



# Economic and Social Council

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### Summary record of the 29th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 20 June 2023, at 3 p.m.

*Co-Chair:* Mr. Massari .....(Italy)

*Co-Chair:* Mr. Chimbindi.....(Zimbabwe)

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*In the absence of Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria), Mr. Massari (Italy), Vice-President, and Mr. Chimbindi, (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions** (*continued*)

**(e) Long-term programme of support for Haiti** (*continued*) (E/2023/63)

**(f) African countries emerging from conflict** (*continued*)

**(g) Sustainable development in the Sahel** (*continued*) (E/2023/92)

*Panel discussion: "Experience in Haiti: Overcoming urgent challenges, particularly to health, food security and protection concerns"*

1. **Mr. Massari** (Co-Chair) said that the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Haiti had more than doubled since 2016. The country was facing a dire protection crisis, abominable levels of gender-based violence and sexual violence, climate shocks, an alarming rise in food insecurity and recurrent socioeconomic and political challenges that were anchored in deep-rooted structural problems and development deficits.
2. **Mr. Rae** (Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York and Chair of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti), panellist, speaking via video link, said that, in order to slow the deterioration of the overall situation in Haiti, it would be crucial to resolve the security situation in the country, including by addressing violence, and gang violence in particular. Insecurity, including food insecurity, was increasing in severity as the threat of violence was preventing people from going to work and growing and selling foodstuffs. The response from the international community to the security situation, including in the allocation of resources towards its resolution, had been insufficient. Opportunities to provide humanitarian support, ensure food security and drive a successful transition from relief to development were being hindered by violence, insecurity and the breakdown of economic, social and political order.
3. There was broad agreement on the need to achieve deeper political consensus in Haiti on how to rebuild the country and find solutions to its problems, a task that must be spearheaded by Haitian actors. Immediate measures must be taken to tackle gang violence, which would require additional contributions and engagement from internal and external stakeholders. It would be important to work closely with a new Haitian Government to chart a new path to development by learning from past mistakes and having the courage to try new approaches. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti was working with a number of African countries to explore ways forward. However, there was still a long way to go. The international community must acknowledge the seriousness of the situation and make every effort to prevent the country's full-scale collapse.
4. **Ms. Richardson** (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti), panellist, speaking via video link, said that, to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past, humanitarian assistance should not be viewed as the solution to the situation in Haiti. The deepening humanitarian crisis was the result not just of gang violence, which had a particularly strong impact on women, children and young people, but also of the deep-rooted structural problems in the country, such as the dismantling of economic incentives that had previously ensured the country's food security. It was therefore crucial to address the root causes of the crisis while also responding to acute needs. In addition, Haiti had not been able to invest in projects, such as the reversal of environmental degradation, that could lessen the impact of the crisis, heighten the country's resilience and improve its capacity to produce food. A multifaceted response to the crisis was needed to ensure that the economic, social and political dimensions of the various intertwined crises befalling Haiti could be addressed together.
5. Rather than providing humanitarian assistance, the international community should support the people of Haiti to strengthen the country's economic resilience and its ability to withstand to natural and human-made shocks. To that end, it would be important to strengthen

the rule of law at all levels, increase food self-sufficiency and institutionalize social protection to address the needs of the most vulnerable in a sustainable manner. International actors must work with existing institutions in Haiti, since such structures would be the ones to lead the country into prosperity and stability once the crisis had ended. It would also be vital to increase partnerships in order to mobilize sufficient financial resources to close the significant funding gaps hampering the efforts of actors on the ground. The Economic and Social Council and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti served as excellent platforms for the broadening of cooperation, including South-South cooperation, with partners at the regional and global levels.

6. Despite the challenges facing Haiti, there was cause for optimism. For instance, thanks to the scaling up of support to the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), around 40 per cent of schoolchildren now received hot meals made with local produce provided through the Home Grown School Feeding Programme. However, actors on the ground required additional resources to continue supporting the Haitian people to move forward.

7. **Ms. Grudem** (Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Food Programme (WFP)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the hunger crisis in Haiti was one of the most critical in the world, with 18 per cent of the population facing emergency levels of food insecurity. Armed groups were spreading to the productive areas of agricultural regions, preventing farmers from taking their produce to market, meaning that food was rotting in fields while people went hungry. If farmers were unable to make a living in rural areas, there was a risk that increasing numbers of young people would need to move to urban areas, where they would fall under the influence of armed groups, thus perpetuating the food insecurity crisis.

