



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

9337th meeting

Friday, 2 June 2023, 4.20 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Spasse
Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador	Mr. Pérez Loose
France	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon	Mr. Biang
Ghana	Mr. Abudu-Birresborn
Japan	Mr. Ishikane
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

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

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The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

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

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

Members of the Council have before them document S/2023/399, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Albania, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2685 (2023).

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

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): With resolution 2685 (2023), the Security Council has sent a unified endorsement of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of all the United Nations staff in the Sudan, as well as those providing support from outside the country, who continue to do vital work under extremely challenging circumstances. Let me in particular underline the United Kingdom's support for the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes and the UNITAMS team.

The situation in the Sudan remains of significant concern, particularly with regard to the humanitarian needs of the Sudan's population. Today's mandate renewal underlines that the United Nations will continue to support the Sudan's demands for peace and democracy. That six-month rollover will also provide the necessary time for the Council to assess the impact

of the developing context on UNITAMS' ability to fulfil its vital mandate.

The press statement (SC/15257) agreed earlier today underlines the Council's concern about the current situation and reiterates its support for UNITAMS. It also expresses support for the efforts of the African Union, Saudi Arabia, the United States and others to achieve a permanent end to the hostilities and a resumption of the political process in the Sudan.

Finally, let me pay tribute to the work of my team and all the experts who worked tirelessly to complete this mandate renewal and send a unified message from the Council.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Gabon, Ghana and Mozambique just voted in favour of renewing the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) in order to enable the Mission to continue its mandate, despite the deteriorating security and political context.

The security situation in the Sudan continues to deteriorate. The country is at a critical juncture in its history, facing a heightened risk of civil war if the conflict continues, which could have grave consequences for the entire region. We believe that the presence of UNITAMS is more important than ever in coordinating the United Nations response to the complex challenges facing the country.

We support UNITAMS' continued efforts, through the trilateral mechanism, to help the Sudanese people overcome the challenges they face at this critical time. The three African members of the Security Council call for an immediate ceasefire. We echo the African Union Peace and Security Council's communiqué of 27 May and underline the importance of the de-escalation plan proposed by the African Union as a benchmark road map for ending the conflict in the Sudan. We reiterate the key role in resolving this crisis played by subregional organizations, in particular the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and stress the need for improving cooperation and coordination on the multiple initiatives.

Given the alarming humanitarian situation faced by the civilian population, internally displaced persons and the many refugees in neighbouring countries, there is a need to take concerted efforts that are commensurate to the scope of the distress and risk that they face. The international community urgently needs to take action to fund the 2023 humanitarian response plan for the

Sudan, as well as those neighbouring countries that are hosting massive numbers of Sudanese refugees. We call for unhindered access for humanitarian actors and stress the need to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered in the Sudan, as well as in neighbouring countries, in accordance with the guiding principles governing the delivery of humanitarian aid.

In conclusion, Gabon, Ghana and Mozambique reiterate their solidarity with the Sudanese people at this painful time in their country's history.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): The United States is grateful that the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan for another six months. We voted in favour of resolution 2685 (2023) to express our strong support for Special Representative of the Secretary-General Volker Perthes and the entire Mission.

We strongly regret that the Council was unable to find consensus on an updated mandate, which is needed now more than ever. We put forth common-sense recommendations for the mandate to report on the ongoing conflict and support efforts to cease the hostilities. However, other members of the Council did not agree, despite the drastically changed and catastrophic circumstances.

We hope that the Council can come together in the months ahead and agree on a resolution that more accurately reflects the situation on the ground and empowers the Mission to better support an end to the conflict, the protection of human rights, the provision of unhindered humanitarian assistance and the resumption of a process to achieve a democratic political settlement in the Sudan.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I too would like to thank the penholder on resolution 2685 (2023), the United Kingdom, for its tireless work to consolidate the Security Council's position.

