form of communication that much of civil society has with the Government, which can give the impression that the Government is failing across the board, thereby emboldening factions of the ancien régime.

I believe that, to be effective to aptly support the transition and get the buy-in of civil society as a key transition partner, UNITAMS should consult regularly and meaningfully with different and diverse civil society actors across the country in its planning and strategizing for its work during the transition; work with what is left of UNAMID while it can and enlist its on-the-ground civil society partners to look into how it will prioritize protection of civilians, while conflict flares up in Darfur and matters look increasingly bellicose in the east; be agile enough to respond to ad hoc issues while planning a phased approach in a holistic strategy of transition priorities, from, for example, the protection of civilians to access to justice and rule of law, elections and then the credible transition of power; be a mission for the entire country, with context-specific strategies for the different political realities across the Sudan drafted in close collaboration with civil society actors from research- and area-specific communities, including rural communities pastoralists.

UNITAMS should also work with a dedicated governmental counterpart that is answerable to the Cabinet, not a committee that functions as a secretariat, which will act as a platform to build consensus within the Government, absorb international support, encourage joined-up policymaking through the Cabinet, and later with the Parliament, while providing a liaising body for efficient coordination; coordinate with parallel processes outside of its mandate but whose success is interlinked with its own, such as transitional justice and reforms; be better funded, and channel that funding wisely, to allow for a better and more meaningfully integrated response to transition needs; seize the opportunity to refine and focus its broad mandate in May of this year; and lastly, and importantly, recruit more senior national staff, particularly from the peripheries.

Ultimately UNITAM's success will be the Sudan's success, if the Mission is cognizant and inclusive of civil society as the bedrock of the democratic project. This inclusion of civil society must be done in such a way that it increases, not limits, civic space, and efforts must be made not to undermine the fragile and inchoate social contract between the civilian Government and the public.

Annex IV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Dai Bing**

[Original: Chinese]

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Khare and Mr. Perthes for their briefings. I also listened attentively to the briefing by Ms. Khair, the civil society representative. I also wish to welcome the Sudanese representative to the meeting.

The Sudan is undergoing major transformations. The United Nations presence in the country is in a stage of transition. I wish to emphasize the following points.

First, the positive political momentum must be maintained. The Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan is only the beginning, not the end. China welcomes important gains such as the expansion of the Sovereignty Council and the reshuffling of the transitional Government. China urges continued efforts to advance processes such as the formation of a Transitional Legislative Council and preparation of elections. Armed groups that have not signed the Agreement should join the peace process as soon as possible. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/199) mentions that financial support is needed for implementing the Peace Agreement. We therefore call on international partners to help the Sudan in this regard.

Secondly, improvement in the security situation needs to be sustained. Despite overall stability in the Sudan, intercommunal clashes are still causing civilian casualties. The Sudanese Government has continued the implementation of its State strategy of civilian protection, responded rapidly to the clashes and quickly deployed security forces, which China welcomes. We call for urgent efforts to remove the negative impacts of Security Council arms embargo on the Government's efforts to protect civilians in Darfur and to upgrade its security capabilities. Military means alone cannot eliminate intercommunal clashes. It takes a holistic approach, integrating mediation, reconciliation and the rule of law, coupled with measures to develop the economy and improve people's lives, in order to eradicate the root causes.

Thirdly, the international community should help the Sudan deal with economic challenges. Owing to such factors as the coronavirus disease pandemic, the Sudan's economy is deteriorating, and the humanitarian situation is dire. Over 13 million people may need humanitarian assistance this year. The Sudanese Government is working to make progress on economic reform, reduce the fiscal deficit and mitigate shortages of goods. China welcomes its efforts. The international community should step up assistance to help the Sudan overcome its difficulties. China calls for early lifting of unilateral coercive measures against the Sudan.

Fourthly, there must be a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has completed its mission. I wish to salute and thank its peacekeepers. The process to close UNAMID should be steady and orderly. Parties should work to ensure the safety of UNAMID personnel and property. China welcomes progress in the deployment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and its active efforts. In the light of the actual needs of the Sudan at present, UNITAMS should focus on helping to advance the peace process and on mobilizing greater economic assistance in order to achieve sustained improvement in the Sudan's situation. In doing so, UNITAMS should fully respect the views of the Sudanese Government and strengthen its coordination with other United Nations bodies there.

Annex V**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

I join others in thanking the briefers for their insightful overviews. Allow me also to extend a very warm welcome to the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perthes. I look forward to working with him, and he can count on Estonia's support.

It is commendable that, despite multiple challenges, the Sudan has continued to make progress in its historic transition. Estonia recognizes the many important milestones that the Sudan has achieved since the last Security Council briefing (see S/2020/1183), ranging from governance and human rights to economic reforms. We welcome the announcement by the Sudan of its accession to United Nations human rights instruments, namely, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Since institutions form the backbone of democracy, Estonia encourages the Sudan to continue with institution-building, as set out in the Constitutional Document, especially the Transitional Legislative Council. We also urge the Sudan to enhance women's meaningful participation in the transitional decision-making bodies.

