



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

9655th meeting

Thursday, 13 June 2024, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Hwang.	(Republic of Korea)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria.	Mr. Koudri
	China.	Mr. Dai Bing
	Ecuador.	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France.	Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault
	Guyana.	Ms. Benn
	Japan.	Mrs. Shino
	Malta.	Mr. Kuymizakis
	Mozambique.	Mr. Fernandes
	Russian Federation.	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Sierra Leone.	Mr. Sowa
	Slovenia.	Mr. Žbogar
	Switzerland.	Mrs. Chanda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America.	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

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

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 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/2024/464, 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:

Algeria, China, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Russian Federation

The President: The draft resolution received 14 votes in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2736 (2024).

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

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): The adoption of this resolution (resolution 2736 (2024)) sends a clear message. The Council demands that the Rapid Support Forces immediately stop the siege of El Fasher and that all sides step back from the brink. An attack on the city would be catastrophic for the 1.5 million people sheltering in it. We presented this resolution to help secure a localized ceasefire around El Fasher and create the wider conditions to support de-escalation across the country and, ultimately, save lives. Civilians need to be allowed to leave the city, should they wish, and aid needs to get in.

The situation in the Sudan is desperate, and the humanitarian needs of the Sudan's population are severe, particularly across Darfur. This resolution underlines the need for full, rapid, safe and unhindered cross-border and cross-line humanitarian access. It calls on the Sudanese authorities to increase cooperation with United Nations agencies and to urgently reopen the Adré border to help facilitate a significant scale-up of humanitarian assistance. In that regard, the resolution urges the international community to increase its support and fulfil existing pledges.

The protection needs in the Sudan are alarming. Through this resolution, we request that the Secretary-General provide recommendations on supporting the protection of civilians in the Sudan, building on the existing good-offices work and the vital mandate of his Personal Envoy for the Sudan, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra. Let me take this opportunity to underline the United Kingdom's full backing to Mr. Lamamra's mediation efforts and his work to help complement and coordinate regional efforts to restore peace.

The Council has sent a strong signal to the parties to this conflict today: this brutal and unjust conflict needs to end. Today's resolution shows the Council remains committed to supporting efforts for peace in the Sudan. We look forward to continuing to work across the United Nations, across the region and with Council members towards that goal. In that regard, I conclude by thanking my colleagues across the Council for their engagement on this resolution.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): The Security Council must do everything in its power to end the fighting in the Sudan and to facilitate an immediate surge of humanitarian assistance at scale to people in dire need, which is why the United States voted in favour of this resolution (resolution 2736 (2024)).

Today we came together to demand that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) halt its siege of and violence against the people of El Fasher. We came together to call for an immediate de-escalation of military operations in and around the city. We came together to demand that civilians be protected and that humanitarian aid be allowed to flow freely into Darfur and across the Sudan, across borders and conflict lines, in accordance with international law. We came together to call on all Member States to refrain from external interference in the conflict, which, if it continues, will only foment

further instability. And we came together to call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, leading to a sustainable resolution of the conflict. I want to take this opportunity to thank the United Kingdom as the penholder for getting this across the finish line.

This resolution could not have come at a more precarious moment. The people of El Fasher are trapped. They are surrounded by heavily armed RSF troops. Food, water, medicine and other essentials are drying up. Famine is setting in, and the threat of further violence, including a large-scale massacre, looms large. Already, hundreds have been killed, and scores have been wounded in El Fasher. Villages have been razed to the ground, hospitals have been bombed and looted, humanitarian aid has been cut off. The noose of war is tightening on the Sudanese people. Right now, more than 25 million people in the Sudan are in dire need of humanitarian assistance and protection — more than 25 million.

And yet, the RSF continues to block the delivery of aid while the Sudanese Armed Forces maintains prohibitions on cross-border aid. With respect to the call to reopen the Adré border crossing for the delivery of humanitarian assistance from Chad into the Sudan, we welcome the agreement and coordination of Sudanese authorities on that call. The delivery of that urgently needed humanitarian assistance must not be delayed or hindered. Let me be clear: if the warring parties do not respect international humanitarian law and facilitate humanitarian access, the Security Council should take action to ensure that life-saving aid is delivered and distributed by considering all the tools at its disposal, including authorizing aid to move from neighbouring countries, as the Council has done in other instances. I would also note that the resolution calls on the Secretary-General to bring forward options to help to better protect civilians. That is critical, and we look forward to those recommendations.

