



Security Council

Seventy-fifth year

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Friday, 25 September 2020, 10.15 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Abarry. (Niger)

Members:

Belgium	Mrs. Van Vlierberge
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Estonia	Mr. Jürgenson
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Germany	Mr. Sautter
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. King
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
Tunisia	Mr. Ladeb
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
United States of America	Ms. Norman-Chalet
Viet Nam	Mr. Dang

Agenda

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (S/2020/912)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 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 the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (S/2020/912)

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations.

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/2020/912, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan.

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in the Sudan and on the planning for our new mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

When I addressed the Council on the Sudan in April (S/2020/336), I highlighted the fact that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was compounding the political, economic and security difficulties the country was facing. This broad assessment remains valid. Nevertheless, there have been positive developments in recent weeks. There have also been new challenges. As the Secretary-General highlights in his report (S/2020/912), the Sudan's political transition continues to move in the right direction. In recent weeks, important legislative reforms were adopted to improve fundamental rights. Interim civilian governors

were appointed in all 18 states, including two women. These are very welcome developments.

The most significant political development, however, was the initialling, on 31 August in Juba, of the peace agreement between the transitional Government of the Sudan, the Sudan Revolutionary Front alliance and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi faction. The parties agreed on a transitional period of 39 months, effective from the date of signing, which is scheduled for 3 October. Furthermore, Prime Minister Hamdok and the Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North signed the agreement on principles in Addis Ababa on 3 September.

All participating parties should be commended for having persevered with the peace process amid the range of other pressures brought on by the pandemic. Those who are absent from the ongoing peace efforts in the country should be encouraged to engage in dialogue and negotiations with the transitional authorities. It is not too late.

As we embrace the recent progress in the peace process, we are also mindful of the significant work ahead. The various accords and respective peace agreements on regional issues must be moulded into a single, coherent framework. Additionally, the parties and the Government must form a joint vision on the way forward and uphold their respective commitments.

At a time when all Governments face major economic constraints, it will be important to set realistic expectations of what can be provided to finance peace dividends. Participants in the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference, held in Berlin, were generous in their support to the Sudan's transition, but signalled that the impact of COVID-19 could reduce donor capacity. The United Nations, in partnership with the African Union, will offer support, as requested by the parties and within its capacity and mandate, to the implementation of these and future agreements.

On 10 September, the transitional Government of the Sudan declared an economic state of emergency after a collapse in the Sudanese pound. This announcement followed months of soaring inflation, a spiralling exchange rate and continuing shortages of basic commodities. Frustration with the state of the economy is growing, as evidenced by the re-emergence of protests across the country. Meanwhile, outstanding issues regarding economic management of the crisis

leads at times to tensions between different components of the Government.

Despite these immense challenges, the Government has been able to make progress in undertaking difficult economic reforms. These changes, such as the removal of subsidies on fuel, form part of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund on a staff-monitored programme, one of the steps necessary to move the Sudan closer to debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

Further, some of the financial assistance donors pledged at the Berlin partnership conference will help to offset some of the economic hardships Sudanese households are experiencing. The contributions will support the implementation of the World Bank-designed, but nationally led, social impact mitigation initiative, known as the Sudan Family Support Programme. The pilot for this initiative was launched with assistance from the World Food Programme this month.

I call on all donors to make good on their pledges and release funds into the Family Support Programme as soon as possible. I also call on international partners to address impediments that prevent the Sudan's full integration into the international economic community. In that regard, I am encouraged by the recent indications of progress on delisting the Sudan from the United States State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

Since the start of the rainy season in July, the Sudan has faced its worst flooding in decades, with over 800,000 people affected, of whom more 100 perished. Between June and September, the projected number of food insecure people rose to 9.6 million, owing in part to the impact of COVID-19, which has exacerbated ongoing inflation and price increases for food and other goods. Humanitarian organizations are working closely with the Government to respond, but further resources are required to meet the growing needs.

The planning for the establishment of the new United Nations mission in the Sudan, UNITAMS, is progressing. Following the lifting of travel restrictions, the work of the planning team shifted in July from Headquarters to the Sudan. I thank the Government of the Sudan for providing a high level of cooperation and support to the team.

The proposed structure and geographical deployment of the Mission are outlined in the Secretary-General's report. The design of the mission is intended

to enable a new and innovative way of working, fostering maximum cooperation and integration among various United Nations entities, and we are working in partnership with the Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese people on this effort.

The mission start-up team for UNITAMS will deploy to the Sudan next month to begin implementing the four strategic objectives mandated by the Security Council: assist the political transition; support peace processes; assist peacebuilding, civilian protection and rule of law; and support the mobilization of economic, development and humanitarian assistance. We will fulfil these objectives with full respect for the principles of national ownership.

Gender issues are mainstreamed throughout the mandate of the Mission, which will have dedicated gender expertise, including at the senior level. We will implement our commitments to advancing gender equality and the women and peace and security agenda.

We know of the significant role that women and civil society have played in the transition in the Sudan, and their voices must be heard in shaping the Sudan's future. During a visit to the Sudan last February, I met with many representatives of women's groups and of civil society, who are eager to play a constructive role. Our planning team, including Special Adviser Haysom, have engaged both groups over the past few months as part of their efforts to design a mission that meets the needs of the Sudanese.

Regarding the protection of civilians, we recognize the existing challenges. As requested by the Council, UNITAMS will support the transitional Government in implementing its national plan for protecting civilians in order to establish a secure and stable environment in the conflict-affected areas. This will include contributing to the training and capacity-building of the Sudanese police on the protection of civilians. The Mission will also work closely with the United Nations country team and civil society organizations on protection and monitoring.

We are conscious of the significant challenges before the Sudan in fully realizing the objectives of its historic transition. The solutions to these long-standing difficulties remain with the Sudanese, and UNITAMS is being configured to accompany them in their efforts. We attach the highest priority to the Sudan and to the speedy deployment of UNITAMS, including the appointment of a special representative. We look

forward to working closely with the Security Council in this important endeavour.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix.

Mr. Lacroix: As Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo has just explained, after almost a year of talks the transitional Government of the Sudan, the Sudan Revolutionary Front and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi joined their national and regional track counterparts in Juba for the initialling of a peace agreement on 31 August. This is obviously a very important milestone in the often-troubled history of Darfur, signifying hope for a more peaceful and prosperous future. I wholeheartedly commend the parties for their commitment to peace, as well as South Sudan for its critical role in mediating the agreement.

