



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8513th meeting

Wednesday, 17 April 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Annen (Germany)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Indonesia	Mr. Syihab
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland	Mr. Lewicki
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2019/305)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2019/305)

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

In accordance with article 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for Darfur, and Ms. Ursula Mueller, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Mr. Mamabolo is joining today's meeting via video-conference from Khartoum.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/305, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mamabolo.

Mr. Mamabolo: It is an honour for me to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur and the work of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), in line with the Secretary-General's 90-day report that is already before the Council (S/2019/305). I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Niels Annen, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

As Council members know, the Secretary-General's report covers the period up to 3 April. Since then, a lot has happened in the Sudan in general, and in Darfur, in particular. Assistant Secretary-General Bintou Keita already briefed the Council on 12 April on the removal

of President Omer Al-Bashir. It would be appropriate to update the Council on key developments since that date.

As Council members know, General Awad Ibn Auf, former Vice-President and Defence Minister, who took over as the head of the Transitional Military Council following the change and resigned a day later in response to popular demands by protesters who spearheaded the demands for a change of Government. He named General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan as his successor. Upon assuming the position, General Al-Burhan announced a number of steps aimed at stabilizing the situation, including the lifting of the daily curfew across the country, the release of political detainees and the imposition of a ceasefire across the country, among other measures.

The Transitional Military Council has also indicated that it will carry out reforms of some of the Government's institutions, including the National Intelligence and Security Service. Indeed, the Council is replacing high-ranking Government officials who are said to be unpopular with the demonstrators, perhaps in an attempt to gain trust and confidence. Yesterday, the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General were replaced. General Al-Burhan announced further that the transitional military phase would last a maximum of two years, ending with a handover of power to a civilian arrangement.

However, protests continue in Khartoum and other parts of the country, with a sit-in at the headquarters of the Sudanese Armed Forces demanding the immediate transfer of power to civilians. It is worth noting that the Transitional Military Council has since initiated dialogue with the Declaration of Freedom and Change, the umbrella body of the protestors, and other elements of the opposition, on a feasible transitional mechanism that would be all-inclusive and representative of all Sudanese interests.

In an important development, on 15 April the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) issued a communique calling on the Transitional Military Council to install a transitional civilian authority within 15 days, failing which the Sudan would be suspended from participation in all African Union (AU) activities. While there has been no reaction so far on the part of national stakeholders, the Transitional Military Council is likely to consider the AUPSC statement a setback.

The changes at the federal level have an obvious impact on Darfur. Since the removal of President Al-Bashir, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other protesters in Darfur have engaged in acts of violence, including arson on the premises of the National Intelligence and Security Services and the ruling party, as well as houses of community leaders perceived to have collaborated with the previous regime. Such incidents have occurred in many locations, including El Fasher, Nyala, Kass, Zalingei, Golo, Nertiti, Kutum, Kabkabayah, Saraf Omra, El Geneina and Mournai. In Kalma IDP camp, clashes between IDP youth groups on 13 April led to the reported death of 15 IDPs. There have been reports of confrontations between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the National Intelligence and Security Service in Darfur, particularly when the Armed Forces attempted to protect the protesters.

Let me assure the Council that in the midst of all these developments, UNAMID has remained vigilant, maintaining a robust posture, particularly in the Jebel Marra area of responsibility, which is where we have peacekeeping troops. The Mission's day-to-day operational activities continue. We have intensified our patrols, particularly in and around IDP camps, and we continue interacting with partners on the ground. With regard to the safety and security of United Nations personnel and assets, I am pleased to report that so far the United Nations has not been a target and that all our staff are accounted for.

Allow me to now focus on the Secretary-General's report before the Council (S/2019/305). With the adoption of resolution 2429 (2018), on 13 July 2018, the Mission continued with its reconfiguration and drawdown. The reduction of the military component from 8,735 to 4,050 personnel by 30 June is on track. The strength of UNAMID police has also decreased from 2,500 to 2,283 personnel. UNAMID police advisers have been deployed to State liaison functions and are also co-located with the Sudanese police forces.

UNAMID and the United Nations country team also continue to implement the transition strategy in preparation for the Mission's withdrawal. In this regard, \$15 million has been allocated to State liaison functions in the 2018-2019 UNAMID budget for the joint implementation of programmatic activities with 10 individual United Nations country team entities with which UNAMID has signed memorandums of understanding in the areas of the rule of law, human

rights, resilience and durable solutions for IDPs and host communities.

UNAMID staff, integrated within the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, have expanded protection monitoring to return areas and areas from which UNAMID has withdrawn. Similarly, the United Nations Development Programme and UNAMID have adjusted conflict-prevention projects to improve targeting and increase sustainability after the Mission's eventual exit. UNAMID staff are also supporting the United Nations Population Fund in strengthening prevention and response to gender-based violence, including community-based mechanisms. As regards programmatic activities, a shift in focus from institutional to community-based projects may be required in the light of the continuation of the state of emergency and uncertainties surrounding the transition modalities.

The security situation in Darfur remained calm in the reporting period. However, clashes between the Government and the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA-Abdul Wahid) in Jebel Marra were more frequent but contained to a few locations, while the footprint of the Sudanese Armed Forces was readjusted in recent weeks to focus on urban areas in the light of the protests. On 28 January, the Government extended the unilateral cessation of hostilities indefinitely while the movements extended the ceasefire for three months on 8 February. Incidents of intercommunal clashes also remained low, while some violence continued to occur between herders and farmers, mainly in North and West Darfur.

Humanitarian partners continued to provide assistance in Darfur, with a focus on the provision of life-saving needs to vulnerable groups through the delivery of basic social services, particularly for newly displaced IDPs and those affected by conflict. However, their activities continue to face challenges in accessing some areas in Jebel Marra localities in South and Central Darfur owing to continued restriction of access by the Sudanese authorities on security grounds. UNAMID experienced a total of 10 access denials and two restrictions of movement, compared with seven in the previous reporting period. Such access denials prevented UNAMID from verifying reported fighting in several areas in Darfur. In an unexpected development, a UNAMID integrated patrol on a humanitarian escort to Feina village in South Darfur on 26 March was denied access by an SLA-Abdul Wahid commander.

UNAMID continued to engage the Government to further strengthen mechanisms for addressing human rights concerns in Darfur. During the reporting period, UNAMID documented 59 new cases of human rights violations and abuses involving 129 victims. UNAMID also continued to support the re-establishment of the criminal justice chain in return areas, with the rehabilitation of a rural court and construction of a district court, three rural courts, a land registry and prison dormitories for male and female prisoners alike in North Darfur. UNAMID, in collaboration with the Sudanese judiciary, also organized mediation trainings for 25 rural court judges and provided capacity-building support through trainings on human rights and prison duties for 59 newly recruited prison staff.

The implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur continued to face challenges as a result of capacity and resource constraints. With regard to the peace process in Darfur and in the context of the changes that have taken place in recent days, the call by the Transitional Military Council on the non-signatory armed movements to engage politically and be a part of the ongoing dialogue has yet to receive a tangible response. In a recent statement, signed by Malik Agar and Minni Minawi, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front — which includes the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM), the Justice and Equality Movement-Gibril (JEM/Gibril) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/North — distanced themselves from the ongoing discussions between the Transitional Military Council and the Declaration of Freedom and Change forces, saying it was too early to hold a meeting with the Transitional Military Council.

However, the SLA-MM and JEM/Gibril have indicated to the mediation that they still intend to pursue the Darfur peace process in a manner that addresses the underlying causes of the conflict. Their reasoning is that there is risk should the Darfur peace process be merged into the current dialogue, because the causes that led to the conflict in the first place may not be properly and independently addressed. In that regard, acting in consultation with the Special Envoy of Qatar and in support of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, UNAMID continues to seek ways of commencing talks between the movements and the Sudanese authorities. On his part, the leader of the Sudan Liberation Army, Abdul Wahid Nour, issued a statement on 13 April rejecting the Transitional Military Council, terming it as an attempt to reproduce

the previous regime. The Security Council should call on him to seize the opportunity and engage politically with the Sudanese authorities.