Clashes continue in the Sudan despite the repeated ceasefire agreements between the parties. Currently, there is no clear positive sign of a return to the political process. The humanitarian situation in the Sudan and its neighbours is worsening. Japan continues to call on the parties to immediately end the hostilities and uphold the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of the Sudan and the agreement on a short-term ceasefire and humanitarian arrangements.

Japan voted in favour of the resolution because it is important to maintain the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) given such difficult circumstances. We are encouraged by the fact that the Council could speak in a united voice in that regard.

Japan was appalled by the letter from the Sudan requesting the removal of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes. We reiterate our strong support for UNITAMS call on all the parties in the Sudan to ensure that the Mission can carry out its mandate unhindered.

In conclusion, Japan reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that the Mission can continue to fulfil its mandate.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): As I take the floor for the first time since you began your presidency, Madam, allow me to congratulate you, wish you every success and assure you of our full support in the month of June.

Switzerland welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2685 (2023), which extends the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) for six months. That is a sensible step given the current circumstances. We thank the penholder country for its tireless efforts in achieving consensus among the members of the Security Council on the renewal of the mandate, and for today's press statement (SC/15257).

It is important for the Council to speak with one voice on the need to end the violence in the Sudan and protect the civilian population. It is also crucial for the Council to demonstrate unity in support of regional efforts, in particular those under the leadership of the African Union (AU) and through the expanded mechanism, in order to implement the AU road map for resolving the conflict in the Sudan. The United Nations, together with the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, as members of the trilateral mechanism, play an essential role in finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

We call on the two parties to immediately silence the guns, respect international humanitarian law and fully implement the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of the Sudan and the agreement on a short-term ceasefire and humanitarian arrangements.

Let me conclude by reiterating Switzerland's full support for UNITAMS, the Special Representative

and all the staff, who have worked tirelessly since the beginning of the conflict.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): Malta welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2685 (2023), which extends the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission (UNITAMS) for six months. Malta expresses its gratitude to the penholder country for its extensive efforts in bridging and leading the members of the Security Council towards a consensus. Today's adoption reflects the Council's continued commitment to and support for UNITAMS, which is currently operating in challenging times.

Malta welcomes the issuing of a press statement (SC/15257) in that regard, which provides a timely, unified and complementary message by the Security Council on the situation in the Sudan — a situation that continues to reflect a deeply worrisome future for the country. We welcome the Council speaking with one voice and reinforcing its central commitment to the people of the Sudan, in concert with regional initiatives.

Malta fully supports the work of the United Nations, together with the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, as members of the trilateral mechanism. We echo the call on both parties to cease hostilities without preconditions and to lead the Sudan back to its political transition. We remind all the parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law, at a time when humanitarian needs in the Sudan have risen to record levels.

In conclusion, we reiterate our full support to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes, who together with his team at UNITAMS, continues his tireless work with unfaltering dedication and commitment. Malta remains steadfast in its support of the Sudanese people, convinced that only through dialogue can the issues raised by the warring parties be resolved.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The ongoing armed conflict in the Sudan has resulted in heavy casualties and a dire humanitarian crisis. The Council has just unanimously adopted resolution 2685 (2023) to renew the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and agreed on press statement SC/15305, demonstrating the common aspiration of the international community to maintain peace and stability in the Sudan.

I wish to reiterate the following points.

First, a cessation of hostilities is the top priority. The parties have reached multiple temporary ceasefire agreements, but military clashes continue. As a good friend of the Sudan, China sincerely hopes that the relevant parties will put the interests of the people and the country first and make every effort to ease the tensions and avoid any further escalation. At the same time, the parties should commit to resolving differences through political dialogue, build mutual trust and create conditions for reaching a more durable ceasefire and lasting political arrangements.

Secondly, the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other regional organizations and relevant countries have made enormous efforts to promote peace talks. The African Union Peace and Security Council recently adopted the African Union road map for the resolution of the conflict in the Sudan. The Security Council and relevant international partners should support the efforts of regional bodies and strive to form synergy.