As we meet here today, we are only just over a week away from the scheduled signing ceremony and the start of a new era for Darfur. Nonetheless, much work remains to be done to ensure that the goodwill shown in the negotiating process is translated into lasting and sustainable change on the ground. Key players, including the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW), are yet to join the process. The agreements, still a patchwork of documents negotiated on different tracks, are yet to be woven together into a single, unfractured vision of the future of the Sudan. With continued armed clashes and protests in Darfur signalling the anxiety of Darfuri constituencies on the decisions being made in Khartoum and Juba, we must, now more than ever, work together to bring all stakeholders on board and work towards preventing a relapse into conflict, especially in the hot-spot areas that require continuous attention beyond the lifespan of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Furthermore, the implementation phase, which is now beginning, will be just as crucial as the drafting of the agreement itself. This includes, as one of the key provisions of the security arrangements for Darfur, the creation of a 12,000-person joint security force within 90 days of the agreement's signing, made up of 6,000 members from the Sudanese security forces and 6,000 from the signatory armed groups. As forces are deployed and resources are mobilized in support of the implementation, it is essential to ensure that local

Darfuri communities feel ownership of the agreement and fully participate in the implementation.

Financing, too, will be a key challenge and managing expectations of what the international community can deliver in the current international context will be critical. The Darfur armed movements have suggested that implementation will require \$13 billion over a 10-year period, and the Government has indicated that it will commit \$7.5 billion. As the parties work to make the vision of the agreement into a reality, we in the international community have a responsibility to support them.

In the agreement, the parties have called for guarantors and witnesses from the international community and the United Nations to support the implementation of the protocol on security, including through the provision of resources, expertise and advisers. It is foreseen, specifically, that the United Nations will chair the permanent ceasefire committee and have a representative in the joint supreme military committee, in the integration technical committee and in the Darfur regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration commission. The security protocol stipulates that the permanent ceasefire committee and a third international party will take charge of the logistics of disarmament and demobilization efforts, including the establishment of gathering sites.

UNAMID and the United Nations as a whole stand ready to help. As we await further indications from the parties with regard to specific actions to support implementation, UNAMID remains, for now, fully engaged with the Government, particularly in support of its national protection of civilians plan. Discussions to date have identified as priorities enhancing the capacity of rule-of-law institutions in implementing the national plan, as well as the training of trainers for the Sudanese joint forces on protection of civilians, international human rights and humanitarian law, child protection and women's protection. In some locations, UNAMID police have already started joint patrols with the Sudan Police Force, including in Kutum, Saraf Umra and Kabkabiya in North Darfur.

The situation concerning the coronavirus disease continues to impact UNAMID's operations and movement, with the Mission placing focus on the provision of critical life support and core programmatic activities. Simultaneously, UNAMID has been collaborating with the Sudanese authorities to combat

the spread of the virus and mitigate its impact, including prevention support to internally displaced person camps, prisons and justice institutions across Darfur.

At the same time as it has been providing technical, advisory and logistics support to the peace process, UNAMID has remained focused on the protection of civilians as its strategic priority. Continued intermittent clashes between Government forces and the SLA/AW, concentrated in parts of the Jebel Marra area, remain a challenge in this regard. Equally concerning, as talks in Juba have proceeded, has been the continued infighting between SLA/AW factions reportedly over disagreement on whether the group should join the negotiations, causing civilian deaths and significant displacement, mainly in parts of Central and South Darfur.

The final steps towards the peace agreement have also been accompanied by a notable increase in intercommunal violence in Darfur in 2020, with major incidents in West, North and South Darfur. This violence has coincided with a rise in protests demanding increased security by Darfuri communities, particularly internally displaced persons and others, who fear that they may fail to benefit from the final agreement and its implementation. The Government has responded to intercommunal clashes by deploying troops to quell the violence and by sending mediators to support the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

However, while the Government has vowed to meet the legitimate security demands of the Darfuri people, it continues to face significant challenges, including limited capacity and a trust deficit, particularly in conflict-affected areas and IDP camps, where protection is most needed. UNAMID has worked closely with the Government to reinforce that capacity, engage the communities and calm tensions where they occur. It must be noted that with its uniformed presence focused on the greater Jebel Marra area, UNAMID is limited in its ability to respond to protection needs that arise elsewhere in Darfur, such as in the areas of significant intercommunal violence in West Darfur in July.

The protection of civilians is also at the centre of the ongoing work to prepare the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as requested by the Council, by the end of October. Taking into consideration the security situation, the impact of the peace process and the opportunities and challenges pertaining to the Government's protection plan in

Darfur, a joint AU-United Nations working group is developing options that may be presented to the Council to address protection-of-civilians needs and challenges subsequent to the expiry of UNAMID's current mandate, in December 2020. Each option is being calibrated vis-à-vis the role of UNITAMS in order to ensure coordination and complementarity. To that end, we intend to ensure full consultation with the Sudanese Government, including by organizing experts-level and principals-level meetings of the tripartite mechanism.

As we stand on the cusp of the historic peace agreement in Juba, we are heartened by the progress that has been made but also reminded of the significant challenges that remain. With the start of the implementation phase, it is essential that our support help to achieve improvements that can be felt by the people on the ground in Darfur, especially in strengthening the safety and security of Darfuris.

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

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

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I wish to thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo and Lacroix for their briefings. Let me also thank all those United Nations colleagues who are working very hard to get the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) stood up and to deal with the ongoing issues there.

Despite competing priorities and, indeed, the complications and death toll from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we have continued to see the civilian-led Government of the Sudan take forward the implementation of the key transitional benchmarks, as set out in their Constitutional Document. In particular, we welcome the recent progress made on legal reforms that strengthen human rights across the Sudan, as well as the appointment of civilian governors. On the latter, we welcome very much the inclusion of a number of women in those appointments. So that is all very positive.

But the Sudan still faces a multitude of challenges. In the last year alone, the people of the Sudan have had to contend with unprecedented flooding, desert locusts and the first polio outbreak in more than a decade. Inflation exceeds 160 per cent, and humanitarian

need, unfortunately, is increasing. COVID-19 has only exacerbated those challenges.