At this juncture, I wish to say that, while we are on track with the mission's drawdown process, the political situation in the Sudan has drastically changed and has the potential to affect our mandate implementation going forward. For instance, we were scheduled to hand over Sector East headquarters in Ed Daein on 15 April. We have since delayed the handover by two weeks pending further clarity as the state's administration keeps changing. Meanwhile, UNAMID is in the process of establishing contact and working relationships with the new administration at both the federal and state levels.

Darfur is not, and cannot be, immune from what is happening at the national level. The incidents of violence in displaced persons' camps in Darfur in reaction to the events in Khartoum attest to the fragility of the security situation in Darfur, which had hitherto been increasingly calm and stable, with the exception of the Jebel Marra area. It is my hope that the situation does not deteriorate further or have a negative impact of UNAMID's envisaged exit.

As much as it might not be desirable, the current situation provides a chance for the Sudanese to seize the opportunity to resolve all their conflicts, including the one in Darfur. The Council should urge the people of the Sudan to take a holistic and all-inclusive approach that is representative of all Sudanese.

The President: I thank Mr. Mamabolo for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mueller.

Ms. Mueller: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council.

Well before the latest developments in the Sudan, humanitarian needs in Darfur and other parts of the country were already growing due to the economic crisis. People who had been receiving humanitarian assistance now require greater support. The broader population has also been affected by the worsening economy. There is a risk that more people might slide into greater vulnerability and poverty.

The direct impact on humanitarian operations from the recent political events has so far been limited, and regular operations have continued. That includes

a major campaign to vaccinate children against polio and measles being carried out in South Darfur and other states. However, the humanitarian community is monitoring the situation closely.

We are very concerned about the protection of civilians, particularly in Darfur, where localized fighting continues. Reports of incidents of violence involving internally displaced persons — including internally displaced persons killed in Kalma camp in South Darfur on 13 April — are worrisome. In addition, the start of the school year in Darfur, scheduled for 1 April, has been delayed, impacting education and services tied to school attendance.

The economic crisis in the Sudan has had a significant impact on humanitarian needs and operations, including in Darfur. That includes rapid currency devaluation, rampant inflation, increasing prices for food and medicine, a marked decline in purchasing power and intermittent shortages of daily bread and fuel supplies. The World Food Programme reports that the price of sorghum is 70 per cent higher as compared with the same time last year, impacting people's purchasing power for a staple food. According to the latest analysis, 5.8 million people are presently food-insecure, up from 3.8 million the year before. That includes 1.9 million people in Darfur. With the start of the lean season in May, the number will increase.

Shortages of imported commodities have also impacted health care and other services. According to the Central Bank of the Sudan, imports of medicine in 2018 dropped by a third as compared to 2017. With increases in costs of medical services ranging from 50 to 100 per cent, households are less able to afford health care and are more vulnerable to health risks. Shortages of food and high prices also worsen protection risks, as people turn to negative coping mechanisms, and fewer children attend school. Women and the elderly continue to be particularly affected, as households are prioritizing food for their children. This situation adds to what were already high and long-standing humanitarian needs.

There have been significant improvements in security in recent years, with some people displaced by conflict returning home. Yet 1.9 million people remain displaced by conflict, more than 1.6 million of them in Darfur, and many of them have been displaced for well over a decade, as members well know. Hundreds of thousands of children in Darfur

are acutely malnourished. In Central, East, North, and South Darfur less than half of the population has access to clean water. The World Food Programme reports that a growing proportion of internally displaced and refugee populations — already among the most vulnerable — cannot afford enough to eat.

For those reasons, and thanks to the generous contributions of Member States, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund last week allocated \$26.5 million to assist vulnerable people in areas that have seen some of the largest increases in food insecurity linked to the economic situation, including in East, North, South and West Darfur. The Sudan humanitarian fund is also providing more than \$20 million in complementary funding.

But more support is needed. This year humanitarian partners are appealing for \$1.1 billion to assist 4.4 million of the most vulnerable people, which represents a bit more than half of the overall needs identified in the country, including 2.4 million people in Darfur. Humanitarian needs and response requirements will also be reviewed in the coming months to reflect the ongoing impact of the economic situation, as well as any impact that might emerge from the current political events.

Sustaining humanitarian support is particularly important, as there continue to be significant constraints on longer-term development assistance for Darfur and other parts of the Sudan. Without expanded social safety nets, the ongoing economic situation will have serious consequences. Greater support for development activities is needed, alongside scaled up Government investment in crucial services such as social protection.

The situation in the Sudan also has implications for the broader region. I would like to recognize the Government's generosity in hosting refugees, including nearly 150,000 South Sudanese in Darfur. I hope that support continues. The Sudan has also been a vital route for the provision of humanitarian assistance — particularly food aid — into South Sudan. With critical life-saving assistance to be provided in the coming days and weeks, we hope the Government will continue to facilitate those movements.

Ensuring that the most vulnerable are supported requires sustained humanitarian access to all people in need. Recent years have seen significant improvements. Partners are able to move more easily and assist people in more areas, particularly in Jebel Marra. However, we

continue to call on all parties in the Sudan to allow the humanitarian community to assist people in need. We also call on the Government to take further measures to improve the operating environment for humanitarian organizations, especially by lifting bureaucratic impediments to movement and facilitating impartial needs assessments and protection activities. At this critical time, it is essential to ensure that the people of Darfur and the rest of the Sudan receive the assistance and the support they need.

The President: I thank Ms. Mueller for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister of State of Germany.

Let me start by expressing how honoured I feel to take part in the deliberations of this organ. When Germany presented its candidature for a non-permanent seat, we pledged to be a strong partner in helping to forge sustainable peace. Germany believes in the value of long-term engagement by the international community in conflict situations such as the one that we are discussing today, that is, Darfur in the Sudan.

Before I turn to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), let me underline that we cannot address Darfur in a vacuum. Over the last weeks, we have witnessed significant developments in Khartoum and in the Sudan more broadly. Personally, I am impressed by the will and determination of the Sudanese people to stand up peacefully for a different future. Germany believes that the voices of the people need to be heard as the Sudan charts a new way forward. Therefore, Germany welcomes the statement by the African Union, which strongly underlines the imperative of a civilian-led and consensual political transition in the Sudan. We echo that clear political message from the region, and we call upon all actors in the Sudan to move in that direction with determination, urgency and, above all, without violence.

As developments unfold in Khartoum, we have to carefully consider their impact on the situation in Darfur. It is fair to say that we do not have a clear and full picture yet. But I believe that we as members of the Council should carefully monitor the interplay between political developments in Khartoum and the situation in Darfur. Reports about recent clashes in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur, resulting in a number of IDPs being killed, serve to underline this point in a most deplorable way.

Turning to UNAMID, let me underline that we are dedicated to working with the United Kingdom as co-penholders, and with all of the Council members here around the table, as well as with our partners in the African Union, on the way forward for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. We are convinced that it is the joint responsibility of all of us here in the Council to ensure that the decade-long international engagement in Darfur and for the people of Darfur delivers concrete and lasting results.

It is in that spirit that I would like to thank our briefers today. They shed light on the areas of progress, but also showed us where more effort is needed. I would like to refer in particular to reports of sexual and gender-based violence still being committed in Darfur, including by Government personnel. Those atrocities need to be stopped and the perpetrators held to account. The briefing by Ms. Mueller, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, also highlighted that we still need to find durable solutions for the almost 2 million internally displaced persons in Darfur. That speaks to a broader point: we as the international community need to remain engaged in Darfur and take a longer-term view. Despite progress made in the last years, many of the drivers of the conflict in Darfur are yet to be comprehensively addressed.

We remain concerned about a lack of access to justice, a security sector that remains largely unchecked due to weak governance, and continued reports about human rights violations. Additional factors such as climate change potentially exacerbate tensions among the populations in Darfur and impede development and economic opportunities. Land remains one of the key issues that has not yet been settled. Not all of those challenges can be addressed by a peacekeeping mission, nor should they be. Therefore, the transition process from peacekeeping to peacebuilding becomes increasingly important. My Government is committed to playing an active role in shaping the transition. To us, that means focusing on the following two things.

First, we have to do everything so that UNAMID—as long as it is deployed in Darfur—delivers against the mandated tasks in the areas of mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We think that the mission has made progress working together with other United Nations entities over recent months, including on supporting capacity-building in the areas of the rule of law and human rights, as well as in finding durable solutions for IDPs and host communities. We must keep that

up. We welcome the transition concept and commend the United Nations on progress on this, in particular through establishing state liaison functions. We must continue to work and back it up with the appropriate financial support.