8. Yet there was hope: many Haitians had been brought out of famine-like conditions in 2022 thanks to humanitarian, development and resilience-building interventions, which had relied on rapid, consistent funding. WFP, FAO and partners were also working to strengthen social protection systems, including by widening access to the Home Grown School Feeding Programme, an initiative that benefited not just children but also farmers and workers in the food processing industry. Furthermore, it had been possible to overcome the barriers to access caused by gang violence by working with farming communities to increase local food production opportunities and capacities, and WFP was working with the Government to adopt that approach at the national level. In addition, several organizations were implementing cash transfer initiatives to increase purchasing power among the Haitian population. However, large funding gaps in humanitarian support remained. The humanitarian response plan for Haiti of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was currently less than 30 per cent funded. Without consistent funding, it would be difficult to support humanitarian interventions and social protection systems.

9. **Ms. Anilus** (Team Leader, Rezo Fanm Kapab dAyiti (REFKAD), and member of Cadre de Liaison Inter-Organisations (CLIO) Network), panellist, speaking via video link, said that the crisis in Haiti had weakened the public authorities and undermined the rule of law. Food supply chains and local services were being disrupted by gang violence, and the resulting economic slowdown was having a major impact on Haitian livelihoods. The alarming human rights situation, coupled with pre-existing inequalities, was especially acute for women and girls, who faced barriers to access to food and basic services. Furthermore, it was women, children and persons with disabilities in particular who were experiencing acute food insecurity, and families were facing financial ruin as a result of forced displacement, fires at markets and exorbitant bank loans.

10. Local organizations, which were the first port of call for Haitians in need of support, were experiencing major difficulties in securing sufficient funding to facilitate the transition from relief to development. Local actors must therefore be included in the aid agenda and at all stages of the humanitarian response to ensure that the needs of local populations could be adequately met. Despite numerous appeals from the humanitarian community in Haiti, funding from the international community had been slow to arrive; a humanitarian response that was delinked from politics was thus needed.

11. The international community, including donors, must provide sustained support to Haitian institutions and society. The exercise of rights, food sovereignty and access to education and health were conditional on a stable security situation on the ground; the international community should therefore provide sustainable support towards the re-establishment of the rule of law. Lessons should be learned from the response to the 2010 earthquake in order to improve the allocation of humanitarian aid and finance local projects in an effective and sustainable manner. Local organizations providing community-based services should be supported in their efforts to secure funding and should be on the front line of the humanitarian response. In addition, the international community should facilitate exchanges among Haitian and international actors on key organizational issues. Given the country's vulnerability to natural disasters, it would be crucial to secure direct access to loss and damage funds for Haitian communities affected by climate change. Lastly, to drive progress towards sustainable development in Haiti, local actors should be included in all organizations focusing on women and young people throughout the country, and funding should be channelled towards their activities.

12. **Ms. Dätwyler Scheuer** (Observer for Switzerland) said that growing humanitarian needs, food insecurity and barriers to access to humanitarian aid in Haiti were concerning. International humanitarian law must be respected, and humanitarian workers must be allowed unrestricted and secure access to civilian populations affected by violence and food insecurity. The worsening of the current crisis was likely to have a disproportionate impact on those already experiencing hunger.

13. Switzerland participated in programmes aimed at alleviating food insecurity and supported local agricultural producers and cooperatives in Haiti. Its experience of supporting the country had shown that it was possible to meet humanitarian needs, in particular in the provinces, through a medium-term approach. The commitment of organizations working on the ground, especially WFP, was welcome; Switzerland would therefore increase its contribution to the humanitarian response in Haiti in 2023.

14. **Ms. Morris Garrido** (Guatemala) said that her country shared the concerns raised regarding the deterioration of the situation in Haiti and supported its path to peace, stability, sustainable development and human rights. A holistic approach was needed to address the root causes of food insecurity in Haiti, and all actions taken by external actors must align with priorities set by Haiti.

15. To make a real impact on the lives of the people of Haiti, it would be important to foster economic growth. To that end, security and stability must be cultivated and maintained, food systems must be made more sustainable, inclusive and cooperative, and investment should be channelled into social programmes aimed at reducing inequalities and providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable populations. The country's vulnerability to external shocks resulting from climate change must also be addressed. Guatemala was firmly committed to the development and prosperity of the people of Haiti and stood ready to share its experiences of tackling hunger and malnutrition.