It is clear that the Sudanese people cannot face those challenges alone, and it would be unreasonable for any of us to believe that. The international community must step up. The United Kingdom is playing its part. We have contributed more than \$100 million towards the Family Support Programme, which will help mitigate the negative impact of some of the necessary economic reforms being pursued by the Government of the Sudan. And in 2020, the United Kingdom is donating an additional \$76 million of humanitarian aid to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to meet the most urgent needs of those affected by food insecurity, conflict and economic crisis in the Sudan.

But we must do more. Echoing the Secretary-General, I ask Member States to consider not whether we can afford to support the Sudan, but whether we can afford not to.

Once established, UNITAMS will be at the core of international support, working to ensure that it is coordinated and effective. We urge the United Nations to work with the Government of the Sudan to facilitate the swift deployment of the Mission and, crucially, to ensure that UNITAMS has adequate resources and geographical presence to enable it to respond to the needs on the ground and to fulfil its mandate.

We need to see the rapid appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We have waited for too long, and that delay is undermining the ability of the United Nations to support the people of the Sudan.

Turning to the peace process, I want very much to commend the efforts and achievements of the Government of the Sudan, under the leadership of Prime Minister Hamdok, and a number of armed movements to take forward negotiations despite the challenges of COVID-19. I want particularly to welcome the initialling of a peace agreement on 31 August by the Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front. It is a very welcome step towards a comprehensive peace deal for the Sudan, and it is an opportunity that we urge all parties to take advantage of through the swift and full implementation of the agreement. We also reiterate our call on all of those who remain outside the peace process to engage constructively, immediately and without preconditions and to conclude swiftly negotiations on a comprehensive peace agreement.

Although we have seen progress towards efforts to secure peace, the security situation in Darfur remains concerning. The recent increase in intercommunal violence and civilian displacement and the ongoing conflict in Jebel Marra demonstrates the complexity of the drivers and root causes of conflict, which will need to be comprehensively resolved if we are to see a stable and secure Darfur.

I want to commend the work of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) during these unprecedented times, not only in its assistance of the national response to COVID-19 in Darfur, but also in its work with the Government of the Sudan to support and bolster the protection of civilians.

In that regard, I want to welcome the Government of the Sudan's national protection-of-civilians strategy, which demonstrates its firm commitment to fulfilling its responsibility to protect. However, it will take time to build the required capacity. In doing so, we urge the Government of the Sudan to build on its cooperation with UNAMID to ensure that protection needs continue to be met.

Mr. Sautter (Germany): Today we are discussing the situation in the Sudan, and for the first time we are discussing the work of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). I wish to underline that the notion of assistance stands for the spirit of a new chapter in the relationship between the Council and the Sudan, a chapter based on genuine cooperation and partnership. This support is crucial. I am confident that I speak on behalf of all of us when I say that we want the Sudanese Government to succeed. We want the Sudanese people, as has been said, to cash in on the peace and democracy dividend.

That is why we hosted, together with the United Nations, the European Union and the Sudan, the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference in Berlin in June, mobilizing \$1.8 billion in assistance to the Sudan and marking the beginning of a new political partnership between the Sudan and the international community.

We welcome the agreements reached with parts of the armed groups in Juba and look forward to the signing of the agreements next week. It is crucial that the implementation of the agreed provisions start swiftly. We welcome the ongoing talks with parties that have not yet joined the process, and at the same time we

urge those who continue to stand outside of this process to become part of the solution.

Partnership also means being frank about the challenges ahead. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/912), an unstable economic situation, the need to ensure justice for past crimes and violence, including the massacre of 3 June 2019, and increasing humanitarian needs are all aggravated by the impact of the coronavirus disease.

I am not suggesting that UNITAMS can overcome those immense challenges immediately, but we are convinced that UNITAMS can make a significant difference on the ground. For that to happen, UNITAMS needs to be fit for purpose. The purpose of the Mission is clearly defined in resolution 2524 (2020) and entails four strategic priorities. We hope and expect UNITAMS to be able to work on all of those, including adequate resources for civilian protection and human rights. In that context, we feel it is very important that the position of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General be filled soon.

While we appreciate the update by the Secretariat on the planning process, we would like to mention that the Council had also requested information about the geographical deployment of the Mission. I heard important remarks on that from Rosemary DiCarlo.

In particular, we are looking into the footprint in Darfur and the components that will be represented in the specific offices. We expect that United Nations police will be represented in all Mission offices. We would also like to reiterate that the Council has asked the Secretariat that UNITAMS make use of lessons learned from the State liaison functions concept, and that a mechanism based on them should be established in Darfur, including in Jebel Marra and the Two Areas.

I would like to call on the Secretariat to be both realistic and ambitious in its planning. We welcome what we have seen so far. Germany will continue to support the build-up of UNITAMS, including by making available additional voluntary contributions and personnel. We encourage other Member States to also consider doing so.

Let me make a remark on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The Council will soon have to make a decision on the future of UNAMID. We note with concern that the report in front of us points at a deterioration of the security

situation in Darfur. This is an alarming signal. We are looking forward to more analysis and data in the special report mandated by the Council. That report should contain an assessment of the capacity of the Sudanese Government to protect civilians, as foreseen by resolution 2525 (2020).

In conclusion, the response of the Security Council to the historic change and transformation in the Sudan is a very good example of what the multilateral system can muster in support of the aspirations of the people. Around the same time last year, during the high-level week of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Hamdok said here in New York that the Sudanese people were “marching resolutely towards the future as a friend and partner on equal footing with all peace-loving nations” (A/74/PV.10, p. 37). I am convinced that the Security Council will continue its strong partnership with the new Sudan and its peace-loving people.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo and Lacroix for their briefings. I welcome the Secretary-General’s first report (S/2020/912) on the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). I would also like to take this opportunity to express my condolences to the victims of the floods in the Sudan.

As we speak, the Sudan is going through a critical period of political transition, in which positive developments are obvious to everyone. That transition would not have been possible without the mediation efforts of the African Union, South Sudan and the regional partners. It is also an important practice of African countries implementing the Silencing Guns in Africa initiative. At the same time, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, floods and a fragile economic system still constitute challenges for its transitional process. The international community should increase its assistance and help the Sudan get through this difficult moment. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the following four points.