Estonia also welcomes the continued efforts made by the Sudanese to implement the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. In particular, the formation of the new transitional Government and the expanded Sovereign Council are important milestones. We further recognize the Government's latest cooperation with the International Criminal Court, as the restoration of justice and accountability remain crucial. However, it is also important to acknowledge the significant challenges that lie ahead related to the implementation of the Agreement. Estonia underscores the importance of the inclusion of women in the implementation of the peace agreement. In addition, we call on the parties that have not yet joined the peace agreement to do so urgently.

Unfortunately, the socioeconomic situation continues to impose significant hardship on the Sudanese people, but we commend the important steps that the transitional Government has taken to put the country on the path towards economic recovery. Estonia welcomes the exchange rate reform and encourages the transitional Government to continue implementing its critical reform agenda.

The continued reports of intercommunal violence in Darfur are very concerning. We urge the transitional Government to accelerate the implementation of its national strategy for civilian protection. We are also concerned about the destruction of a former site of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur on 23 February. Extending State authority to all of Darfur will have to remain an important goal.

In all those efforts that I just mentioned, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) can support the Sudan. I urge the Sudanese to tap into that resource. In order to have a systematic approach, we encourage the Sudan to articulate the priority areas where they will need help from UNITAMS. I further urge the transitional Government to finalize the status-of-mission agreement as soon as possible in order to enable the effective operation of UNITAMS.

Estonia is concerned about the recent escalation of tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia over the Fashaqah border area. We urge the leaders of Ethiopia and the Sudan to de-escalate the situation and work towards a peaceful solution. Finally, I

would like to reiterate our deep appreciation to the Sudan for offering its generous support to the Ethiopian refugees who have fled from Tigray.

In conclusion, the Sudan has made significant progress, but much remains to be done. We hope that the good cooperation between the Sudan and UNITAMS will help the country to rise to the challenge so that it can complete its historic transition. The international community must spare no effort in supporting the aspirations of the Sudanese people to achieve democracy, peace and prosperity.

Annex VI

Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nathalie Broadhurst Estival

[Original: English and French]

I would like to thank the briefers for their comprehensive and interesting presentations.

I would like to stress four points.

France's priority remains support for the democratic transition in the Sudan. The progress made over the past three months is very encouraging. I have in mind the formation of a new Government and the extension of the Sovereign Council, which includes representatives of former armed groups signatories to the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. The Government adopted its programme of work, with very ambitious goals, including consolidating the peace process. The unification of exchange rates, which was eagerly awaited by France and numerous partners, provided a first sign of the political will of the new team.

Important steps have also been taken in the area of human rights. We welcome the authorities' decision to ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. We also encourage the authorities to continue their good cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. As we commemorated International Women's Day yesterday, allow us to reiterate our support for the elimination of all discrimination and violence against women and the promotion of gender parity in the Sudan as elsewhere.

Following the commitment made by President Emmanuel Macron, France will organize a high-level conference in support of the Sudanese transition in Paris on 17 May. That event will be an opportunity to solemnly mark the return of the Sudan to the concert of nations, encourage private investors to come back to the Sudan and renew the commitment of partners to the Sudan's foreign debt relief. The transition should contribute to genuine equality between women and men.

Efforts must continue, and even broaden, with regard to the peace process and the protection of civilians, which is my second point. We encourage the Sudanese authorities to move ahead with the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council. The participation of women must also progress, as the new Council of Ministers has not reached the 40 per cent threshold set by the Constitutional Document and the Juba peace agreement. The fight against impunity must also continue, with the establishment of the Transitional Justice Commission, the reform of the National Human Rights Commission and continued cooperation with the International Criminal Court.

In Darfur, the violence that occurred on 16 and 18 January and since then, as well as the looting of the Saraf Umrah site, which was handed over just one month earlier by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, is extremely worrisome. France recognizes the willingness of the Sudanese authorities to take full responsibility for the protection of civilians in Darfur and encourages the Government to continue to fully implement its national plan for the protection of civilians, with the assistance of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), of course. We further encourage the parties that remain outside the peace process to join it as soon as possible.

Those efforts take place in a fragile regional context, as many speakers pointed out.

We welcome the Sudan's efforts to host and provide protection to more than 61,000 Ethiopian refugees in the east, with the support of all its international partners, including France and the United Nations. We must jointly sustain those efforts to prevent any deterioration in the humanitarian situation. We support the regional and subregional initiatives to ease rising tensions, particularly with regard to the land dispute on the border between the Sudan and Ethiopia, where the risk of escalation is very worrisome. We call on all parties to engage in dialogue, but also to exercise restraint.

In that context, and this is my last point, France supports the rapid operationalization of UNITAMS in order to continue United Nations support for the Sudanese transition. That requires first of all that the Sudan rapidly finalize the status-of-mission agreement, which is the legal framework required for the Mission's action. UNITAMS has a broad mandate that enables it to support the efforts of all Sudanese authorities to address the challenges posed by the transition: support for governance and human rights, including the protection of children, support for the peace process, peacebuilding and, of course, the engagement of economic and humanitarian actors. We therefore call on the Sudan to make full use of the potential of that mandate, including in terms of capacity-building.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, T.S. Tirumurti

Let me begin by thanking Mr. Volker Perthes, Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), and Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for their briefings on the activities of UNITAMS, centred around the Mission's four strategic and interrelated pillars. I would also like to thank Ms. Kholood Khair, Managing Partner of Insight Strategy Partners, for her remarks.