China has repeatedly reiterated that the Sudan issue is highly complex and that a solution can be found only internally. When conducting good offices, the international community should uphold the principle of "Sudan-led and Sudan-owned". Any external pressure or unilateral sanctions will only increase disagreement and competition and impede diplomatic mediation.

Thirdly, China supports the efforts of UNITAMS to achieve its mandate from the Council, overcome the existing difficulties and challenges and continue to contribute to restoring stability and alleviating the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan. At the same time, the United Nations should maintain communication and coordination with the Sudanese authorities, resolve differences and misunderstandings, earn the understanding and support of the host country and ensure the smooth fulfilment of the Mission's mandate.

In the next six months, the Council should keep abreast of the evolving situation on the ground, fully heed the views of all parties in the Sudan and further consider the work of UNITAMS going forward.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 2685 (2023) on a six-month technical rollover of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) prepared by the United Kingdom.

The situation in the Sudan remains worrisome. On 15 April, the conflict started between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces began, and it has not subsided. The humanitarian situation is very difficult. Further escalation could worsen the security risks within the Sudan and destabilize neighbouring countries, which are themselves very vulnerable. We urge the Sudanese parties to demonstrate political will and wisdom and to take immediate steps to end the armed confrontation. We support national and regional efforts to settle the situation and ensure a ceasefire.

We believe that a technical rollover of the mandate of UNITAMS in this situation is the only correct thing to do. We believe that, in its future activities, the Mission, which operates at the invitation of the Sudan, will take into account the opinion of the host country and listen to its concerns, without which the effective fulfilment of the mandate will be impossible. We expect that, once the acute phase of the conflict is over, the Security Council will be able to return to discussing the parameters of the United Nations presence that the country needs.

We call on the United Nations to pay special attention to providing humanitarian assistance to the Sudan and neighbouring States in strict compliance with the relevant guiding principles enshrined in General Assembly resolution 46/182. In that regard, when discussing press statement SC/15305, which we also adopted today, we were concerned by the attempts to question those foundational principles. External interference in the sovereign affairs of the Sudan is unacceptable, and we regret the fact that a clear signal on that, which was agreed by the African Union, was not reflected in the Security Council's reaction to the situation in the country.

Moreover, we would like to reiterate our commitment to the national unity of the Sudan. When working on Council documents, we are defending that and consider even the slightest deviation from that to be unacceptable.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the adoption of today's resolution 2685 (2023). We thank the United Kingdom, in its capacity as penholder, for its efforts in facilitating the consultations for both the renewal of the

mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the substantive press statement on the concerning developments in Sudan (SC/15305). We reiterate the United Arab Emirates' full support to the United Nations and the Secretary-General for their commitment to peace and stability in the Sudan at this critical juncture.

We join others in expressing our deep concern at the grave violations of the ceasefire agreement, reached in Jeddah, which have led to serious harm to civilians. We are also extremely alarmed by the obstruction of humanitarian access, which is a lifeline for those in need. For those reasons, the United Arab Emirates voted in favour of today's resolution. We did so following extensive consultations among the members of the Security Council and in continued communication with the Sudan. That decision was borne out of a firm belief that it is the Security Council's responsibility to send a clear message on what is at stake if a permanent ceasefire arrangement is not reached.

We support the renewal of the mandate of UNITAMS because we seek to maintain a fully fledged United Nations presence in the Sudan. That is crucial at this time, especially considering the vital role that UNITAMS plays in engaging with other stakeholders and coordinating humanitarian assistance.

The press statement outlines the expectations of the Security Council. It stresses the need to immediately cease hostilities, to ensure the protection of civilians and the United Nations and to facilitate humanitarian access. It also reminds parties that the Juba Peace Agreement is binding.

The United Arab Emirates therefore strongly supports strengthened international coordination to enable the Sudan to achieve those expectations. We support the African Union (AU) road map for the resolution of the conflict in the Sudan, and we will remain actively engaged with all partners, including UNITAMS, the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the League of Arab States in support of the Sudan.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.