First, China welcomes the recent positive developments in the political process in the Sudan, not least of which was the initialling of the peace agreement on 31 August. We appreciate South Sudan’s important role in that regard. China calls on all parties in the Sudan to remain united, proceed to sign the peace agreement as scheduled and earnestly implement it. Those who are not yet party to the Juba process should

also sign the peace agreement as soon as possible. The peace agreement is a new starting point for peace and development in the Sudan. We encourage all Sudanese parties to continue with the dialogue in a bid to jointly promote the Sudan's transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and expeditiously achieve long-term peace and stability.

Secondly, with the fragile economic and health system in the country, the COVID-19 pandemic and the floods have worsened living conditions and increased the humanitarian challenges facing the Sudanese people. The international community should provide targeted assistance to help the Sudanese Government realize economic reforms and strengthen its health system. International financial institutions should also take debt relief action to help the Sudan. China actively supports Sudan in its efforts to develop its economy and fight the pandemic, and has provided the country significant material and technical assistance. We will continue to do our best to help the Sudan achieve sustainable development.

Thirdly, China appreciates the important role played by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to promote the peace process in the Sudan, and welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat and peacekeeping personnel to that end. We expect UNAMID to implement its exit strategy in an orderly manner, as planned. I wish to thank the UNITAMS planning team for its advance work and welcome the strong support the Mission received from the Sudanese Government. We highlight that the core task of UNITAMS is to support the political transition process in the Sudan. It has a mandate that should not go beyond the provisions of our resolution, let alone intervene in the internal affairs of the Sudan. A smooth handover is needed from UNAMID to UNITAMS. We should save resources and avoid duplicating responsibilities. UNITAMS should also step up its efforts to help the Sudanese Government promote sustainable development, while coordinating international humanitarian assistance efforts. The Sudanese Government bears the primary responsibility for protecting civilians. China supports the Sudanese Government in formulating and implementing, in earnest, a national strategy to protect civilians. UNITAMS should provide technical support to that end and strengthen coordination with other United Nations agencies on the ground, which should perform their duties strictly in accordance with their respective

mandates and avoid stepping on each other's toes in carrying out their functions, as that would affect the expected results.

Fourthly, in view of the positive developments in the Sudanese political process, the Security Council should, according to the latest developments, carry out a timely review of the sanctions imposed on the Sudan and establish a road map for lifting them, thereby sending a positive message. China calls on the countries concerned to remove the Sudan from the sanctions list of sponsors of terrorism as soon as possible and lift the unilateral sanctions against the Sudan in order to create favourable conditions for the Sudanese Government and its people to fight the pandemic.

The hard-won peace process in the Sudan is an opportunity for the international community to help the Sudan move towards peace and development. China will join the international community to contribute to promoting the Sudanese political transition, long-term stability, development and prosperity in the Sudan.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African States members of the Security Council, namely, the Niger, Tunisia and South Africa, as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

At the outset, on behalf of the A3+1, allow me to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, on convening this meeting. Additionally, the A3+1 would like to thank our briefers today, Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Jean-Pierre Lacroix, for their enlightening briefing on the developments pertaining to the Sudan and the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

The A3+1 would also like to express our appreciation to the UNITAMS planning team for its efforts and consistent consultations in order to bring life to the envisioned special political mission. We are confident that it will successfully navigate the mammoth task ahead of it.

The A3+1 also welcome our colleague, the Permanent Representative of the Sudan, to today's Security Council meeting, and we are looking forward to his statement on the latest developments from home.

As the international community, we have been steadfast in our commitment to assisting in bringing about peace, stability and prosperity in Darfur for over

a decade. Although it has been a turbulent journey, significant strides have been made in the process. It is in this context that, as we start a new chapter with the new special political mission, we wish to ensure that we will work to preserve the gains and continue to assist in bringing forth the peace for which ordinary Sudanese have yearned and for which they still urgently yearn.

In this regard, the Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa welcome the efforts of the Sudanese transitional Government as it continues to pursue political reforms, make progress in the peace process and tackle the rapidly deteriorating economic situation. Furthermore, the A3+1 is also encouraged by the signing of the 29 August agreement with the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and of the 3 September agreement on principles, which mark significant steps forward on a trajectory towards achieving lasting peace in the Sudan.

The A3+1 recognizes that the transitional Government is operating amid conditions characterized by a dire economic situation, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and a tense political climate. The report of the Secretary-General clearly highlights that

“[s]piralling inflation, continuing shortages of key commodities, a growing public deficit and dropping revenues have placed the country’s economy in a critical state” (*S/2020/912, para. 41*).

Consequently, the A3+1 call for the lifting of all sanctions against the Sudan, as they have outrun their course. In fact, they are further hindering prospects for progress in the country.

The Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa welcome the pledges made during the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference to assist with the socioeconomic situation in the country. We trust that this support will aide in alleviating a number of the hardships with which the Sudan is currently grappling.

On the security front, we welcome the transitional Government’s efforts aimed at working with the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to tackle the increased levels of intercommunal violence in the country. We also welcome the steps the transitional Government has made towards the national plan for protecting civilians. As UNAMID draws down, the A3+1 encourage it to

continue working with national- and local-authority stakeholders, as well as the United Nations country team and other partners, in protecting civilians, facilitating mediation and addressing underlying issues of access to land and resources.

The A3+1 look forward to the urgent appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to assume overall authority, provide strategic direction for all activities of UNITAMS, fulfil an advisory and advocacy role at the political level and coordinate the efforts of the international community in support of the strategic objectives of the UNITAMS mandate.

As it shares borders with key countries in its region of Africa that are pivotal to unlocking the peace and security of the region and the whole African continent, the Sudan is of geostrategic importance. It is therefore imperative that the Security Council continue to ensure stability in the Sudan. As Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Sudan is critical in building cohesion in the Horn of Africa.

It is the considered view of the Niger, Tunisia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa that the global environment remains difficult and uncertain. Thirty-two million people have been infected by COVID-19, and a million have perished. All of our economies have been battered, with no exceptions. None of us in this Chamber — the permanent five and the elected ten alike — could have predicted in September 2019 that in September 2020 we would be living through the turbulent times occasioned by the pandemic — no one. The Sudan is part of this world that we are talking about, as are Africa and the Caribbean, and all our countries and regions.

Mrs. Van Vlierberge (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Jean-Pierre Lacroix for their briefings.

I will focus on three aspects: the protection of the most vulnerable, the progress of the peace process and the transition.