First, with regard to the political transition and peace processes, the Sudan continues to make progress in its democratic transition. The recent developments are a testimony to the determination and commitment of the Sudanese leadership to lead the Sudan towards the path of development, peace and prosperity. The measures taken to implement the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, including expanding the Sovereign Council, establishing the Council of Partners for the Transitional Period and the formation of the new Cabinet to include the signatories to the Agreement, are steps in the right direction. The removal of the Sudan from the United States list of State sponsors of terrorism is another important milestone in the transition process, as is the normalization of bilateral relations with Israel. We welcome those positive developments.

The Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan is a comprehensive, but ambitious and complex document. The implementation process may therefore face several challenges. The transition process to a federal and democratic system will not be an easy one. While the initial steps towards implementation have been taken, a trust deficit among the parties, outstanding security concerns and a lack of financial resources have the potential to undermine such efforts. It is therefore important that the Sudanese stakeholders continue to demonstrate their commitment to the Agreement and engage constructively to resolve their differences. They must ensure that the transitional institutions have clearly defined mandates and are inclusive and effective. To that end, the early formation of the Transitional Legislative Council and the establishment of the Commissions will be important. It is imperative for the international community, particularly the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to support national efforts and extend all possible help to the Sudan in the implementation of the Agreement.

With regard to the third pillar, it is encouraging to note that the transitional Government has continued with its institutional and legal reforms. The draft laws concerning various commissions, including the Transitional Justice Commission, have been finalized. Again, those are positive developments.

The intercommunal violence in Darfur in the past few months demonstrates the complex challenges faced by the transitional Government. We commend efforts to bring the situation back to normalcy in Darfur. We welcome the formulation of a national plan for civilian protection and the announcement of a 12,000-member protection force, which is currently in the process of deployment to Darfur. We also call on the armed movements that remain outside the peace process to join the negotiating table.

Regarding the fourth pillar, the difficult economic situation is one of the major impediments in the transition process. The transitional Government has engaged positively with the international financial institutions and the Friends of the Sudan grouping, which will help in the mobilization of much-needed financial resources. It is critical that the international community continue to support the Sudan's economic recovery and the transitional Government's economic reform agenda.

We fully support the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs in developing an integrated strategic framework and structures to maximize international support for enhancing the effectiveness of UNITAMS with the objective of advancing the Sudan's political transition. We also appreciate the efforts of Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare and his team at the Department of Operational Support towards the smooth drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We also encourage UNITAMS to continue working closely with the transitional Government to ensure a smooth drawdown of UNAMID, while taking care to bridge any ensuing gaps.

Lastly, India remains committed to supporting all efforts of the transitional Government of the Sudan towards a successful transition. In that context, we have bilaterally implemented 49 projects in the energy, transport and agro-industry sectors in the Sudan through concessional lines of credit worth \$612 million. More than 290 scholarships have been extended annually for capacity-building under our Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme and other scholarship programmes. Most recently, India delivered 100 metric tons of food supplies last November as humanitarian assistance to the Sudan. I am also happy that, under the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility, 820,000 doses of Made-in-India coronavirus disease vaccines have been supplied to the Sudan. In addition, we are in the process of delivering 10 metric tons of life-saving drugs to the Sudan in the coming weeks as a part of our bilateral humanitarian assistance programme.

Let me reiterate that India remains committed to the all-round progress and inclusive development of the Sudan.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Geraldine Byrne Nason

I want to thank both Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes and Under-Secretary-General Khare, as well as Ms. Khair, for their really insightful briefings this morning. As this is the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's first meeting since assuming his role, I want to congratulate him and welcome him among us. Of course, I also want to wish him luck. He has a challenging and ambitious mandate to implement. The timing is critical. He comes in at a really important moment as the United Nations continues to grapple with the implications of what, I think by any standards, is a complex transition. On the other hand, we believe that the scale of his challenge is matched only by the opportunity for the people of the Sudan.

As we already heard from many speakers, the Sudan is clearly making strong efforts to advance the transition and implement the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. Nevertheless, we of course know that peace processes are at their most fragile in their infancy.

A comprehensive, civilian-led approach, with the full inclusion of civil society, will be needed to bring all parties into closer political agreement. At the same time, the challenge is to move beyond the existing power-sharing arrangements to actually implementing the Agreement's substantive components, and to do that as swiftly as possible.

The next steps must include the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council and the commissions envisaged under the Agreement. The people of the Sudan have demanded transparent, civilian-led democratic governance in the Sudan. That is the least that they deserve. We believe their call must be heeded.

Seeing the benefits of the Agreement materialize on the ground will actually be the most effective way of maintaining support and attracting those forces outside the Agreement to join it. We welcome the launch last month of the Samarat Family Support Programme, to which Ireland was one of the first contributors.