Secondly, Germany is convinced that, for the transition to be successful, we need a collaborative relationship among the decision-making authorities in the Sudan, the international community and the United Nations with respect to Darfur. That partnership must be built on mutual trust and with the common objective of sustaining peace in Darfur.

Therefore, if we want to develop a way forward for the planning post-UNAMID, it is essential that we have an in-depth conversation with the Sudan. That conversation needs to include the current obstacles to the functioning of UNAMID, such as access denials—which have been mentioned. Looking forward, that conversation also has to do with strengthening the capacity of rule of law institutions. It has to be about revitalizing the political process for Darfur and about cooperating with the international community, including through a presence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission. And eventually it needs to be a conversation about the Government of the Sudan assuming responsibility for tasks that currently lie in UNAMID's hands. This is not a technical exercise; it needs political engagement. Germany stands ready for that. But clearly, as things are evolving in Khartoum, we currently do not have a counterpart on the Sudanese side to engage with in this important conversation.

That brings me back to my first remark: we cannot simply de-link the political developments in Khartoum from our joint work on UNAMID. We will have to take a close look at the time plans. Artificial timelines do not help the people in Darfur, and blindly following them might risk our investment as members of the Council. Our decisions on the future of UNAMID must be shaped by developments on the ground, not by budget lines. The Secretariat will present its thinking on this soon. We look forward to those proposals, carefully charting our way forward on UNAMID as the situation continues to evolve in Khartoum.

Lastly, given today's uncertainties, we see it as the responsibility of the international community, and in particular the Security Council, to make sure that, once

UNAMID leaves, Darfur does not relapse into conflict. We must prevent a cliff in terms of political attention, political support for mediation and practical support on such key issues as the rule of law, human rights and peacebuilding. That needs to be avoided because, frankly, we cannot afford it.

We owe it to the people of Darfur to continue our support. That is why Germany believes that we should have a strong United Nations presence in Darfur once UNAMID is gone. Such a presence, in our mind, would consolidate and further advance the political, peacebuilding and development objectives in Darfur.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): We all know that today's meeting takes place in uncertain times in the Sudan. The African Union Peace and Security Council issued a clear statement two days ago. Recent developments and what happens over the coming days have an impact on Darfur and, potentially, the wider region. The Council has to consider the implications of these important political developments. I will therefore divide my intervention into two parts: first, on the wider situation in the Sudan; and, secondly, on the impact of that wider situation on Darfur and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

On 11 April, we witnessed the climax of four months of peaceful protests demanding change and a better future for the Sudan. Let us admire the bravery and determination of the Sudanese people, which saw the removal of a President who had headed a brutal regime for 30 years. However, the legitimate change that the Sudanese people are demanding has not yet been achieved. The Transitional Military Council must listen to the people, who continue to protest.

First and foremost, the authorities must protect the ongoing peaceful protests and continue to exercise restraint. The Sudanese authorities have a responsibility to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to peaceful assembly. There must be no violence and no forced removal of protesters. We are at a moment when the Sudanese authorities have an opportunity to build trust with their people and the international community. They should

seize this opportunity and demonstrate that they are genuinely committed to ending the Sudan's history of violent repression.

The people are saying that the Sudan needs a political system that is inclusive, respectful of human rights and the rule of law and properly constitutionally rooted. The United Kingdom stands with the Sudanese people and supports the African Union's call for the Sudan to return swiftly to civilian rule. All need to work together in an inclusive political transition. In particular, women have played a critical role in the protest movement. Their contributions will be vital in the political transition process and the subsequent civilian-led Government.

From the beginning, the protestors have demanded accountability. The United Kingdom supports their call. We believe that there must be justice for the crimes committed by individuals within the former Government of the Sudan. It is right that the Sudanese people should hold those individuals accountable. Of course, we fully support the International Criminal Court and expect the full cooperation of all States with the Court and its Prosecutor.

The latest political developments have a direct impact on Darfur. We, like others, are concerned by reports of violent clashes in several locations in recent days, which have resulted in civilian death and injury. In particular, on 15 April, as reported by UNAMID, in the Kalma internally displaced persons (IDP) camp, 16 IDPs were killed. I have a question for the Joint Special Representative for Darfur. What was the response of the two UNAMID formed police units stationed in Kalma to that incident? We have also seen the negative impact of recent political turmoil on the Darfur peace process, which is currently stalled. It is vital for the future stability of Darfur, but also the wider Sudan and the region, that we as a Council maintain our expectation that progress will be made in finding a peaceful solution to the root causes of the conflict.

Throughout UNAMID's drawdown, the United Kingdom has consistently called for a gradual and sensible approach, guided by the situation on the ground, and we share the Secretary-General's assessment that ongoing political and economic uncertainty pose a number of challenges for a responsible exit of UNAMID and the transition to peacebuilding. The international community must not abandon its responsibility to ensure that the handover of UNAMID responsibilities

and assets is done appropriately and to those with the capacity to manage the ongoing tasks. There remains a high level of need in Darfur, and the root causes of conflict have not yet been resolved.

An immediate step that the Transitional Military Council could take to build confidence and alleviate need would be to abolish the burdensome system of approvals and permits that hinders the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We need to think carefully about how best we tackle those issues after the eventual departure of UNAMID, in particular with regard to what sort of African Union and United Nations presence on the ground is needed to provide the expertise and programmatic ability and ensure a proper flow of financial support to address ongoing challenges. We therefore encourage the African Union and the United Nations to make recommendations to the Council on what those future arrangements should be.

The Sudan is at a crossroads. The Transitional Military Council faces a choice. It should listen to the Sudanese people, respect their legitimate demand for civilian rule and enable the transition to a system that respects human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms, and delivers accountability. Making that choice would mean a new Sudan. It would be a Sudan respected in the international community of nations. It would bring support and resources from across the globe, both to underpin the resolution of long-standing peace processes, including in Darfur, and to support the Sudan's own economic and social development. It would herald a new chapter in the Sudan's relations with its region and the world. The people of the Sudan have shown incredible bravery and perseverance in their dignified demands for an end to a brutal, unaccountable regime that has impoverished its own people through decades of economic mismanagement. The Sudanese people have forced change in their country. I salute them. Let us stand by them.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Mamabolo and Ms. Mueller, and also acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Mr. Niels Annen.

First, with regard to the progress made in the situation in the Sudan, we welcome the overall improvement in security in Darfur, with the exception of the hotspots in Jebel Marra, where the conflict between the Government and the rebel forces of the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid persists. At

the same time, we are concerned about instances of intercommunal violence and the destruction of farms, reported in Central and North Darfur states.

I also express our deep concern about the increase in criminal incidents victimizing internally displaced persons, as well as the suspension of some humanitarian activities and the restriction and denial of access to the personnel of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Above all, however, we are concerned about continuing reports of sexual abuse against women and girls by uniformed military personnel. It is regrettable that that remains an ongoing feature of the conflict and that many such cases are not reported by the victims for fear of reprisals. We reiterate our call for the implementation of the framework for cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict in order to respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

Secondly, we draw attention to the stalemate in the peace process and the repercussions that current events may have on it. Although the current political dynamics raise challenges and uncertainty, it is crucial that the process be put in motion to ensure the return and relocation of displaced persons, the settlement of land issues and the establishment of judicial and reconciliation entities, as well as the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund. There is an urgent need for an open dialogue process to determine the future interlocutors in the Government, both at the national and the local levels, and to attribute national ownership as a guarantee of the sustainability of the process.

Thirdly, I express our concern about the recent events in Khartoum and the consequent uncertainty experienced by the Sudanese people. The Sudan is facing a struggle in the midst of social protests and disproportionate governmental reactions, with a toll of dozens of dead and wounded, and, as often happens in such processes, a high human cost. Every day we hear stories like those of Babarki, a doctor who helped wounded demonstrators at his home and was allegedly executed, and Fatih, a university student who was fatally shot in the head. Those are tragic events involving a people who ask only that their concerns be heard and addressed. The Dominican Republic reiterates its call for calm and that bloodshed be avoided at all costs.