The establishment of a new mission is a significant moment. It is a matter of translating on the ground the decision taken by the Security Council, in order to concretize the objectives of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) to support the political transition and help

the Sudan regain peace and security, with a particular focus on Darfur and the Two Areas.

Without going back over the entirety of the tasks expected of the Mission, Belgium wishes to reiterate the importance of supporting the protection of civilians and strengthening respect for human rights. We are appalled by the persistence of serious violations against children in the Sudan, in particular the frequency of sexual attacks, mutilations and murder. These violations are committed by all parties to the conflict.

The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, chaired by Belgium, is currently discussing that reality. We welcome the efforts of the Sudanese Government to integrate the issue of children into its national plan for the protection of civilians. The amendments to the penal code adopted in July are also an encouraging sign; they improve the protection of vulnerable population groups, including children. These concerns should be addressed in a balanced way in planning for UNITAMS, including providing sufficient capacity dedicated to child protection.

The peace process in the Sudan has made significant progress in recent weeks, with agreements in Juba and Addis Ababa. Belgium calls on the parties to maintain their commitment through constructive dialogue and to rapidly implement the agreements once they have been concluded. We encourage the groups that have remained absent to return to the negotiating table. This is essential for sustaining peace.

Belgium welcomes the fact that the talks do not sidestep such difficult issues as the return of displaced persons, land ownership and transitional justice. These elements are essential to laying the foundations for reconciliation among communities; the current persistence of conflicts among these communities demonstrates their necessity.

Supporting reconciliation is one of the strategic priorities of UNITAMS, and we will closely monitor activities in that area. Since we are talking about justice, we have noted the intention of the Sudanese authorities to cooperate with the International Criminal Court, whose work we support. We also commend efforts in cooperation with the authorities and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to defuse tensions in Darfur. Civilians remain vulnerable to attacks, and we are concerned about the recent increase in violence in the region. In addition to the peace process and restoring security in

Darfur and in the Two Areas, the Sudan currently faces many other challenges. The socioeconomic situation is fragile and has been exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic and major floods, disproportionately affecting women, children and displaced persons. Such a situation may also lead to political instability; it is a test of the maturity of the political leaders. We note with satisfaction the ambitious programme of political reforms undertaken by the transitional Government and its willingness to address the economic situation. UNITAMS, in collaboration with the country team, will be the Sudan's key partner for the transition period. The Sudan can already count on the support of the international community, as demonstrated by the high-level conference held in June. Belgium, together with the European Union, stands with the Sudanese people.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Ms. DiCarlo and Mr. Lacroix for their very comprehensive briefings. France's priority is to support the transition that began more than a year ago. The progress made in recent months is encouraging, particularly with regard to the momentum of the peace negotiations, which the Government has prioritized. We will be highly vigilant with regard to the implementation of those agreements. We also call on the parties that remain outside that process to assume responsibility by returning to the peace talks and draw lessons from the new political situation in the Sudan.

We remain concerned about the ongoing violence in Darfur, both between communities and within armed groups, which continues to result in numerous civilian casualties, including among displaced persons, in violation of international humanitarian law. The deployment of 1,500 troops of the Sudanese Armed Forces, announced at the end of July, is very encouraging and demonstrates a clear willingness to address such challenges. That must be translated into the effective protection of, and the reduction of threats to, the civilian population. That is critical to creating the conditions for the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which is anticipated by the Sudanese Government by the end of December. It will be up to the Council to take a decision by that date based on an assessment of the situation on the ground drawn up by the Secretary-General. In that context, the structure of UNITAMS proposed by the Secretary-General provides an adequate framework. The Mission must be provided with the necessary human and financial resources

in order to take shape. That is especially important with regard to the mandate to protect civilians, in particular women, children and humanitarian and medical workers.

In that regard, let me underline the primary responsibility of the Sudanese authorities, which goes without saying. The Mission has a broad mandate in that area in order to support their efforts, particularly in terms of human rights and police capacity-building. In that respect, I welcome the cooperation between the Sudanese Armed Forces and UNAMID forces to deal with the clashes last July, which is a step in the right direction. In the coming months, it is also crucial to fully leverage the synergies between UNAMID and UNITAMS without exception. There is no doubt that mobilizing UNAMID's capacities and footprint can help to expedite the transition to UNITAMS.

In that context, France will continue to fully support the Sudanese Government on several fronts. In addition to security issues, the Sudanese authorities are facing significant economic challenges, with necessary structural reforms, as well as health reforms given the impact of the coronavirus disease and humanitarian challenges due to the floods that have affected more than 800,000 people in the Nile basin, from the north to the south. France expresses its condolences to the victims of the floods. We will continue to work alongside the Sudanese people through our emergency relief. Finally, we welcome the agreement reached with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to open a local office in Khartoum and regional offices, including in Darfur.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Like other speakers, let me begin by thanking the briefers, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for their comprehensive presentations.

Indonesia is encouraged by the achievements of the Government of the Sudan, especially the historic comprehensive peace agreements with armed groups in Darfur and the Two Areas. We commend the Sudan on reaching yet another important milestone on its journey towards peace, stability and prosperity. We therefore need to remain vigilant in order to ensure that those achievements can be sustained and further enhanced. In that regard, I would like to underline three important points.

My first point concerns strengthening intercommunal dialogue. The intercommunal tensions in the east, west

and south of the country must be addressed effectively. Indonesia firmly believes in the virtue of sustained and owned dialogue towards a lasting reconciliation. We call on the Government of the Sudan, in coordination with the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), to intensify dialogue and community engagement in response to the clashes. Indonesia joins the Secretary-General in commending the Government of the Sudan's prompt response to the clashes, particularly through the national committee for the protection of civilians and the facilitation of reconciliatory dialogue among the communities.

My second point is on enhancing humanitarian assistance. As reported by the Secretary-General (see S/2020/912), intercommunal clashes, the economic crisis and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have exacerbated the humanitarian situation in the Sudan. We strongly believe that the improvement in the general well-being of all the Sudanese is inseparable from the country's political transition. Political progress should be experienced by all Sudanese people in their daily lives.

The presence of UNAMID remains crucial to ensuring the provision of humanitarian assistance and basic services to the Sudanese. We call on UNAMID to enhance its cooperation with the Government to ensure the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance, including to bolster the Sudan's efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

My third point concerns ensuring a smooth transition to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). Indonesia welcomes the establishment of the Executive Committee for Coordination with UNITAMS. We believe that the smooth transition to UNITAMS can be achieved only through close coordination between the United Nations and the Government of the Sudan, as well as the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, in the UNITAMS planning process. Indonesia emphasizes the need for close cooperation and collaboration among all relevant parties in the UNITAMS planning process, especially on the transfer of assets. As an inseparable part of the Sudan's transition, the success of UNITAMS should be the priority of all parties.