Women, such as the 22-year-old student Alaa Salah, were clearly instrumental in bringing about the transition in the Sudan. They must not be shut out of the political process. Barriers to their full, equal and meaningful participation simply must be addressed. Women in the Sudan also urgently require better protection against sexual and gender-based violence. In that regard, the Personal Status Law needs to be reviewed. We also believe that the new draft law to combat violence against women is welcome, but it will need to be implemented.

We heard that the security situation in Darfur remains very concerning. There is ongoing fighting and recruitment of fighters in Darfur, including, tragically, the recruitment of children, by signatory and non-signatory parties to the Juba Agreement for Peace. In January alone, attacks in Darfur forced more people to flee their homes in three days than in the whole of 2020 in the Sudan as a whole. As the protection-of-civilian mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) ends, the Sudanese Government must step up to its responsibility. The Government's strong response to recent violence in North Darfur has been encouraging and should be sustained. The perpetrators of that violence must also be held accountable. That is critical to breaking the cycle of impunity, which is fuelling repeated attacks on civilians in the same locations.

There is now an urgent need for the swift implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians and the implementation of the security pillar of the

Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. We believe that the civilian protection force needs the scale and capacity to do its job effectively. The Security Council, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and the Sudan's international partners can offer technical support and capacity-building, including on post-conflict and community police training. I call on the Government of the Sudan to set out concretely what is needed and how the Sudan's partners can help.

The recent looting of the former UNAMID site Saraf Umrah in Darfur is shameful. This former UNAMID site was due to be used as a vocational training centre for the benefit of the Sudanese people. Such looting, which is unfortunately part of a historic pattern in Darfur, robs the community locally of a long-term asset. We welcome the steps taken by the Government to address the challenges associated with the drawing down of UNAMID, including the creation of a new department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to support both United Nations missions in a more integrated manner. However, as we have heard, it is of vital importance that the Sudanese authorities immediately finalize the status-of-mission agreement with the United Nations.

We do not underestimate it — the challenges facing the transitional Government and the Sudanese people are immense, not least in terms of humanitarian challenges. An estimated 13.4 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2021. The food security situation is worrisome and is being exacerbated by the Sudan's economic difficulties. In this context, I want to commend the solidarity shown by the Sudanese people to the more than 60,000 refugees who have arrived in eastern Sudan from the Tigray region of Ethiopia. This needs to be recognized.

Finally, tensions around the border in the Fashaqah region are worrisome. This weekend's developments have highlighted how continued tensions can have a detrimental impact on an already fragile region. We must do our utmost to avoid this. This dispute must be settled through diplomacy. And the engagement of regional organizations, particularly the African Union, including its leadership on mediation efforts, is vital.

Annex IX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez**

[Original: Spanish]

At the outset, I would like to welcome Special Representative Perthes. We thank him for his briefing on the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the situation in the Sudan, a little more than a month after his arrival in the country. We have also taken note of and appreciate the information provided by Under-Secretary-General Khare and Ms. Khair.

The transitional Government of the Sudan is at a critical juncture, and we welcome its efforts to implement the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, which has three new signatories. We call on those armed groups that have not yet done so to sign the agreement urgently and without preconditions. Coordination for the implementation of the agreement is paramount, and we welcome the establishment of the Council of Partners of the Transitional Period, although it is regrettable that only one of the 29 members is a woman.

We welcome the appointment of the new Cabinet and the approval of the budget, but also note the need to improve the transparency of the processes, in particular those related to the budget.

We urge the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council and the appointment of state governors, while reiterating the importance of fulfilling the provisions of the Constitutional Document on achieving the minimum of 40 per cent representation of women. Only four of the 26 Cabinet ministers are women. We recognize and support the leadership of Sudanese women in their mobilization and their struggle for full participation in decision-making bodies.

We are following with concern the escalation of tensions in the Fashaqah area and the increased military presence on both sides of the border with Ethiopia. We urge the parties to exercise restraint, seek a peaceful solution to their differences and ensure the protection of civilians in the area. That will also help to prevent wider destabilization in the region.

Mexico is closely following the updates regarding the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the full establishment of UNITAMS. We commend the United Nations country team and the transitional Government for cementing the benchmarks that will allow further progress on strategic objectives. Notwithstanding the transition, we express our concern at the increase in tensions and violence in the Darfur region.

The violence last January in West Darfur, which left 162 people dead and more than 100,000 internally displaced, is deplorable, and we are following with concern the consequences of the violent clashes in South Darfur, which resulted in the displacement of at least another 20,000 people. We look forward to the early formation of the joint security-keeping force envisaged in the Juba agreement between Government forces and signatory armed groups.

We urge the Government of the Sudan to continue with the implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians. We recognize the challenge of establishing a protection-of-civilians force. However, efforts relating to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the regular progress reports for the implementation of the plan are still very limited.

Mexico reiterates its deep concern about illicit arms flows to and from the Sudan. We reiterate that, as long as there is access to firearms, it will be impossible to effectively tackle the cycles of violence that have regrettable consequences for the entire region.