16. **Mr. Quinn** (United Kingdom), expressing concern at the humanitarian situation in Haiti, said that armed criminal gangs were exacerbating and perpetuating the suffering of the Haitian people, preventing the transition from relief to development and creating barriers to the enjoyment of protections, including protection from gender-based violence. The United Kingdom would continue to work on the ground in Haiti and use its platform at the Security Council to support international efforts to find a Haitian-led solution to the country's multifarious challenges.

17. **Ms. Hasselfeldt-Sepe** (United States of America) said that it was possible to successfully support complementary disaster risk reduction programmes when responding to complex emergencies. Encouraging the provision of multiple layers of support in parallel with a significant humanitarian response would mitigate serious risks from natural hazards.

18. The challenging human rights situation in Haiti remained deeply concerning. The United States was providing support through protection, nutrition and health programmes and was assisting in disaster risk reduction and resilience programming with a view to lessening the impact of natural hazards.

19. **Mr. Rajasingham** (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)) said that while humanitarian efforts in Haiti were of undeniably critical importance, they alone were not a sustainable solution to the current crisis. The vicious cycle of insecurity could be broken only through the promotion of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, which was the approach favoured by the people of Haiti. To achieve sustainable change, additional resources were needed to drive the humanitarian response and address the root causes of the crisis. The international community must therefore urgently increase its support and boost the presence of development actors to help Haiti to build resilience, support livelihoods, prepare for natural disasters and strengthen local response capacities and, ultimately, restore dignity to the population. Actors on the ground continued to implement life-saving interventions, including by negotiating with armed groups to gain access to vulnerable populations, and a campaign had been launched to raise awareness of the need to respect humanitarian norms in times of war.

20. He urged international actors to mobilize their networks to push for a long-term solution to the political and security crisis and to fund the humanitarian response plan for Haiti to enable OCHA to keep saving lives. OCHA would endeavour to coordinate with development actors to systematically address risks, vulnerability and needs in Haiti.

21. **Mr. Rae** (Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York and Chair of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti) said that the international community must recognize that it was currently falling short of its obligations to Haiti. It would be impossible to address development and humanitarian issues without first tackling the security situation, and the United Nations would need to provide more assistance to the Haitian national police to increase its capacity to take action and successfully tackle gang violence. However, change would be possible only through the achievement of deeper political consensus in Haiti; the Haitian political elites should therefore take some responsibility for the situation and should act more quickly and urgently to deal with the crisis. It would also be useful to examine the underlying issues drawing young men into gangs, such as the absence of alternative employment opportunities.

22. Nonetheless, while it would be important to deal with the complex root causes of the crisis, its symptoms must be addressed first. Progress could only be achieved if breakthroughs could be made in all areas of the crisis; States must therefore contribute further financial resources to enable the United Nations to effectively address the political, security, humanitarian and development dimensions of the situation.

23. **Ms. Richardson** (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti) said that the symptoms and root causes of the crisis must be addressed simultaneously. The brutal violence and human rights violations facing Haitians, in particular the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, was damaging the social fabric of Haiti and its capacity to rebound from the situation. It was true that the international community had an obligation to support people in need of humanitarian assistance. However, it must also find ways to address the many long-term problems and root causes of the current situation, such as political instability, the weakening of the justice system and the widespread sense of impunity. Investment from, and trade with, other countries in the region would be essential to that end, as would efforts to strengthen the resilience and capacity of Haiti to withstand natural shocks.

24. The humanitarian response plan for Haiti sought to address both the acute and longer-term issues facing the country, and the situation's root causes were considered in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period 2023–2027. The international community, including organizations in the United Nations system, must learn from its past mistakes and consider how to better respond to the situation in Haiti. Humanitarian actors had the capacity to deliver progress on the ground but lacked the necessary financial resources to do so, an area in which Member States and international financial institutions could contribute.

25. **Ms. Grudem** (Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Food Programme (WFP)) said that consistency was needed in the support provided to Haiti, including in efforts to address the root causes of the crisis. It would be crucial to eliminate

the push factors that drove Haitians into gang membership, including by improving opportunities for employment and income generation, and to foster hope among Haitians.