The time has come to leverage this opportunity for a democratic and peaceful transition and minimize the possibility of a violent outcome. The Sudanese people deserve not only an opportunity for political and economic recovery but also to be recompensed for their prolonged suffering within a reasonable amount of time. The time has come to establish an inclusive political system that upholds human rights and the norms of international law, and above all that will restore trust among Sudanese people.

We reiterate that the challenges facing the Sudan should be resolved through consensus with the participation of all actors, including the equal participation of women, with a view to restoring democratic order, good governance and the well-being of the people. As the representative of the United Kingdom rightly pointed out, we find ourselves at a decisive moment in time. Any decision that is taken, will leave its mark on the future of democracy for the Sudanese people.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): We welcome you, Mr. President; it is great to have you join us in the Security Council today.

Over the past days, we have seen a dramatic and significant series of events unfold in the Sudan. However, the demands of the Sudanese for a representative Government have not yet been met and the situation remains tense. Protesters and opposition groups are calling for a quick transition to civilian authority, and the African Union (AU) said on 15 April that it will withdraw the Sudan's membership if the transition is not made within 15 days. We agree with the Sudanese people that the first step is forging a new transitional body that includes the leadership and participation of civilians representing the diversity and breadth of Sudanese society.

We are concerned by the impact of the events in Khartoum on the security and stability of Darfur, including last Saturday's deadly attack on a camp of internally displaced persons that other speakers have cited, and we continue to receive reports of violence resulting from protests in Darfur. In addition, the United States is deeply concerned that violence between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction increased during the reporting period. We are also troubled that crimes against displaced persons and vulnerable civilians increased, and with them a rise in

fatalities. Such violence worsens the possibilities for a humanitarian response in an already severe situation and has prevented humanitarian actors from accessing the most vulnerable to provide life-saving services and assistance.

Violence has also prevented United Nations peacekeepers from carrying out important prevention-and-response patrols. Despite those challenges, the United States strongly encourages the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to redouble its efforts to address the spike in violence and prioritize the safety and security of civilians.

The joint United Nations-AU report on UNAMID's future, due in May, will be an opportunity to provide a set of prioritized benchmarks, while also recommending possible trajectories for the mission. The United States expects the strategic report to also consider the events of the past several months and weeks and their impact on the stability and security of Darfur.

Even with the significant events, the Government and parties should show measurable and sustainable progress on prioritized benchmarks, in particular, demonstrating the Government's ability and capacity to protect and provide for the Darfur people and addressing the root causes of the conflict. Absent such evidence of progress, the United States is supportive of the Council considering all options as we seek to bring long-term peace and stability to Darfur.

The United States commends the people of the Sudan for their resilience and commitment to non-violence as they express their legitimate demands for an inclusive and representative Government that respects and protects human rights. The United States urges all parties to continue the process towards an inclusive, civilian transition, amid an atmosphere of restraint and calm. We stand ready to work with partners in the Council and the region to support those efforts.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): We welcome you, Mr. President, in presiding over this meeting, and we thank our briefers Mr. Mamabolo and Ms. Mueller for their updates.

I would like to focus my remarks on three fundamental points: the situation in Darfur, the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the future of Darfur.

On the situation in Darfur, the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2019/305) has confirmed the continued decrease in all kinds of violations in Darfur over the past four years. In addition, the region is enjoying relative security and stability, while displaced persons continue to return. We reiterate that their dignified, safe and voluntary return is necessary and that the international community should continue supporting their return amid the difficult circumstances. We welcome the allocation of \$26 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund as humanitarian assistance for those in need.

Accordingly, we emphasize the need for the work to continue as proposed by the Secretary-General and set out in resolution 2429 (2018) and in the Security Council's presidential statement of last year (S/PRST/2018/19).

On the withdrawal of UNAMID, the Council affirmed in the presidential statement that the progress made on achieving the benchmarks and indicators for the withdrawal will contribute to the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. As per the Secretary-General's report, there has been sustained progress in a number of areas, and there is an ongoing need for additional efforts in other areas. There is therefore a need, now more than before, for our Council to move forward the agreed issues in order to continue the implementation of UNAMID's exit strategy, in accordance with resolution 2429 (2018).

On the future of Darfur, as members of the Security Council we must take into consideration the impact of stability in Darfur on the Sudan and its region. We must not forget the great human, political and material investments made first by the people of the Sudan, and then by the African Union and the United Nations over a decade and a half. We would be committing an injustice against Darfur and its people if we allowed their hopes for a life of dignity and a better future to be dashed. We therefore call on the members of the Council to unite at this critical juncture and resist divergence because of our positions or slogans.

We have closely followed developments in the Sudan and call on all parties to be calm, practice maximum restraint, denounce violence and pursue dialogue in order for the transitional political process to be successful. We express our hope that the measures taken to address the recent developments will achieve security and stability in the brotherly Sudan and that

they will respond to the aspirations of its people. We call on the Sudanese people to prioritize their national interest over everything else with a view to achieving unity, sovereignty, stability and territorial integrity in the Sudan.

In conclusion, we reaffirm that what is happening in the Sudan is a domestic affair that should not be interfered with, in line with the Charter of the United Nations. We call once again for all concerned to abide by the Security Council resolutions on the Sudan. We further call for our discussions to be limited to our subject matter and not to allow the current circumstances to divert us from what the Council has agreed upon in its resolutions.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): The Sudan is going through a phase of profound change. Therefore, before addressing the issue of the prospects for the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), I would like to return to the political situation in Khartoum and its consequences for Darfur.

First, with respect to the political situation, France calls for the formation of a transitional civilian Government to reactivate a democratic process and enable elections to be held as soon as possible. We therefore call for the early appointment of a consensual transitional authority, led by civilians, to begin a democratic process and hold free, inclusive and transparent elections as soon as possible.

The Sudanese people have shown great maturity in calling for reforms and political renewal at the country's helm. The voice of the people must be fully heard. Only a credible and inclusive process will make it possible to meet the aspirations of the Sudanese people and ensure that the country enacts the necessary political and economic reforms.

France is prepared to support a civilian transition process and in that context to support the Sudanese people in their aspiration to greater freedom, a strong rule of law and sustainable and equitable development. France takes note of the commitment of the Transitional Military Council to pursue dialogue with the opposition in order to establish a civilian transitional Government and encourages all stakeholders to engage in dialogue in a spirit of conciliation and consensus and to show restraint in order to avert violence.

We are convinced that justice for victims is vital in order to build a lasting peace and a strong democracy. The very grave crimes that have been committed in the Sudan, in particular in Darfur, including sexual violence and violence against children, should not go unpunished. In that connection, I wish to recall the obligation to cooperate with the International Criminal Court, in conformity with resolution 1593 (2005).

Secondly, in this context of transition, stability must be preserved in Darfur. We are all clearly very concerned at the possible repercussions on Darfur of the political changes under way in the Sudan. France is concerned about the incidents documented in Darfur since last week, in particular those between security forces, and we continue to closely monitor developments on the ground.

Darfur remains a fragile region where the root causes of conflict, in particular access to land and the future of displaced persons, have not been truly resolved. In that context, we must work together to ensure that the changes under way do not rekindle the conflict in Darfur. In recent years we have been able, in particular thanks to UNAMID, to reduce the level of violence; we must safeguard that achievement.

In that regard, it is important to swiftly establish a civilian transition authority that is recognized by the international community and could be a trustworthy and responsible interlocutor for UNAMID and the parties to the conflict. In that connection, I welcome the mission entrusted by the Secretary-General to his Special Adviser, Nicholas Haysom.

But we must go further. The major changes under way in the Sudan could provide an opportunity to relaunch the peace process. France calls on the future Sudanese authorities and all armed groups to seize this opportunity and engage in the peace process in good faith. It is also crucial that the new Sudanese authorities facilitate humanitarian access, put an end to the restrictions on the movement of the UNAMID and create the conditions necessary for the dignified, safe and voluntary return of the more than 2 million displaced persons.

Finally, on my third and final point, the situation in the Sudan requires prudence with regard to the timetable for UNAMID's withdrawal. France has always supported a gradual exit of UNAMID, taking account of the situation on the ground. In the light of what the Joint Special Representative, Mr. Mamabolo,

has just shared with us regarding the impact of the situation on UNAMID, current events must lead us to be even more prudent and to wait for the situation, in particular the institutional situation, to stabilize before we set a timetable for UNAMID's exit.