The impact of the conflict on women and children is irrefutable. The reports of the recruitment of children in Kabkabiyah and Nertiti by some armed groups signatories to the Juba agreement are simply unacceptable. Moreover, incidents of sexual violence against women and girls, who are mostly internally displaced, continue to be reported.

The progress and challenges in the strengthening of the transitional Government and the multifaceted adjustment that the establishment of UNITAMS involves should not detract attention from the humanitarian crisis in the country. By 2021, it is estimated that 13.4 million people will be in need of humanitarian assistance, and more than 7 million people will be food insecure. We therefore call for unhindered and safe access for humanitarian personnel to attend to the most basic needs of a people who have been severely affected by the scourge of armed conflict.

Annex X**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Anna Evstigneeva**

[Original: Russian]

We thank our briefers, Special Representative Perthes and Under-Secretary-General Khare, for the information provided on the situation in the Sudan. We listened carefully to the statement by Ms. Khair.

We consider the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, signed on 3 October 2020, by the transitional Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front, an important step towards achieving national harmony in the country and solving the country's urgent socioeconomic problems. We hope that the armed groups that remain outside the agreement will also join it. We were pleased to note that Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and the Head of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz Al-Hilu signed the joint agreement on principles on 3 September 2020.

Unfortunately, some Sudanese stakeholders continue to act as spoilers of the peace process. Therefore, Abdul Wahid Al-Nur, who refused to join the peace agreements and engage in dialogue with Khartoum, is one of the perpetrators of antagonism against the Sudan Liberation Army in Jebel Marra. We call on those who can influence the opposition to bring the necessary pressure to bear on him.

We are encouraged by the fact that the Sudanese authorities have shown that they are ready to thoroughly address the underlying causes of conflicts, including in Darfur. Tangible progress in the implementation of the peace agreements demonstrates that. In that regard, we note the expansion of the Sovereign Council and the formation of a new ministerial Cabinet.

At the same time, we cannot fail to mention that the Sudan faces many challenges that have worsened during the coronavirus disease pandemic. The developments in Libya and the growing number of internally displaced persons and refugees from the neighbouring States negatively impact the situation in the Sudan. Against that backdrop, the economic crisis is worsening and social tensions are increasing. That is why it is crucial not to delay the implementation of initiatives aimed at economic recovery and peacebuilding.

We are convinced that the Sudan is at a critical stage in the implementation of the peace agreements and in confronting the challenges I mentioned. To do so, the Sudan will need broad international support, and Khartoum is entitled to count on such support.

We welcome the appointment and assumption of office of a new Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). We wish you, Mr. Volker Perthes, every success and count on your good offices to bring all Sudanese stakeholders under the umbrella of the Juba Peace Agreement.

We also welcome your first steps towards maintaining balanced contacts with both branches of Sudanese authorities. It is of the utmost importance that you support their efforts aimed at ensuring national stabilization and implementing the constitutional decree of 17 August 2019.

We trust that the work of UNITAMS will strengthen Khartoum's capacity in key areas, the first of which are peacebuilding, promoting economic reforms, implementing sustainable security sector reform and the maintaining peace and the rule of law. It is important to not only remain united in the face of political signals,

but also to increase economic support for the Sudan to allow the country to resolve key outstanding issues. Providing assistance with the mobilization of resources and coordinating humanitarian assistance are also important tasks in the mandate of UNITAMS.

We believe that removing the Sudan from the United States list of State sponsors of terrorism in December 2020 will contribute to that. We look forward to an early review to adapt Security Council sanctions concerning the Sudan to the reality on the ground.

With regard to Darfur, the dynamic in that region has not undergone any significant negative changes. Sporadic intercommunal clashes in some states do not change the overall situation. The authorities' timely and coordinated response to incidents and the development and implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians are testament to Khartoum's commitment to a comprehensive approach to stabilization. The time has come to prioritize the economic recovery and development of the region, something that the new mission is designed to support.

We believe that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has successfully met its objectives. We proceed from the assumption that UNAMID personnel will be completely withdrawn by 30 June, in line with resolution 2559 (2020). We commend the work of the Secretariat's leadership on the ground, in particular the work by Under-Secretary-General Khare, in terms of establishing dialogue with the local authorities in order to ensure a smooth and safe drawdown of UNAMID.

Annex XI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Barbara Woodward**

Let me begin by thanking Special Representative Perthes, Undersecretary-General Khare and Ms. Khair for their briefings.

Prime Minister Hamdok and his Government have continued to make progress on the path towards peace, prosperity and democracy. The formation of a new Council of Ministers to include signatories of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan; the exchange rate reform; the ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Government's cooperation with the International Criminal Court are all noteworthy. As we heard from Ms. Khair today, civil society, women and youth have a vital role to play in all aspects of the transition process. And we look forward to the establishment of the Transitional Legislative Council with a quota of 40 per cent women in this context.

The United Kingdom stands ready to work with the Government of the Sudan as it continues its transition to democracy. During his visit to Khartoum in January, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced the United Kingdom's intention to provide a \$456 million bridging loan to help clear the Sudan's arrears with the African Development Bank. This is in addition to the \$55 million already contributed to the Sudan Family Support Programme.