26. **Ms. Anilus** (Team Leader, Rezo Fanm Kapab dAyiti (REFKAD), and member of Cadre de Liaison Inter-Organisations (CLIO) Network) said that it would be necessary to develop strategies to force the armed gangs in Haiti to withdraw to allow peace to return. Haitians also needed help to re-establish the rule of law and create a new political class, as many institutions had operated for several years without elected leaders. In addition, basic infrastructure would need to be adapted to be able to respond to natural disasters. Lastly, local organizations, especially women's and youth organizations, required support and funding given their key role in alleviating the suffering of the people of Haiti.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.15 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.*

*Panel discussion: "Experience in South Sudan: Promoting resilience and sustainable solutions in a complex and protracted crisis"*

27. **Mr. Massari** (Co-Chair) said that South Sudan faced a protracted development deficit and a protracted humanitarian crisis and was one of the countries most vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Despite those challenges, its people were working to build communities, schools and businesses and harness the country's vast potential. The United Nations and partners were working on the ground to explore how to respond to those challenges through humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts.

28. **Mr. Šimonović** (Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations in New York and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission), panellist, speaking via video link, said that it was crucial that the South Sudanese authorities ensured the full and timely implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, in line with the Roadmap to a Peaceful and Democratic End of the Transitional Period, as a prerequisite to advancing sustainable peace and development.

29. The Peacebuilding Commission also underscored the need to invest in capacity change and institution-building to ensure the effective delivery of and access to basic social and economic services in a context of complex humanitarian, security, political and development challenges. Furthermore, national ownership, trust-building, national reconciliation and a whole-of-society approach were preconditions for addressing the root causes of armed conflict and the multidimensional crisis. Lastly, partnerships should be fostered with civil society, and greater support should be offered to it.

30. The Commission promoted the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of young people in peacekeeping activities and the transition process. In that vein, it encouraged compliance with the 35 per cent quota for women's representation in governance bodies at the State and national level, called for a greater provision of socioeconomic opportunities to address intercommunal violence and urged the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity in South Sudan to continue to implement the youth peace and security agenda.

31. **Mr. Van der Auweraert** (Acting United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan), panellist, speaking via video link, said that over 9.4 million people in South Sudan were projected to need humanitarian assistance in 2023, principally owing to the consequences of conflict and climate change against a background of high poverty rates. The conflict in the Sudan had led over 130,000 people, mostly South Sudanese returnees, to flee to South Sudan, and had caused the price of basic commodities in areas bordering the Sudan to surge.

32. The humanitarian response plan for the Sudan had reached only around 30 per cent of its funding target, and prospects for receiving further funding were low. It was clear that humanitarian assistance alone would not resolve the issues faced by South Sudan. Consequently, it was crucial to pair humanitarian work with development work, and peacemaking work with peacebuilding work. It was also important to adapt infrastructure and the way humanitarian work was carried out in order to build the country's resilience and find joint solutions. Prioritizing collective action by financing collaborative projects over individual ones should make it possible to reduce the number of focus areas and key objectives, and thus deliver better results and create more accountability.

33. Plans for displaced populations, climate change adaptation and food security were being shaped by development actors in collaboration with local communities and authorities in the areas affected. It was important to ensure that short-term humanitarian assistance actors, who were addressing the symptoms of a problem, were contributing to longer-term development solutions.

34. Initiatives such as the Partnership for Peace, Recovery and Resilience facilitated collaborative work and created a space for joint discussions. Leadership had been decentralized through the nomination of area-based leaders in three locations in South Sudan in an effort to bring decision-making closer to the field and give the local population a greater say in the priorities and solutions chosen. The Integrated Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator had also been established to improve coordination and collaboration between actors and further harmonize the delivery of work.

35. **Mr. Raad** (Country Manager for South Sudan, World Bank), panellist, speaking via video link, said that, under the updated World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence, the Group's country programme had expanded significantly over the previous two years. It sought to boost community resilience and protect vulnerable communities by providing vital cash assistance and work opportunities to poor households; by helping communities build local infrastructure to support basic services and cope with climate shocks; and by supporting small farming communities to grow their markets and expand their livelihoods. In coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, it also supported the lives and livelihoods of refugee and host populations in South Sudan by unlocking resources from the Window for Host Communities and Refugees operated by the International Development Association.

36. The country programme promoted a shift back to government-led implementation of development operations in an effort to strengthen the Government's capacity, accountability and ownership by working with and through public sector systems, subject to World Bank policies and procedures related to financial management, procurement and safeguards. The associated risks were being managed and mitigated via implementation support services and partnerships with the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations.

37. Engaging with government actors, development partners and key stakeholders made it possible to build more effective synergies between peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance and development work in communities across the country. For example, discussions had taken place on the importance of promoting sustainable farming and agribusiness to reduce the need for food assistance. The backing of all stakeholders would be essential for South Sudan to transition to permanent status and contend with its numerous humanitarian and development challenges.