Let me conclude by reiterating Indonesia's deep commitment to supporting the Sudan in this new

chapter of its journey towards an enduring peace, security and prosperity.

Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia): We join other Council members in thanking the briefers for their insightful overviews.

Last year, during the high-level week of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Hamdok introduced his Government's ambitious goals to bring peace to the country, lead a successful transition to democracy and restore the economy. Despite the multiple challenges, such as the coronavirus disease, the Sudan has made great efforts to achieve those goals. While a great deal of work still lies ahead, we recognize the progress already achieved. In that regard, allow me to congratulate the Sudan on reaching the peace agreement. We further encourage the parties that have not yet joined the peace agreement to do so urgently. We hope that this agreement will pave the way for lasting peace in the Sudan. For this to happen, addressing the root causes of conflict is imperative.

As with any peace agreement, implementation is key. While the Sudan will be clearly in the lead, we hope that it can feel the full and unwavering support of the international community through the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) in the endeavour of implementation.

We also welcome the progress the Sudan has made in the political transition to democracy. For instance, the appointment of civilian governors was a key milestone. Equally significant was the adoption of legal reforms that strengthen human rights. We encourage the Sudan to continue on this path of institution-building, as strong democratic institutions form the backbone of democracy. Again, we hope that UNITAMS can be a solid partner in the endeavour of helping the Sudan to achieve full democracy.

The Sudan continues to face immense economic challenges. Estonia was proud to contribute to the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference held in June, but it recognizes that more needs to be done. The Sudan needs continued support to heal its crippled economy. We hope that sustained support will be provided by UNITAMS, among other actors.

UNITAMS was established with the sole purpose of supporting the Sudan during its historic transition. Given the immense challenges the Sudan is facing, it is crucial that UNITAMS have sufficient capacity and

adequate resources and be fit for purpose to offer support in all areas where the Sudan needs help. This also applies to the security situation. We welcome the willingness of the Sudan to address civilian protection head-on, but also recognize some of the capacity constraints, where the United Nations can be helpful. On that note, we would also like to commend the cooperation between the Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in addressing the recent outbreak of violence in Darfur. It serves as a true example of how much more can be achieved if actors work together for a common goal. Therefore, it is our hope that UNITAMS, as well as UNAMID, are embraced by the Sudan as true partners that will help the Sudan to rise to the challenges it is currently facing.

We also join other colleagues in highlighting the importance of appointing the Special Representative of the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

In conclusion, Estonia wants to see the Sudan succeed. We hope that, with the support of the United Nations, including UNITAMS, the Sudan is able to reach all of its goals of achieving peace, democracy and prosperity.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo and Lacroix for their briefings.

The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) represents a genuine and valuable opportunity to help the Sudan achieve lasting peace. The fact that the Mission has the unanimous support of the Security Council should not be taken for granted. However, the Mission is facing many challenges in achieving its objectives. The Sudan is in the midst of political reform and faces intense pressure from the Sudanese people to meet their needs. That is in addition to the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the effects of climate change and an increase in humanitarian needs, driven primarily by an increase in intercommunal violence.

According to the most recent reports, 2.8 million people currently face a food crisis or levels of emergency food insecurity in Darfur, and almost 400,000 people have been affected by heavy rains and flooding. Insecurity and human rights violations are also increasing, affecting vulnerable populations, especially women, who continue to be affected by high levels of sexual and gender-based violence in some areas during the COVID-19 lockdown. In that regard, we welcome

the recent legal amendments for the protection of the most vulnerable populations, including the eradication of cultural practices against women and girls through the prohibition of female genital mutilation and the abolition of the death penalty for persons under 18.

We add our voice to calls for the allocation of adequate resources to continue child protection efforts and to enable UNITAMS to fully implement its child protection mandate. It is essential that child protection advisers be provided and that they have adequate funding and sufficient seniority, as well as a monitoring and reporting mechanism.

We recognize the Sudan's efforts to advance the transition and welcome the decision of the parties to maintain their commitment to the Juba process and the decision of the Sudanese Government and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front to sign a comprehensive peace agreement in Juba on 3 October. All the parties in the Sudan, including armed groups, must remain committed to addressing the root causes of the conflict in order to establish a safe environment for all Sudanese, especially the most vulnerable.

In that regard, the focus of UNITAMS in supporting the Government in the protection of civilians is vital. All efforts to protect civilians must be a priority and a shared responsibility. The transitional Government's initiative of a national plan for the protection of civilians is a positive step in that direction. It is our hope that the support of UNITAMS in this area will provide new opportunities to ensure that the unarmed protection of civilians is a more widely implemented approach.

While we acknowledge the improvements in the protection of women's rights and gender equality in the comprehensive peace agreement, we remain concerned that women's formal participation in peace talks has been marginal in most cases. We also encourage the Government to continue its efforts to improve humanitarian access and call on non-State armed groups to allow the safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians in need.

Finally, the political transition of the Sudan remains fragile. The recent increase in intercommunal violence is of great concern and calls for a comprehensive response that addresses the urgent need for peace of the Sudanese people. As the Sudanese transition evolves, tangible progress on human rights, justice and inclusive governance will ultimately determine whether the aspirations of the Sudanese become a reality. It also

represents a crucial opportunity for the United Nations and the Council to support the search for peace in the Sudan, and we believe that UNITAMS is a useful means to that end.

Ms. Norman-Chalet (United States of America): I want to thank Under-Secretaries-General DiCarlo and Lacroix for their remarks and the updates regarding the latest developments in the Sudan.

I would also like to welcome the progress made on the ground since the Security Council met in June (see S/2020/496) to authorize the creation of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

The United States commends the efforts of the civilian-led transitional Government, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi faction to reach an agreement that, if upheld an earnest and in a spirit of peace, reconciliation and development, could usher in a new era throughout the Sudan. It is now up to the parties to implement the agreement transparently and in a timely manner. We strongly believe the agreement can bring long-term peace, justice and stability to those who have endured cycles of widespread violence and been victims of atrocities committed with impunity. The next steps will not be easy but the United States is committed to supporting this agreement because we believe it can serve as a foundation for a new just and democratic Sudan.