After months of delay, the United Kingdom welcomes the deployment of Special Representative Perthes and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Lo N'Diaye. We also welcome the initial cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

We recognize that the success of the Sudan's transition requires sustained efforts in a number of areas. It is therefore vital for the Government to work with UNITAMS, including its integrated country team, to identify priority areas for UNITAMS to provide support in line with its mandate. In order to harness the full potential of the support of UNITAMS, we urge the Government of the Sudan to work with the United Nations swiftly to finalize the status-of-mission agreement.

The United Kingdom has provided \$500,000 in voluntary contributions to UNITAMS. We are the first Member State to do so, and we encourage others to provide support for UNITAMS efforts to support the Government of the Sudan's work.

While the Government of the Sudan has taken many steps to overcome the challenges facing its country, significant obstacles lie ahead. We cannot ignore the escalation of intercommunal violence in Darfur in recent months. More people have been displaced in Darfur in 2021 than in all of 2020. We are also concerned by the destruction of yet another former site of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, on 23 February, after it was handed over to the Government of the Sudan.

We echo the Secretary-General's call for the Government to expedite the implementation of the national plan for civilian protection, the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan and other efforts aimed at preventing and reducing violence at the community level. We also call on the Government of the Sudan to secure the sites handed over to them by the United Nations so that they can be used to consolidate peace across Darfur.

I also reiterate our call for those who remain outside the peace process to engage without preconditions to conclude swiftly negotiations on a comprehensive peace agreement.

Finally, the United Kingdom continues to closely monitor the situation on the Sudan-Ethiopia border. We call on both sides to engage in dialogue to prevent further escalation, which could have significant ramifications for regional peace and security.

Annex XII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield**

I would like to welcome Special Representative Perthes to your first Security Council briefing in your new role. The United States is committed to the success of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) and the efforts of the United Nations in the Sudan. We look forward to working closely with you and your team in the months and years ahead.

Under-Secretary-General Khare, thank you as well for your time today and for your efforts over the last several months to draw down the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and carry out the transition of United Nations responsibilities from UNAMID to UNITAMS. Drawing down a mission of 7,000 in six short months is a demanding task.

And thank you to Ms. Kholood Khair for your informative briefing today. Your voice and the voices of other members of civil society are vital to the future of your country.

And I welcome the representative from the Sudan who is here with us today. I have followed the Sudan's evolution for many years, dating back to my time as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Today it is clear that the Sudan finds itself at a pivotal moment. After decades of autocratic rule, the Sudanese people — notably many strong, courageous Sudanese women — have opened a new door for the country.

The time is now ripe for inclusive, representative government. This a moment to build a comprehensive and sustainable peace. And it is an opportunity to support those on the margins and to help those who have suffered achieve justice.

One such specific opportunity is the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. Six months have passed since the signing of this historic agreement between the civilian-led transitional Government and the rebel groups. And yet the Sudanese people have not seen the commitment and engagement by signatory parties necessary for progress. It is time for the Sudan to take basic steps to make it clear that it is committed to the long-term stability of the country.

The Sudan should complete the formation of an inclusive Transitional Legislative Council, including at least 40 per cent women representatives. It should establish the necessary security forces in Darfur and implement the Juba Peace Agreement security arrangement in the Two Areas. It should create the rule of law and other transitional justice mechanisms, including the Special Court for Crimes Committed in Darfur. And it should finalize the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the Juba Peace Agreement. In this moment of transition, the Sudan's Government must now assume full responsibility for protecting civilians. The Sudan does have a comprehensive plan for protecting all civilians in the country. But a plan is just a piece of paper. It is only useful or good if it is enacted.

The shocking attack in West Darfur in January is a tragic reminder of the ongoing threats that civilians face in the Sudan. The attack reportedly killed 163 people and displaced 50,000 more. The Government must do more to ensure that its protection plan will prevent future violence and to hold the perpetrators of this terrible attack accountable.

We strongly encourage national-level authorities to coordinate with local authorities and cooperate fully with UNITAMS and the United Nations country team. They should especially coordinate to build capacity and support to implement the

plan to protect civilians. We are dismayed that the Sudan has yet to sign the status of mission agreement, an essential document to ensure the safety of UNITAMS staff.

Furthermore, mobile monitoring teams, early-warning systems and local crisis mediation are essential mechanisms to protect civilians. They promote human rights and ensure appropriate oversight and accountability for alleged abuses. The Government must work with UNITAMS to establish these mechanisms as soon as possible.

The United States was also very concerned to see a former UNAMID team site looted on 17 February, and you have heard this from other Council members as well. We call on the Sudanese authorities to hold the perpetrators accountable and to step up security to prevent looting of the remaining team sites once handed over.

Finally, we are deeply concerned about rising tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia around their border, including the recent bellicose rhetoric and the positioning of additional forces around the el-Fashaga area. We have seen frequent skirmishes, which have resulted in displacement and casualties, and the risk of miscalculation is high. So, we call on both sides to expand direct communications to prevent any further military escalation and commit to discussions without preconditions.