I take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for the work carried out by the mission under difficult conditions as well as for the work of United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors to provide vital assistance, as Ms. Mueller has just underscored.

UNAMID's withdrawal is essentially a transfer of responsibility to the Sudanese State, and its exit must therefore be conducted in close cooperation with the Sudanese authorities. It is necessary to wait for new authorities to be appointed to engage in dialogue with them regarding the mission's exit.

Through their peaceful mobilization in recent weeks, the Sudanese people, in particular women and young people, have set an example of dignity and civic-mindedness. France hopes that the transitional Government that will be established will fully live up to the high standards set by that example and intends to ensure that it has our collective support. It is up to the Council to support the Sudan and to work to ensure stability in Darfur in this transitional phase.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish to express our appreciation to you, Mr. Minister of State, for the timely convening of this meeting and for the very important briefings delivered by Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo and Ms. Ursula Mueller.

As a number of speakers before me have noted, we cannot fail to refer to recent events such as the overthrow of President Omer Al-Bashir and the ongoing protests in much of the country. The message of the Sudanese people is clear: they are demanding profound change and the democratization of the country. Peru supports the legitimate aspirations of the Sudanese people for a civil administration that would put in place a peaceful, trustworthy and inclusive transition process, with all represented parties, that would make it possible to undertake the necessary constitutional reforms and to set out once again on the path to democracy through the holding of free and fair elections in a reasonable time frame.

In this context, the support of the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development is important so as to ensure a peaceful

transition, taking account in particular of the serious humanitarian and social situation in the country, particularly in Darfur.

We deplore the fact that the gains made in December in the Darfur peace process could be affected by the political crisis. We refer here to the recent outbreaks of violence in refugee camps and to the decision of the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi to reverse their agreement to renew talks with the Sudanese Government in January.

Also alarming is the decision of the opposition Sudan Call alliance to withdraw from the agreement on the road map to put an end to the conflict in the Sudan in the context of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, signed in 2016 with the Government.

Given this complex political juncture, we deem it vital to revert to the agreements reached and put an end to the violence. We call on all parties to cease hostilities in Darfur definitively, so that it becomes possible to resolve pending substantive issues through dialogue. We commend the efforts of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and its cooperation with the national and local authorities, the country team and other related groups to facilitate the mediation and reach sustainable solutions to the driving forces of the conflict, including access to land and resources.

We would also express our deep concern at the grave situation of human rights in Darfur and regret that in many cases, violations of fundamental rights affecting internally displaced persons, especially women and girls, have been associated with the Sudanese Armed Forces.

In this context, it is of the greatest importance that UNAMID be able to effectively implement its mandate throughout Darfur, especially in the Jebel Marra area. We hope that the Sudanese Government will be able to guarantee the mission and humanitarian personnel unfettered access to the zone.

While the process of the reconfiguration of UNAMID is under way, as planned, the current context presents a number of challenges for the mission's exit and its transition towards peacebuilding. To that end, we deem it necessary that UNAMID's withdrawal take place in an atmosphere of caution, taking into account the

situation on the ground. The mobilization of resources will be key in order to facilitate a peacebuilding process that is satisfactory in the long run.

Finally, we wish to reiterate our support to the African Union, the United Nations team, agencies of the United Nations system and UNAMID for their efforts to tackle the tremendous challenges facing Darfur on a daily basis.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, my delegation wishes to welcome your presence at this meeting, which highlights the importance of the situation in the Sudan and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). It congratulates the briefers, Mr. Mamabolo and Ms. Mueller, and would like, in the light of their detailed reports, to make the following comments on the political situation in the Sudan and its impact on the peace process in Darfur.

Côte d'Ivoire has been closely following the recent developments in the political situation in the Sudan, which has been marked by the deposition of President Omer Al-Bashir and the establishment by the Sudanese army of a Transitional Military Council for a two-year period. The situation opens up an alarming period of uncertainty given the potential risks of the deterioration of the sociopolitical and security climate and the possible repercussions on the region.

In that connection, my country urges the military authorities to spare no effort to preserve peace and stability in the Sudan. We therefore call on them to engage as soon as possible in inclusive consultations with all the country's stakeholders with a view to arriving at consensus solutions that respond to the deep desires of the people of the Sudan, echoing the 15 April communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the situation in the Sudan, which urges the Transitional Military Council to transfer power to the competent civilian and political figures as soon as possible. We note the willingness expressed by the military authorities to work with the opposition to establish a civilian Government and respect the Sudan's international obligations. We encourage them to conduct that process in accordance with the guidelines and due diligence of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in order to restore constitutional order and hold democratic elections, which would ensure peace and stability.

With regard to Darfur, my delegation supports the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/305), which notes the relative stability in the region as a whole, with the exception of the Jebel Marra area. We also welcome the fact that people are gradually returning to their areas of origin and that UNAMID is assisting local authorities in managing intercommunal tensions and ensuring access to land and resources. However, those achievements should not make us lose sight of the many challenges related to finding viable solutions to the root causes of the conflict, the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and the persistent sexual and gender-based violence.

My country believes that resolving the crisis in Darfur depends on the implementation of an inclusive political process, involving all stakeholders, including the movements that have not signed the Doha Document. We therefore remain concerned about the withdrawal of some of the non-signatory movements from peace negotiations and of the Sudan Call alliance from the 2016 Roadmap Agreement of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, following decisions taken by the Sudanese Government in response to popular protests in the country. We therefore urge the armed groups to work together with the Sudanese authorities to ensure that the hostilities are truly at an end. We also urge all the stakeholders working to resolve the crisis in Darfur who have influence on the parties to redouble their efforts and ensure that the Sudan Call alliance rejoins the peace talks.

My delegation calls on the new authorities to work to safeguard the achievements of the peace process in Darfur. We continue to believe that a successful transition will be an unquestionable advantage in solving the problems encountered in mobilizing resources to implement the peace agreements. It is also essential to ensure that the international community, along with regional and subregional stakeholders, supports the authorities in their quest for viable solutions to the root causes of the conflicts with the aim of guaranteeing resilience in Darfur.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire calls on the international community, the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to remain committed to providing assistance to the Sudan, which is at a crucial stage in its history, in order to preserve the achievements of the political process under way in Darfur and to respond to

the Sudanese people's deep desire for peace, democracy and development.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I thank the briefers for their statements. I would like to underscore three points: first, the need for a credible and inclusive transition in the Sudan; secondly, the situation in Darfur; and thirdly, the importance of fighting impunity.

First, the situation in Darfur must be considered in the broader context of the whole country and cannot be seen in isolation. Belgium is concerned about the current situation in the Sudan. We reiterate our call for showing restraint in the use of force, avoiding violence and ensuring full respect for human rights, including freedom of assembly and freedom to demonstrate. Belgium welcomes the 15 April communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), which emphasizes the importance of arriving as soon as possible at a solution to the current crisis that is based on respect for the constitutional order and reflects the aspirations of the Sudanese people. The communiqué also requires the Sudanese military to hand over power to a civilian-led transitional political authority, in accordance with the will of the people and the constitutional order. A consultative and inclusive process that involves all political actors and stakeholders should ensure consensus on a transition led by civilians and lead to the holding of free, fair and transparent elections as soon as possible.

Belgium has noted the announcement of the release of political prisoners, an essential measure that will help to establish a climate of mutual trust with a view to reconciliation.

At this fragile moment, it is important that in recognition of the crucial role of the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Security Council should back their efforts to find a peaceful solution, and we support the efforts of the Secretary-General in that regard.

Secondly, the situation in the Sudan has an undeniable impact on the issue of Darfur and the peace process. The Council should therefore continue to monitor the situation in the rest of the country closely and assess its effect on the drawdown and exit process of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. In that regard, we look forward to the joint report of the United Nations and the African Union on the strategic review. In any case, we must take a

cautious approach to the withdrawal that ensures that the continued United Nations presence in Darfur is adequate. In general, establishing the rule of law and ensuring a fundamental respect for human rights are key elements for Darfur's future. The protection of civilians, an improved humanitarian situation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security-sector reform remain essential to a lasting solution to the crisis.