Similarly, the United States welcomes the declaration of principles recently agreed to by the civilian-led transitional Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North. We urge the parties to begin discussions based on those principles soon.

The Juba peace agreement and the Addis Ababa declaration of principles build upon the tremendous momentum in the Sudan that began in late 2018 and early 2019 to achieve peace, freedom and justice, as well as equal rights and opportunities for all Sudanese. We call on the Sudanese Liberation Movement, led by Abdul Wahid, to without delay engage the civilian-led transitional Government to further the cause of peace.

Comprehensive peace will need an inclusive and harmonized peace process. Now more than ever, UNITAMS is needed to support the Sudanese people, and we commend the efforts of the United Nations to

lay the groundwork for an effective United Nations presence in the Sudan. We hope that, despite the delays in identifying a Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations will move quickly to hire and deploy UNITAMS personnel.

The United States strongly believes that UNITAMS will be able to fulfil its mandate to support the political transition and peace process, assist peacebuilding, development and humanitarian assistance efforts and provide critical assistance for security sector reform, police training, the rule of law and inclusive civilian governance.

At the same time, we are deeply concerned with the lack of accountability for recent violence in Darfur and other conflict-affected areas. We note the Sudan's steps to respond to this violence, including through developing its protection of civilians plan, the appointment of civilian governors and the deployment of a joint force.

However, local authorities and the civilian-led transitional Government must do more to prevent further militia attacks on civilians, including internally displaced persons, and to hold those responsible for the horrific violence at Masteri and elsewhere. We urge the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and other United Nations agencies to continue to coordinate to protect civilians. The violence, which left hundreds dead and thousands displaced, is a reminder to us all that the protection of civilians must always be at the forefront of our deliberations and decisions with respect to the Sudan, including during our upcoming discussions on the future of UNAMID.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): I would like to thank Under-Secretaries-Generals Rosemary Di Carlo and Jean-Pierre Lacroix for their comprehensive updates. I welcome the presence of my dear friend the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Sudan at this meeting.

Viet Nam warmly welcomes a number of positive developments in the Sudan, in general, and Darfur, in particular, over the past few months. We commend the efforts of the transitional Government in promoting peace, stability and development in the country, as well as in responding to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It is our sincere hope that the historic peace agreement initialled on 31 August between the Government and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and

the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi faction will open a new chapter of peace in the country. We applaud the efforts of the parties in conducting negotiations largely through remote means, as well as neighbouring South Sudan's efforts in relentlessly mediating the peace process. It shows that COVID-19 cannot prevent genuine will to make peace.

We would also like to reiterate our support for the work of the United Nations, the African Union and other relevant partners in contributing to the peace process in the Sudan. At the same time, we acknowledge that the Sudan continues to face many challenges. It is crucial that all the relevant parties in the Sudan continue to fully uphold their agreements, thereby contributing to long-term peace and stability in the country. Allow me to highlight the following points.

First, the full implementation of the Constitutional Declaration and the peace agreement remain the most important tasks to achieve long-term peace and stability in the Sudan. We welcome the appointment of the interim governors in 18 states and call on the Government to make further progress on the transitional process.

Furthermore, we urge the remaining armed groups in Darfur to engage in peace negotiations as soon as possible. We believe that more confidence-building measures should be supported in that regard. The support of the United Nations and the African Union, as well as the mediation role of South Sudan, can be further strengthened. In the light of the challenges of COVID-19, it is important to support the Government in maintaining dialogue with the relevant parties in Darfur, including via remote means.

Secondly, we take positive note that the security situation in Sudan, in general, and Darfur, in particular, has become more stable. We urge the armed groups in Darfur to continue to exercise restraint. At the same time, inter-communal violence in Darfur remains an issue of particular concern. We note the efforts of the Government in addressing the recent incidents and call on the Government to find comprehensive and sustainable solutions to address the root causes of intercommunal violence in Darfur, including measures to promote dialogue and reconciliation among different tribes and communities. We also commend the efforts of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in contributing to peace and stability in the region. As the mission is in the drawdown process, we encourage UNAMID to further

engage in capacity-building activities for Government security forces.

Thirdly, it is important to address the critical economic and humanitarian challenges in the Sudan. Viet Nam welcomes the commitment of relevant donors at the Sudan Partnership Conference on 25 June in support of the country. The international community should continue to support the Sudanese Government in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the current socioeconomic challenges, including food insecurity, natural disasters and climate change. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/912), the transition needs both financial and political support. The Sudan's access to international financial assistance, investment and debt relief in the short and medium term needs to be facilitated, not prevented.

Fourthly, we commend the efforts and cooperation by the United Nations and the Sudan since June and look forward to the timely deployment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) to support the Sudan's transition and development. We also strongly support the active role and participation of women in all stages of the transitional process, and therefore appreciate the efforts of UNITAMS to support the engagement of women in that regard.

In conclusion, we fully share the view of the Secretary-General in his report: the question is whether the international community can afford not to support the Sudan as it strives to meet its formidable challenges. The Security Council simply cannot.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Under-Secretaries-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Jean-Pierre Lacroix for their briefings on the situation in the Sudan and for the report on the activities of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and progress in the deployment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) (S/2020/912).

We would like to begin by sincerely congratulating the people and the Government of the Sudan. I think that we can say without exaggeration that a historic event was achieved. On 31 August, in Juba, agreements in principle were reached on peace in and the future of the country. We look forward to the official signing of

a peace agreement and the start of implementation by the parties of their obligations.

In that connection, we must note the mediation efforts made by the South Sudanese people and personally by President Salva Kiir. This is yet further proof of the effectiveness of the formula "African solutions to African problems".

We agree with the conclusions contained in the report of the Secretary-General that the Sudan faces complex tasks in terms of restoring the country's economy and implementing peacebuilding projects. That is precisely why we believe that the new United Nations special political mission should reach its planned capacity as soon as possible. Khartoum has a right to expect that the international community will be able to quickly provide the necessary assistance, and the Security Council should not disappoint the Sudanese people.

We took note of the proposal by Secretary-General Guterres on the need for rapid agreement on the modalities for the transfer of assets and support capacities from UNAMID, which is finalizing its mandate, to UNITAMS. We deem this initiative very timely and urge the Secretariat to get to work on the issue.