The United States stands willing to work with partners in the region to support efforts to de-escalate and find solutions. We stand with the people of the Sudan. We will continue to work closely with them and the international community to help create the peaceful, prosperous future they deserve.

Annex XIII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy

I would like to start by thanking Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes and Ms. Kholood Khair for their statements.

I welcome the representative of the Sudan to our meeting today.

Viet Nam welcomes the continued positive developments in the Sudan in the past few months. We commend the efforts of the Government of the Sudan in promoting peace, stability and development in the country, as well as in responding to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

We applaud the efforts of the United Nations, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, South Sudan and other international partners in facilitating the peace process in the Sudan. In the light of the recent developments, I wish to highlight the following three points.

First, it is imperative to further advance the transitional process in line with the Juba Peace Agreement. We call for the swift appointment of the state governors to ensure the effective functioning of the Government at local levels. We hope that the Sudanese parties can continue to resolve their differences and facilitate the implementation of the remaining provisions of the Peace Agreement.

Moreover, we urge the remaining armed groups in Darfur to join the peace negotiations as soon as possible. In this regard, more confidence-building measures and dialogue opportunities should be promoted, with the support of the United Nations, regional organizations and neighbouring countries.

We welcome the initial efforts by UNITAMS in assisting the transitional process, in close cooperation with the Government of the Sudan. We hope that the Mission will soon reach its full operational capacity. We also reiterate our strong support for the active role and participation of women in all stages of the transitional period and beyond.

Secondly, we take positive note of the fact that the security situation in Darfur has become more stable. We commend the commitment of the Government of the Sudan to implement the national plan for the protection of civilians, as well as the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism to ensure a smooth drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

However, as stated in the latest report (S/2021/199) of the Secretary-General, inter-communal violence and attacks by armed groups in Darfur continue to take place, resulting in a high number of civilian casualties and displaced persons. We call for further efforts to strengthen the Government's capacity for the protection of civilians, including through cooperation with, and assistance from, international organizations and Member States.

While we note the efforts of the Government in addressing the recent incidents, it is also vital that the Government continue to find comprehensive and sustainable solutions to address the root causes of the security issues in Darfur. This should include measures to promote dialogue and reconciliation among different tribes and communities.

Furthermore, we call on the Government to ensure a safe and orderly withdrawal of UNAMID personnel and the Mission's assets, in line with resolution 2559 (2020).

Thirdly, it is essential to further address the critical economic and humanitarian challenges in the Sudan. The international community should continue to support the Sudanese Government in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the current socioeconomic challenges. In this regard, we call for further facilitation of the country's access to international financial institutions. As the Secretary-General notes in his report, the Sudan's debt relief and access to foreign loans are seen as its gateway to economic recovery.

In conclusion, Viet Nam re-emphasizes our firm commitment in supporting the Sudan in this transitional chapter towards long-term peace, security, and prosperity.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, allow me to extend my warm congratulations to you, Madame, on your appointment as Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations and on your presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We look forward to working with you on issues related to the Sudan in the Security Council in the coming period. I also wish to express my appreciation for the efforts of the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom during her presidency of the Security Council last month.

I would like to thank Mr. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), as well as Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, for their briefings today.

The transitional Government of the Sudan continues to implement its policies, the aim of which is to achieve a democratic transition, institute the rule of law and improve human rights conditions. In addition, the Government is working to address the Sudanese economy's inherited structural deficiencies. The purpose of these programmes and policies is to build a secure and stable Sudan in which peace and prosperity reign and in which citizens enjoy freedom and justice, as expressed and embodied by the slogans of the glorious December revolution in the Sudan.

In order to achieve those goals, during this important stage of the country's political, constitutional, economic and social development, the transitional Government is working to mobilize all national actors and involve them in the development of comprehensive policies that are suited to the nature, needs and aspirations of today. To that end, we will work to overcome the obstacles of previous decades and lay the foundations of a democratic, development-oriented State whose central concern is the human being, a State that reinforces the pillars of social justice and comprehensive peace.

In recent weeks, significant efforts have been made in the Sudan to put in place the institutions of the transitional authority. The Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers have been reconfigured to include representatives of the armed resistance movements that are signatories to the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. The Government and all of the parties to the Agreement have been working closely to implement it, with a view to achieving stability and establishing comprehensive and sustainable peace. The Prime Minister has declared that the Government is determined to see through the peace process by pursuing dialogue with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu, and the Sudan Liberation Movement, led by Abdul Wahid Nur, without any conditions apart from that of defending the national interest. To that end, an important meeting took place between Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, Chair of the Sudanese Sovereign Council, and Abdelaziz al-Hilu in Juba last week.

In the meantime, my Government and the other members of the transitional authority are continuing their efforts to finish shaping the structures of governance. The Council of Partners of the Transitional Period, which is currently being formed, will serve as a coordinating body that brings together the Sovereign Council, the Council of Ministers and partners from political entities and armed resistance movements, in order to promote cooperation and partnership among them as they implement the transitional Government's programme. Consultations are under

way ahead of the forthcoming announcement concerning the commissions and the composition of the Transitional Legislative Council, the membership of which will be representative of all sectors and groups that comprise the Sudanese people and be responsible for carrying out the legislative and oversight functions that will guide the transitional process.