38. **Ms. N'Zi-Hassane** (Africa Director, Oxfam International), panellist, said that one of the most pressing issues in South Sudan was the food security crisis: 3 in 4 people were going hungry, 43,000 people were living in famine-like conditions, and over 1.4 million children under the age of 5 years were facing acute malnutrition. Malnourished people were also particularly vulnerable to disease. The conflict in the Sudan continued to impact food security in many areas, including through the arrival of thousands of returnees and refugees in South Sudan, which had further stretched the country's limited resources. Lastly, the drop in value of the South Sudanese pound against the United States dollar had pushed the price of basic food items to an all-time high, making them unaffordable for many.

39. An urgent and major injection of money was required to manage the immediate humanitarian crisis and to address the structural underlying drivers of vulnerability and conflict. It was also important to invest in local people's resilience. Oxfam International was investing expertise and funds in community peacebuilding with support from other organizations. For example, the Danish International Development Agency had assisted Oxfam International and the authorities to establish dialogue structures and village committees to reduce issues such as cattle theft and ranch killings in the Lakes State. Furthermore, as young people made up the majority of the South Sudanese population, it was critical to invest in creating opportunities for them to prevent them from engaging in conflict situations.

40. **Mr. Garwech Kuol** (National Director, Child's Destiny and Development Organization), panellist, said that the context of widespread poverty and acute food insecurity had led to dependency on humanitarian food aid. It was therefore vital to pursue sustainable longer-term interventions that combined humanitarian, development and peace approaches. It should also be noted that the earmarking of almost all of the official development assistance provided had prevented much-needed collaboration among implementing actors and limited their ability to pool resources and adapt to ever-changing conflict and peacebuilding dynamics.

41. Challenges faced by donors included: the ambiguous concept of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, especially the peace component; donors' limited contextual knowledge and conflict analysis; difficulties with collaboration and coordination owing to the fragmentation of triple nexus administrative units within donors' institutions; and localization barriers experienced by national actors, such as the limited capacity of local non-governmental organizations.

42. Risk must be reduced through risk-sharing, and power dynamics must be rebalanced. International organizations should share power with local actors to give them ownership over development, humanitarian and peacebuilding programmes. Lastly, funding should also be channelled for national use and donors should publicly advocate for locally led development.

43. **Mr. Rajasingham** (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)) said that South Sudan was one of four pilot countries in which OCHA was rolling out a project to reduce humanitarian vulnerability, which was intended to be solution-oriented and led by the affected populations. On a visit to Bentiu, a week earlier, staff had asked the local population about their aspirations and had reported that while some people wished to return to their homes, many women would prefer not to do so and hoped for access to agricultural livelihoods to provide for themselves. Young people wished to stay in urban areas with access to training and employment. The population wanted to be self-sufficient and not rely on humanitarian assistance.

44. Despite the country's extraordinary agricultural potential, the local population needed security. Unpredictable localized violence affected all aspects of the community, and the roughly 70 checkpoints around the River Nile that were controlled by various armed groups impeded mobility and access to markets and made it difficult for people to return to their homes. A national water management strategy was needed to support self-sufficiency.

45. **Ms. Dätwyler Scheuer** (Observer for Switzerland) said that Switzerland welcomed and supported the OCHA initiative and looked forward to seeing how it would transform the humanitarian response. The country's programmes in South Sudan centred on promoting the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to reduce humanitarian needs and increase the resilience of locally affected populations.

46. **Ms. Advani** (United Kingdom) said that the humanitarian situation in South Sudan was deeply shocking. Border crossings due to fighting in the Sudan were exacerbating response capacity issues. However, the United Kingdom wished to commend the United Nations system and humanitarian partners on their swift response and urge the adoption of an agile strategy and careful risk management as the situation evolved. Her Government had announced £143 million in humanitarian aid for East Africa for 2023–2024, including £18.9 million for South Sudan. It had also allocated funding for food security, nutrition assistance and gender-based violence prevention and response services in South Sudan. The United Kingdom wished to encourage the Government of South Sudan to build on the progress it had already made and take further steps, including prioritizing resource allocation to the worsening humanitarian crisis, helping to prevent attacks on humanitarian workers and reducing humanitarian need by tackling conflict. The root causes of fragility urgently needed to be addressed, and every effort was needed to stop subnational violence and deliver progress on the peace agreement.

47. **A representative of the United States of America** said that natural hazards such as flooding, drought and agricultural pests continued to affect South Sudan each year, and the situation was compounded by conflict, deteriorating conditions and poor governance. Widespread flooding caused loss of life and property and exacerbated physical, social,



economic and environmental vulnerabilities, worsening food insecurity, displacement and intercommunal and interfamilial violence, including gender-based violence.