Finally, combating impunity is at the heart of the protesters' demands in the Sudan. Human rights violations are among the root causes of the conflicts there, and we have not forgotten the issue of the outstanding arrest warrants of the International Criminal Court. As we know, the Security Council referred the situation in the Sudan, or more precisely in Darfur, through resolution 1593 (2005). Based on that, the Court issued arrest warrants for five individuals. Belgium would like to point out that resolution 1593 (2005) stipulates that the Sudan and all other parties to the conflict in Darfur have the obligation to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and its Prosecutor and provide them with all necessary assistance. It is essential to ensure accountability for past actions.

In conclusion, I would like to express Belgium's solidarity with the people of the Sudan and their desire for a peaceful solution to the situation in their country.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): We would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening and presiding over today's meeting. We agree with most of your views and recommendations with regard to Darfur and the situation in the Sudan.

We also want to thank the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), Ambassador Jeremiah Mamabolo, for his enlightening briefing, as well as the useful information provided by Ms. Ursula Mueller.

We are particularly grateful to UNAMID for their continued efforts in Darfur in their pursuit of peace albeit under difficult security and climate change-related challenges. The united efforts of the United Nations and the international community have led to substantial progress in building peace in Darfur and the wider region. Our continued efforts should preserve the gains that have been made in recent years.

It is our hope that the developments in Khartoum will not negatively affect the gains made thus far.

We should continue to build on the gains made in advancing the Darfur peace process and the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. It is important that the international community continue to support those important processes and encourage all stakeholders to implement the outstanding provisions of the various commissions and agreements. It is imperative that adequate support be provided to internally displaced persons, particularly focusing on the prevention of sexual violence against women and children.

The importance of humanitarian support to affected areas in the Sudan remains a significant lifeline for many people. It is essential that there be an eventual transition from humanitarian support to reconstruction and development in the Darfur area as UNAMID ultimately exits. Let me pay tribute to development partners for their kind generosity and humanitarian assistance to Darfur and the wider Sudan.

South Africa supports the fact that UNAMID should continue its mission and the course for the drawdown. But I would like to ask Joint Special Representative Ambassador Mamabolo if he is proposing a revised timetable for the drawdown in Darfur given the current political situation in Khartoum.

We would like to make the following remarks on the situation in the Sudan and Khartoum.

First, with regard to the wider Sudan, it is critical that the Sudanese people seize this opportunity to address all their current differences and ensure an inclusive arrangement for all Sudanese people as they find a durable settlement for the current crisis because the developments in Darfur are inextricably linked to those in the Sudan and the wider region.

Second, South Africa underscores the importance of a credible and inclusive transition and transparent processes and arrangements that will assist in unifying the Sudan.

Third, the international community should rally behind the aspirations of the Sudanese people as a whole as they find a pathway to the future of their country.

Fourth, in its engagement in the Sudan the Council should further be guided by the regional approaches and through the African Union (AU) and

the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué of 15 April on the situation in the Sudan urgently appeals to all the AU partners and the international community to support their efforts through the adopted communiqué. The unity of the Council in supporting that approach is vital.

Fifth, the Council should support the Secretary-General's endeavours in supporting the African Union in trying to find an acceptable settlement of the Sudan crisis through peaceful means.

Sixth, South Africa is of the firm view that support to the Sudanese economy is essential. The need to address the socioeconomic needs of the Sudanese people will be paramount in the rebuilding of the Sudan, as that constitutes part of the root causes of the current impasse.

Seventh, on accountability, we should give space to the Sudanese to utilize their own internal mechanisms to address accountability issues and chart their future. That will also lay the groundwork for the future peace and reconciliation of the Sudanese people and, if possible, promote ethnic, religious and regional tolerance.

Lastly, it is important that the Council call for calm and for the situation to be resolved peacefully and amicably through inclusive political processes.

We would like to express our appreciation to the AU High-level Implementation Panel, led by former President of South Africa Thabo Mbeki, former President of Nigeria Abdulsalami Abubakar and former Foreign Minister of Algeria Ambassador Lamamra.

The Sudan is the biggest African country in terms of landmass. It borders with more than nine African countries and numerous countries currently facing security challenges, as we all know. The manner in which the Council approaches the Sudanese crisis and its resolution may have a particular impact on Darfur and the neighbourhood.

Let us find a common cause and assist the Sudanese in finding one another as they build peace. We hope that our own national interests will not outweigh the interests of the Sudanese people.

Mr. Lewicki (Poland): We very much welcome your presence, Mr. Minister, here among us today. We also wish to thank Joint Special Representative Ambassador Mamabolo and Assistant Secretary-General Ursula

Mueller for their comprehensive briefings, including on the recent developments in the Sudan.

A number of representatives have referred to the developing situation in Khartoum. Poland also closely follows the developments, including in the Sudan. Like other delegations, we support the aspirations of the Sudanese people to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic transition, good governance and social and economic well-being. We support the African Union call for a swift transition to a civilian Government.

We call on the new Sudanese authorities not to lose sight of Darfur. With the drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), we are at a crucial turning point and the new civilian Government should do its utmost to provide security, rule of law and basic services in Darfur. Protecting civilians, promoting intercommunal reconciliation and dealing with the root causes of the conflict should be among the top priorities.

Poland welcomes the relative stability of the security situation in Darfur. At the same time, we are aware that the progress that has been made is both volatile and reversible. In that context, we remain concerned about the continued clashes in Jebel Marra between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid, and the incidents of intercommunal conflict, which Assistant Secretary-General Mueller highlighted, and which make it clear that Darfur requires the Security Council's continued attention. I could not agree more with Mr. Annen that it also requires a long-term engagement on the part of the international community.

We note with regret and are deeply troubled by the fact that the human rights violations, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, as mentioned by the representative of South Africa, continue to occur in Darfur. We strongly condemn any targeting of the civilian population — including by Government security personnel — especially those who are most vulnerable, that is women, children and internally displaced persons. The authorities should spare no effort to hold the perpetrators accountable and should do their utmost to fight impunity in Darfur. It is also vital to address the human rights situation with regard to ensuring long-term stability in the Sudan, because human rights violations and abuses are both root causes of the conflicts and also a constant feature of conflicts and their concomitant violence. In that context, we

welcome the cooperation of the Sudanese authorities with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and look forward to seeing the new authorities continue that cooperation.

We reiterate our position that there can be no solution to conflict in Darfur other than a political one. We regret that the recent changes in the Sudan's internal situation have led to a loss of the momentum in the peace process and hope that it can be resumed in the near future.

To repeat once again what we have said on many occasions in this Chamber, it is our strong belief that during the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur, particular emphasis should be put on socioeconomic conditions there with regard to the provision of basic services, job opportunities, education for children, basic economic infrastructure, agriculture and so on, as well as on establishing the effective rule of law and good governance across the region. Nor should we forget about the very challenging humanitarian situation, which as Assistant Secretary-General Mueller rightly pointed out has been exacerbated by the deteriorating macroeconomic conditions.

Cooperation among the Government of the Sudan, the local authorities in Darfur, UNAMID and the United Nations country team is key to a successful transition, as are adequate resources. We believe that the international community should join in the efforts on the ground in support of recovery and development in Darfur, or we may run the risk of a relapse into conflict. As I have already said, the progress we have achieved is both volatile and reversible. With regard to the drawdown of UNAMID, we continue to believe that the Security Council should closely monitor the impact on the ground of the downsizing of the mission in order to ensure that the gains achieved in Darfur will be durable and not be compromised. We look forward to receiving the results of the strategic assessment of UNAMID in the context of our upcoming discussion of the mission's mandate.

In conclusion, I would like to express our deep gratitude to all UNAMID personnel and the United Nations country team for their continued dedication and contribution to the promotion of peace, security, stability and reconciliation in Darfur.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the

African Union, and Assistant Secretary-General Ursula Mueller for their detailed briefings on the situation in Darfur.

To be honest, after hearing a number of our colleagues' statements, we have the distinct impression that they mistook today's meeting as an opportunity mainly to discuss the internal situation in the Sudan rather than the situation in Darfur. In our view, that is not right. The Security Council has no mandate to discuss the evolving political processes in that country. It is important to avoid any statements or actions that could be interpreted as interfering in its internal affairs, and we urge all our colleagues in the Council to keep that in mind.