The dire economic situation in the Sudan is the product of decades of mismanagement and poor governance. In addition, the impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic has compounded the country's economic challenges. The Government is making efforts to remedy its structural deficiencies in order to spur economic growth and achieve economic stability. It intends to lift subsidies for certain commodities and allow the Sudanese pound to float in relation to foreign currencies, in order to attract savings from Sudanese citizens abroad, supply banks with foreign currency and combat currency exchange outside the banking system.

Those economic reforms have certainly affected the most disadvantaged groups in society. To mitigate that impact, the transitional Government launched the Thamarat (Fruits) programme. The purpose of the programme is to establish a social safety net by providing support to the poor, with the assistance of regional and international partners.

The measures that the transitional Government is taking to remedy the Sudanese economy's structural deficiencies will require it to work closely with the international community, so as to enable the Sudan to benefit from the assistance of international financial institutions. We call on the international community to help extend debt relief to the Sudan by taking advantage of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and channelling capital to the country for the purposes of investment and providing development support. UNITAMS is expected to play an important role in that regard.

With respect to the protection of civilians, the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, the transitional Government continues to undertake institutional and legal reforms and strengthen frameworks for the protection of human rights and achieving justice. A national human rights mechanism has been established that is modelled on international and regional human rights mechanisms and institutions, and its membership comprises all national stakeholders that are involved in promoting and protecting human rights. Furthermore, in order to bring justice to the victims of the Darfur war, an International Criminal Court (ICC) delegation is currently visiting the Sudan. The delegation is assessing the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation that the Sudan and ICC concluded in February. Arrangements are being made for the ICC Prosecutor to visit the Sudan a second time in April.

The Sudan recently ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Ratifying both conventions constitutes a positive step towards engaging with human rights issues domestically and establishing and strengthening legal frameworks and mechanisms that criminalize enforced disappearance and torture and impose the harshest penalties on the perpetrators. The ratification of those conventions also attests to the earnest desire of the Sudan to fulfil its international obligations and strengthen its cooperation with the international community and all partners to protect and promote human rights.

Since the transitional Government took power in the Sudan, it has committed to pursuing a foreign policy that is based on mutual respect and cooperation, and whose central aim is to realize the supreme interest of the Sudan and uphold the principles of good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation. In so doing, it has been

guided by the principles of its peaceful revolution and the Constitutional Document. One of the most significant challenges carried over from the previous era was the inclusion of the Sudan on the list of State sponsors of terrorism. For that reason, removing the Sudan from that list and the decisions taken subsequently constitute an achievement, one that was made possible by the collective efforts of all transitional Government entities, the people and international friends, chief among them the United States of America.

The delisting of the Sudan and the country's return to the international community herald a new reality, opening broad new political, economic and diplomatic horizons that will enable the Sudan to play the role that it expects to play in the region.

I must note that what is happening in the eastern region of the country, along our border with Ethiopia, is that the Sudanese Armed Forces have retaken our territory and are redeploying there. The Sudanese forces have not and will not cross international borders or attack Ethiopia, our neighbour. The Sudan is always mindful of the abiding and special relationship between the Sudanese and Ethiopian peoples. That is why it is hosting tens of thousands of Ethiopian refugees who have arrived in the country since last November. The Government has taken several measures to respond to this humanitarian situation and opened its borders unconditionally. A high-level national emergency commission was established in response to the Ethiopian refugee crisis. The Government has also provided emergency humanitarian assistance, offering housing, food, health care and drinking water in camps that have been set up specifically for Ethiopian refugees, and it facilitated the visit of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, to the refugee camps in eastern Sudan. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the role that the Sudan has continued to play in hosting refugees over the years and for the Sudanese people's warm welcome.

The Sudan affirms that it stands ready to cooperate fully with UNITAMS to achieve the four strategic objectives set out in Security Council resolution 2524 (2020), namely, to support the political transition, progress towards democratic governance, embed human rights concepts, provide technical assistance with electoral processes and constitution drafting, help to establish and build a comprehensive peace, and mobilize economic and development assistance to achieve those objectives. We also affirm our full cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat to ensure the safe and orderly drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) during its exit and liquidation. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, concluded his successful visit to the Sudan, which took place from 27 February to 7 March 2021. During that visit, he met with the Chair of the Sovereign Council, the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of the Interior. He concluded his visit by signing a framework agreement on behalf of the United Nations that governs the liquidation of UNAMID and its exit from the Sudan. The Government is committed to continuing to improve the security situation in Darfur by implementing the Juba Peace Agreement and collecting unauthorized weapons, achieving justice, ensuring accountability, implementing the National Plan for Civilian Protection with the participation of the parties to the Juba Peace Agreement, and involving the Abdul Wahid movement in the peace process.

Darfur is currently undergoing an important transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. It is our hope that the international community will support the transitional Government's efforts to foster sustainable security, peace and stability in the region.