48. Through its Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the United States Agency for International Development mainstreamed disaster risk reduction across its multisectoral portfolio, helping support self-reliance among vulnerable communities in South Sudan. It also funded multi-year emergency awards to deliver programmes related to agriculture, food security, livelihoods and capacity-building, in addition to strengthening gender equity and youth empowerment in disaster risk reduction. The Agency's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration partnered with non-governmental organizations in Upper Nile and Unity States to build empowering interventions in collaboration with refugees and host communities. Examples included training in disease eradication and water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as support for climate shock-resilient farming and seed storage management to increase community resilience and independence.

49. **Mr. Šimonović** (Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations in New York and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission) said that the experience of the Sudan had demonstrated the importance of inclusivity and the broader context in achieving peace and overcoming crises. In addition to the United Nations, regional and subregional actors – including international financial institutions, the Government, civil society, women and young people – needed to be fully engaged. The broader context could have positive and negative impacts: while in South Sudan the engagement of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had been key to the successful implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement, fighting in the Sudan negatively impacted stability and the political and humanitarian situation in South Sudan due to existing resource scarcities and the influx of Sudanese refugees. Ending that conflict was hugely important to helping South Sudan.

50. **Mr. Van der Auweraert** (Acting United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan) said that overall there was good coordination and participation of authorities, with the Government very closely engaged in humanitarian, development and peacebuilding coordination mechanisms. However, some authorities, such as local government, had limited capacity to participate and lacked sufficient staff on the ground. Despite the large number of actors present in South Sudan, coordination and collaboration had improved and was advancing shared priorities and objectives. While there was much enthusiasm around the OCHA initiative, as it presented a new way of working, there was fatigue on the ground from those who had been providing humanitarian assistance in the same way for many years. He wished to make a plea for flexible funding from donors and for donors' own objectives to be aligned with the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus.

51. **Mr. Raad** (Country Manager for South Sudan, World Bank) said that while collaboration and coordination platforms existed, consultation with the Government needed to be intensified. Fatigue was related to the political and policy narrative of South Sudan, which should be changed through development reforms to present the country as “open for business” and encourage investors. There was an acute paradox between reality and potential, as South Sudan had some of the poorest development indicators globally for poverty, illiteracy and access to electricity and sanitation, yet had immense potential in terms of natural resources, agriculture and livestock. That paradox should incentivize the Government and all development actors to take action. Good leadership and good governance were fundamental. The World Bank was investing in building State institutions and supporting government capacity-building and accountability for development work and would continue to do so: supporting the public sector was essential to support medium- to long-term development in the country.

52. **Ms. N'Zi Hassane** (Africa Director, Oxfam International) said that Oxfam International always aimed to advance the principles of local leadership, helping build local capacity. That had been particularly important in South Sudan, where securing acceptance from local populations could be challenging. In relation to coordination, Oxfam International worked well with the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission that reported to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs. The Commission provided a platform to raise concerns.

53. There was a need for promoting peace and peacebuilding, as Oxfam International had observed in Lankien during seven years of providing assistance with food and water, sanitation and hygiene there. While prolonged flooding had contributed heavily to the urgent situation, the lack of peace and intercommunal violence also limited community farming and herding activities.

54. **Mr. Garwech Kuol** (National Director, Child’s Destiny and Development Organization) said that while flooding, climate change and intercommunal violence had left populations vulnerable, affecting access to basic services and leading to food insecurity and, recently, deaths from hunger, it had also brought food in the form of fish, although obtaining fishing equipment posed a problem. Capacity-building was needed for national actors.

55. **Mr. Chimbindi** (Co-Chair), thanking all participants for their contributions, said that the discussion had presented a timely exploration of the South Sudanese experience in a complex and protected crisis. South Sudan faced persistent challenges and required undivided attention and collective action. He called for a continued spirit of collaboration and compassion. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had shown that problems in one part of the world would inevitably affect others, so mutual support was in everyone’s collective interest.

56. **Mr. Massari** (Co-Chair), thanking all participants for their active engagement, said that the discussion had demonstrated the importance of close collaboration in humanitarian, development and peace efforts and the significance of inclusive solutions, with the nexus approach acting as a guiding principle for collective action. However, the work was far from over and a sustained commitment – translated into action – was required to address the challenges and bring about meaningful change on the ground.

*The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.*