As far as the state of affairs in Darfur itself is concerned, we note that on the whole the situation in the region has remained stable. There have been no reports of major armed clashes for some time, and intercommunal violence is now virtually non-existent. The Sudanese Government has done a great deal to normalize life in Darfur, and we hope that those efforts will continue. It is important that, given the positive momentum in the region, the process of further drawing down the military component of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) continues in accordance with resolution 2429 (2018). We share the view that in order to prevent any relapses into conflict we must avoid the possibility of creating a power vacuum in the region and focus on building the capacity of State institutions in Darfur. We consider this the main task of the transition concept for UNAMID endorsed in the resolution and designed to support the Sudanese people in the context of the start of the peacebuilding phase of the Darfur settlement.

We emphasize the importance of ensuring that donors deliver on the pledges they have made at previous donor conferences. Together with a relaxation of the unilateral sanctions on the Sudan, we believe that should help to normalize the humanitarian and socioeconomic situation in the Sudan as a whole and resolve issues related to peacebuilding and strengthening security in Darfur.

We are pleased that almost all the provisions of the 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur have been implemented. It is regrettable that the unreconciled armed opposition, while it has lost its presence on the ground, has not given up its attempts to destabilize the situation and incite a new wave of violence in the

region. It has been clear for a long time that the reason the Darfur peace process is stalled is because of the unconstructive negotiating position of the unreconciled parties, including the Sudanese Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid. That is clearly the story behind the refusal of the movements that did not sign the Doha Document to implement the 6 December pre-negotiation agreement concluded in Berlin and mediated by the African Union. Here we should also point to the Sudan Call alliance's decision of 20 March to withdraw from Thabo Mbeki's amended Roadmap Agreement. It is regrettable that in reporting such facts the Secretariat is making the same appeals to everyone concerned. We are convinced that courting the unreconciled parties in this way only harms the peace process. We also believe that rather than encouraging radicals to hold meetings in their capitals, the external sponsors of the Sudanese opposition should urge them to come up with more realistic demands that respond to the goal of advancing the peace process.

Considering all of this, we see no basis for linking the events in Khartoum of 11 April with the processes of the UNAMID withdrawal and the review of the Darfur sanctions regime, which should progress in accordance with the existing plans.

Mr. Syihab (Indonesia): I would first like to join others in expressing our appreciation to Joint Special Representative Jeremiah Mamabolo and Assistant Secretary-General Ursula Mueller for their comprehensive briefings.

We note recent incidents of violence in Darfur, including clashes in Kalma camp. Yet we have all said time and again that the overall security situation in Darfur remains relatively stable. My delegation draws reassurance from a significant decline in intercommunal conflicts, made possible by the active engagement of State and local authorities supported by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The gradual return of internally displaced persons, as attested to in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/305), is particularly encouraging. My delegation cannot overstate the importance of their safe, voluntary and dignified return. We concur with the observations that those trends showcase the stabilizing impact of UNAMID. Indeed, continued improvement in the security situation has enabled a phased withdrawal of UNAMID and the implementation of the plan for its eventual exit in 2020, in line with resolution 2429

(2018). Against that backdrop, my delegation would like to make three important points.

First, it is imperative to promote further progress in the Darfur peace process. We regret that no meaningful progress has been made over the past few months. It is deeply troubling that clashes involving certain groups that repeatedly rejected the peace process increased during the reporting period, and Darfuri armed groups continue to maintain their destabilizing presence outside the Sudan. My delegation stands by its conviction that a military solution is not an option in Darfur. All parties should end hostilities and direct their energy to the negotiating table rather than the battlefield. The plight of the civilian population should be reason enough to revitalize the process. We therefore welcome the declaration of a nationwide ceasefire and the invitation extended to all armed groups to participate in the peace process and contribute to rebuilding the country.

Secondly, the sustained engagement of the international community based on mutual respect and national ownership is key to preventing a relapse into conflict. UNAMID will continue to play an instrumental role in protecting civilians as well as supporting capacity-building with respect to the rule of law and human rights. As we proceed with UNAMID's withdrawal, it is important to enable the Sudan to bear the primary responsibility for security in Darfur.

Also critical to preventing a relapse into conflict is the promotion of socioeconomic development. That would require sustainable financing support for reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts. With 1.9 million people still displaced across the country and 1.2 million refugees from the region residing within its borders, humanitarian assistance becomes a daunting but essential task.

Indonesia is very concerned that the situation in the Sudan continues to be compounded by the impact of the worsening economy crisis and food insecurity. The release of \$26.5 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund a few days ago to provide life-saving assistance to the Sudanese people could not be timelier. However, they still need much more.

That brings me to my third point. My delegation continues to observe very carefully the recent situation in the Sudan. Indonesia reaffirms its principle of non-interference and respect for Sudanese sovereignty and territorial integrity. In that regard we welcome the role of the African Union as the regional mechanism,

including its Peace and Security Council, concerning the situation in the Sudan.

After years of conflict, Darfuris deserve peace, stability and prosperity. Momentum in realizing that hope has been created. It is our conviction that we all must work together to preserve and capitalize on what has been achieved thus far in Darfur. For Indonesia, that would be our clear priority. No party should take advantage of the situation in the Sudan to let Darfur backslide into conflict. All stakeholders must exercise calm and maximum restraint and act in a way that supports the climate of peace in the country.

I should like to conclude by commending the critical work of UNAMID in Darfur. Indonesia is proud to be part of UNAMID, represented presently by 472 peacekeepers. We reaffirm our support for our Sudanese brothers and sisters in taking ownership of their destiny and in their quest to find a peaceful solution in their country.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes your presence, Sir, to preside over the deliberations today. We thank Mr. Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for Darfur and Head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), and Ms. Mueller, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings.

In recent years Darfur, in the Sudan, has maintained a stable security situation on the whole. Since the implementation of UNAMID's transition plan began in the second half of last year, Darfur has continued to remain stable. However, Darfur is still confronted with some challenges. In view of the current situation, the international community should focus its efforts on the following two aspects.

First, it is imperative to continue to advance the political and peace processes. Darfur is presently at a key juncture, transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The international community should continue to advance the relevant political and peace processes in a bid to achieve a steady and smooth transition. The parties to this issue should continue their restraint, avoid the use of force and jointly safeguard the peace and stability of Darfur. Some opposition and armed groups should abandon military solutions in earnest, actively participate in the peace process and resolve their tensions and differences politically through dialogue and consultations.

Secondly, it is necessary to continue to provide humanitarian assistance and economic support. The humanitarian situation in Darfur is still challenging. The foundation for economic and social development is still weak. Those factors will affect the long-term peace and stability of Darfur. The international community should continue to honour its commitment by actively providing humanitarian assistance and economic support. The current focus should be on helping with the return and the settlement of Sudanese internally displaced persons, building and improving local infrastructure and improving agricultural development.

China welcomes the necessary support from the United Nations Development Programme, the Peacebuilding Commission and other relevant bodies for the reconstruction and development of the Sudan. China commends UNAMID's contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability in Darfur and supports its continued activities, in accordance with the mandate to ensure the implementation of the priorities that have been given to it. China hopes the Secretariat and the African Union will keep in close contact and conduct full and objective assessments of issues such as the implementation of UNAMID's transition plan and Darfur's transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, so as to provide timely and feasible suggestions to the Security Council.

The Sudan is an important country in Africa and in the Arab region. Maintaining stability there not only serves the long-term and fundamental interests of the Sudanese people but also contributes to the peace and the security of the wider region and of Africa as a whole. China follows closely the developments in the Sudan. The Transitional Military Council has engaged with parties in the Sudan to carry out dialogue and listen to their aspirations. China welcomes and supports that development and hopes the relevant parties in the Sudan can build consensus and jointly advance the process of political transition and safeguard stability, order and development in the Sudan. The international community should respect the decisions made by the Sudanese people themselves and adhere to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Along with the wider international community, China stands ready to jointly play a constructive role in promoting stability and development in the Sudan and in Darfur.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Your presence among us here this morning, Mr. Minister, underscores the importance of this meeting and that which your country places in its current role as President of the Security Council for April. I also express my gratitude to Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo for updating us not only on the current situation in Darfur, but also with regard to the country and the events that the Sudan is experiencing. We also thank Ms. Ursula Mueller, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for her informative briefing.