We reiterate our position in favour of the final withdrawal of UNAMID, which has successfully completed the tasks entrusted to it. The challenges facing Darfur today are of a peacebuilding rather than a peacekeeping character. The time has come to focus on the recovery and economic development of Darfur; this should be the priority. We believe that it is vital to stay the course towards the gradual drawdown and withdrawal of UNAMID, in accordance with the time frame set out in resolution 2525 (2020).

We note that the way in which events are evolving in Darfur has not shown any significant negative change. Intercommunal clashes in certain states, which are provoked, inter alia, by the seasonal transhumance of cattle, do not change the overall picture. Furthermore, the immediate and coordinated response of the authorities to the events, as well as the implementation of the national strategy to protect civilians, on which the Sudan reports to Security Council regularly, once again demonstrate Khartoum's commitment to a holistic approach to addressing the root causes of the conflict. We can only welcome that.

In addition, it is worth recalling that the main spoiler of the peace process and the person responsible for the hostility of the Sudan Liberation Army in the Jebel Marra region remains Abdul Wahid Al-Nur, who has refused, *inter alia*, to join the peace agreement. We again call on those countries that have an influence on that intransigent opponent to bring the necessary pressure to bear on him.

We note that the Secretary-General has called once again for the lifting of unilateral economic sanctions, including such an anachronism as the fact that the Sudan remains on the American list of countries that sponsor terrorism. Obviously, we would like to endorse that appeal. It is impossible to speak of the importance of the economic recovery of the country and at the same time continue to hinder the implementation of initiatives through international financial institutions. We see that the lifting of unilateral sanctions is subject to conditions that have no relation to the peace process in the Sudan but that reflect the agenda of those who introduced those restrictions. That kind of cynicism does not surprise us and has not surprised us for a long time.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Siddig (Sudan): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September and to express our deep appreciation to my friend Dian Triansyah Djani for Indonesia's successful presidency last month. Allow me also to thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo for their briefings. I would also like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all Security Council members for the support they expressed and offered to my country.

Late in August and after almost one year of candid and fruitful negotiations in Juba, the transitional Government of the Sudan and the major armed groups in Darfur and the Two Areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile concluded a historic peace deal. The deal is comprehensive in scope and addresses the root causes of the armed conflicts and political instability in the country. It includes resource-sharing, land ownership, social justice, governance and equality at the national level. The deal also includes clauses to resolve the consequences of conflicts, including humanitarian relief, the safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their areas

of origin, the disarmament of combatants and their integration into the national army or into society, and the development, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the conflict-affected areas.

Three elements characterize this peace deal and make it different from previous agreements.

First, there is strong political will and commitment from the transitional Government to deliver peace, justice and freedom in line with the key objectives of the Constitutional Document.

Secondly, the agreement was negotiated and concluded between the Sudanese themselves. As His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Republic of the Sudan, Abdalla Hamdok, put it: "This is a Sudanese peace, made with our own hands and by our own efforts". In that regard, the Sudan is deeply thankful to the Government of South Sudan for its important role in hosting and facilitating the talks.

Thirdly, the negotiations were conducted between partners, not between adversaries, in contrast to the confrontational atmosphere that prevailed during the previous regime.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Hamdok met with the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, Abdelaziz Al-Hilu, in Addis Ababa. Together they signed a declaration of principles in which they secured the continuation of the current cessation of hostilities for the duration of the negotiation process. They also agreed on six principles that would pave the way to resolving the few remaining issues. I take this opportunity to reiterate our call to Abdul Wahid Mohamed Al-Nur to join the peace process and pursue a prosperous future of peace and stability in Darfur.

My Government is fully committed to taking on its responsibility to protect its people in Darfur in particular and throughout the country in general.

In this regard and following the unfortunate intercommunal clashes in Darfur at the beginning of the farming season in July, the Government guaranteed the non-recurrence of such conflicts by enhancing its security capabilities in Darfur by sending 15,000 army and police forces. Additionally, a regionwide arms collection campaign is under way. Furthermore, peaceful intercommunal coexistence is being encouraged and criminal justice mechanisms have been improved and strengthened. More importantly, the appointment of civilian governors across the country, most especially

in Darfur, would have a profound effect in preserving security and stability in the region.

In May, the Sudan shared with the Security Council its national plan to protect civilians in Darfur and the war-affected areas. The plan is guided by best practices, as well as successful policies and standards. Ten days ago, a periodic progress report on the implementation of the plan was also shared with the Council. On top of that, the signing of the peace deal would inevitably clear the way not only for lasting peace but also for a better civilian protection in the affected areas.

Right after the adoption of resolution 2524 (2020), by which the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) was established, the Prime Minister made a decision to form a national mechanism for coordination with UNITAMS, and appoint a veteran diplomat as national coordinator. This interdepartmental coordination body includes all relevant national authorities and is tasked with synergizing between the Government and UNITAMS at the federal and state levels, as well as with identifying the areas in which the Sudan needs support. When the Secretariat planning team visited the Sudan in August, the national mechanism played a key role in making the visit a success. We will spare no effort to facilitate the establishment of the new Mission and ensure a smooth transition from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to UNITAMS in December. While thanking the Security Council and the Secretariat for responding to the Sudan's request for creating this special political mission, we expect further close consultation with the Government during the planning for the Mission and

the setting of its structure, policies and priorities. It is also our hope that the Security Council will soon agree on the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to lead UNITAMS.

All members of the Council know that the transitional Government of the Sudan is tirelessly tackling huge challenges. As a result of the economic mismanagement of the previous regime, the economic situation is dire. That is coupled with the coronavirus disease pandemic and the unprecedented level of heavy rains and devastating floods. This situation requires the sustained and generous support of the regional and international partners, including the Sudan's urgent removal from the United States State Sponsors of Terrorism list, which is preventing debt relief, access to concessionary loans and large-scale foreign investment. We would like, in this connection, to thank the countries that participated and pledged in the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference, which was held virtually and co-hosted by Germany, the European Union, the United Nations and the Government of the Sudan in June, as well as the follow-up meeting hosted by Saudi Arabia in August.

The transitional Government of the Sudan will continue its efforts to make fundamental changes in the political, social and security landscape in order to build a prosperous and peaceful country.

The President (*spoke in French*): I will now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its discussion on the subject in closed consultations.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.