We are very concerned about the violence that is negatively affecting the people in Darfur, especially those in the internally displaced persons camps in the aftermath of the overthrow of General Al-Bashir. With regard to the current political situation, the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is closely following current political developments in Khartoum following the removal of General Omer Al-Bashir, the resignation of the Head of the Transitional Military Council, Awad Mohamed Ahmed Bin Auf, and the appointment of his replacement, General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan Abdelrahman, which we believe to be actions taken for the benefit of the people and in response to their demands. In that regard, my country reminds the Transitional Military Council of its role in safeguarding the security of citizens and listening closely to their demands to ensure the stability of the country. Moreover, we welcome the negotiations under way between the Transitional Military Council and the political parties on how to guide the Sudan towards establishing a civilian Government. We hope that the visit by the members of the Transitional Military Council to the African Union in Addis Ababa and the visit to Khartoum by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission will contribute to a complete normalization of the situation in the country. Accordingly, we take note of and support the call of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the Transitional Military Council urging it to transfer power to a civilian Government.

We regret the slow progress in the political process based on Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. In that regard, increased support needs to be provided for the political process, led by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. Equatorial Guinea continues to believe that, in order to resolve land disputes leading to violence, mediation and reconciliation

efforts are needed to prevent and end such conflicts. We commend the efforts of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in its weapons collection campaign. Its full implementation is of the utmost importance not only for preserving the current peaceful situation in Darfur but also in view of restoring lasting peace to that area, especially given that this important programme is now being carried out in the area of Jebel Marra.

Equatorial Guinea requests that, given the current political situation in the Sudan, the international community agree to confer the necessary level of trust upon the Transitional Military Council so that the prerequisite negotiations can be carried out among all the political actors to establish a stable transitional Government and lead to the holding of peaceful and inclusive elections in the Sudan.

I warmly congratulate the Mr. Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative of the African Union and the Secretary-General for Darfur, and the entire UNAMID team and urge them to continue their work to improve the lives of the people of Darfur. I conclude by expressing my hope that the situation in the Sudan will be normalized as soon as possible with the actions that the Transitional Military Council is taking, which are likely to have a positive impact on the situation in Darfur and end the violence that Mr. Mamabolo mentioned earlier.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Ahmed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Mr. Minister, for presiding over this morning's meeting. I would also like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2019/305). I also thank Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for Darfur, and Ms. Ursula Mueller, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their valuable briefings.

We have reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Darfur, which stresses that the security situation throughout Darfur is improving, with the one exception of the area under the control of Abdul Wahid Mohamed Nour in Jebel Marra. His troops are attacking the armed forces and civilians in neighbouring towns. In turn, the military and security forces confront those attacks to protect civilians.

In the past period, Central Darfur state has focused on issues related to strengthening security and stability through the weapons collection campaign and the restoration of State authority. That was done by increasing police troops in order to ensure the voluntary return of internally displaced persons and the success of the harvest season. We hope that will positively affect the security situation and living conditions throughout Darfur states, which are improving daily towards achieving stability and development. We hope that those initiatives will enjoy the support of the international community.

Some parts of the report before the Council have been overtaken by time following the changes that took place since the glorious revolution of December 2018. In that regard, let me reiterate what I said to the Council last week (see S/PV.8509) with regard to the Sudan's commitment to respecting all regional and international agreements, treaties and conventions, including those signed with the United Nations involving the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). I also reaffirm the Sudan's commitment to facilitate the work of the mission and humanitarian organizations working in the Sudan, in general, and Darfur in particular. In addition, I reiterate that the Sudan looks forward to cooperating with the Secretariat and the Security Council to implement UNAMID's exit strategy pursuant to resolution 2429 (2018) and according to the agreed time frame set forth in the resolution, namely, June 2020.

Moreover, we expect our agreed plans to transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur to be implemented, and we also look forward to the dialogue on the report of UNAMID concerning its strategic review. We hope that the recommendations of the report will be in line with the objectives set forth for UNAMID's exit in 2020. We also hope that the report will be in keeping with our aspirations for peacebuilding and sustained peace in Darfur, as well as for UNAMID's exit. That would represent an example of success and a model that truly embodies the meaning of partnership between the African Union and the United Nations in the context of peacekeeping and establishing peace in Africa.

We commend the intense efforts geared towards concluding the peace process, and, once again, we welcome peacebuilding, which means development and an end to the conflict, in conjunction with the major developments in my country following the glorious December revolution.

My country's delegation would like to thank UNAMID for everything that it has been able to accomplish in a number of areas and for the sacrifices of its peacekeepers in recent years. In that regard, we thank the countries that have contributed military, police or civilian personnel. We reiterate that the Sudan is ready to cooperate with all regional and international partners in all the different aspects of UNAMID until it exits my country.

In conclusion, I wish to comment on the remarks made by some members of Security Council. I clearly state that what has been happening in the Sudan since December 2018 is an internal matter, according to the Charter of the United Nations. We do not believe that there is any justification for the Security Council to discuss this matter, especially because the exceptional situation that the Sudan is currently experiencing requires great caution so that stakeholders can conclude their consultations on reaching a peaceful, smooth and democratic transition of power. The same applies to the Secretariat, which must adhere to its mandate in the preparation of its reports.

We are keen to not take any step that might have negative repercussions on the current situation. We are also confident that the members of the Council share the same concern. Those present and the entire world have seen that the Sudanese revolution is a peaceful one that seeks to bring about a change that the Sudanese people desire. If the revolution, which has lasted for months, is able to meet its aspirations, then the Sudanese people will also be able to reach theirs and conclude their peaceful and civilized revolution in a manner that is appropriate to the circumstances and challenges of our country.

The President: I give the floor to Mr. Mamabolo to respond to the questions posed by the representatives of the United Kingdom and South Africa.

Mr. Mamabolo: The question from the representative of the United Kingdom was on the response of the formed police units to the incident in Kalma. I want to start by saying that we have three formed police units stationed in Kalma. The units are from Pakistan and are supported by Bangladesh and Burkina Faso. We must first understand the nature of the conflict. It was really mostly between supporters of Abdul Wahid and those that are perceived not to be supporting Abdul Wahid. Upon receiving information,

we immediately arrived there and gave first aid to the injured, transferred the six injured to a hospital and collected the bodies. We engaged with the community leaders and made sure to create a buffer zone between the groups that were fighting. Then began negotiations by way of mediating between the community leaders of the two groups to defuse the situation.

The other question, put forth by the representative of South Africa, was on whether we are proposing a revised timetable for the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). I wish to say that we are acting in accordance with resolution 2429 (2018), the term of which ends in June 2019. Resolution 2429 (2018) is intended to follow the exit strategy of UNAMID, which says that by June 2020 UNAMID should be out of Darfur. If we look at June 2019, we are just a couple of months from that final destination and our plans have already been made. We are therefore acting in accordance with the decisions that have been taken and agreed upon by the Security Council in terms of our exit strategy.

The Security Council also took a decision that we should have a strategic review to inform the new mandate that is to follow, beginning July 2019 until June 2020. The Security Council will have the opportunity in the near future to review that report. Experts did come, but the strategic assessment team came before we had what we are now experiencing in terms of disturbances, which have created quite a lot of concern. In my statement, I indicated that we cannot pretend that nothing has happened on the ground, and we are also concerned about that.

The fact is that we have actually given two weeks for the handover of the camps that were meant to be handed over, some of which we would have handed over already by now. We decided that with the dissolution of the State structure that it was not possible to go ahead with the handover of those sectors, and that perhaps we ought to give a period of two weeks to see what happens. We have in the meantime engaged with the authorities and we will have a meeting so as to understand who our interlocutors from the Government side will be so that we can continue. We have been informed that as of tomorrow, it will be possible to have this meeting with a view, hopefully, to being able to comply with the June 2019 time line of resolution 2429 (2018).

In terms of going forward from July, that decision will fall to the Security Council to make when it analyses the report of the strategic assessment, which I am sure it will have soon. I am sure that the assessment will take everything into account, including the current situation that we are witnessing in the Sudan.

The President: I now give the floor to Assistant Secretary-General Mueller to make some additional comments.

Ms. Mueller: I always stand ready to respond to questions from the Security Council. I did not hear any, so I have no further comments.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.