The Sudan has become far and away the world's worst humanitarian crisis. And yet, for so long, the international community has overlooked this catastrophe. The Sudanese people have noticed. They have noticed and felt the silence and the inaction. I heard that first-hand when I sat down with Sudanese refugees in Adré last year. While there, I made a promise to them. I promised that the United States would work around the clock to bring about peace, to aid relief efforts and to hold the perpetrators of atrocities to account. But I also made clear that no one country can tackle a crisis

of this scale alone. We all have a responsibility to stand with the Sudanese people, who have endured so much death, destruction and devastation because of a conflict that two generals, desperate for power, set in motion.

Today we began to live up to that responsibility. But this is not a moment for us to pat ourselves on the back, because the impact of today's vote will be measured by the results on the ground. And so the RSF and the Sudanese Armed Forces must heed the demands of the Council. We will be watching closely, and if the situation on the ground does not change for the better, the Council must take further action. For its part, the United States, led by Special Envoy Tom Perriello, will continue to pursue diplomatic initiatives to save lives and bring about a ceasefire. In that work, we are grateful for the partnership of the humanitarian community, civil society leaders and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra. Together, let us lift up the voices of the Sudanese people and help to build a more secure, freer and more democratic future in the Sudan.

Mr. Sowa (Sierra Leone): I am delivering this explanation of vote on behalf of the African members of the Security Council (A3+), namely, Algeria, Guyana, Mozambique and my own country, Sierra Leone.

At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to the United Kingdom for the efforts deployed during negotiations to craft this resolution (resolution 2736 (2024)), which accommodates an important part of the A3+ concerns. Our vote in favour of the resolution reflects the conviction that the Council must respond swiftly to the alarming situation in El Fasher, where the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are holding the city, hosting hundreds of thousands of civilians under untenable siege and committing unspeakable violations in the nearby cities and villages. The RSF acts do not spare civilian infrastructure, nor medical or humanitarian facilities. The recent attack against the medical facility of the humanitarian non-governmental organization Médecins sans frontières is an example of those grave violations. It is therefore imperative that the RSF halt their siege of El Fasher and that the parties engage in de-escalation and ensure the protection of civilians.

In that regard, we look forward to the consultations to be undertaken by the Secretary-General with the Sudanese Government and the regional stakeholders to make recommendations on the protection of civilians.

That crucial endeavour must build on the existing mediation and good offices mechanisms with a view to formulating adequate and realistic recommendations. On that note, we wish to make clear an important detail: mentions of the Sudanese authorities in the text refer only and solely to the Sudanese Government.

The call in paragraph 6 for Member States to refrain from external interference is to be strongly emphasized. In that regard, we remind those who facilitated the transfer of arms and military materiel to Darfur in support of one of the parties to the conflict of their clear obligations, as stipulated in the arms embargo measures and in accordance with resolution 1556 (2004) and resolution 1591 (2005).

We believe that this resolution represents the strong will of the Council to take proactive steps to address external interference in the conflict in the Sudan, with scrutiny of the negative role of foreign actors. We therefore look forward to the report on the implementation of this resolution in the next update to be submitted by the Secretary-General. We reiterate our call to denounce publicly and firmly foreign interference. The Sudanese people do not need more arms, they need peace. Let us help them to achieve that. We hope that those supporting one party over the other will join the legitimate endeavour for peace.

On the humanitarian situation, we are extremely concerned about its continued deterioration and call on the parties to ensure unhindered access for humanitarian assistance through different border crossing points. In the past two months alone, 8.8 million people have fled their homes. Millions have no access to food and are suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The health-care system is collapsing. There are increased reports of horrific violence against women, girls and children, and the number of reported fatalities has risen dramatically. In that regard, we welcome the effort made by the Sudanese authorities to improve the measures to facilitate humanitarian assistance, including operating different border crossing points and the issuance of visas. Further and sustained efforts are encouraged in that regard. The opening of additional border crossing points has to be under the direct authority of the Sudanese Government.

In conclusion, we express our hope that the resolution will contribute positively to de-escalating tensions and support existing efforts towards bringing the parties to the table of dialogue and negotiations. Peace must prevail in the Sudan.

Mrs. Chanda (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the United Kingdom for its efforts during the negotiations and to Security Council members for their commitment.

Switzerland voted in favour of the resolution (resolution 2736 (2024)) and welcomes its adoption. Given the extremely alarming situation in the Sudan and especially in El Fasher, the Council's resolution sends a strong and important message to the parties to the conflict, in particular the Rapid Support Forces, to end the siege of the town, to cease hostilities immediately and to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, in particular to protect civilians and to guarantee humanitarian access. The continuing suffering of the Sudanese people, who are widely exposed to an imminent risk of famine, and the enormous toll paid by civilians are unacceptable and require the Council's attention. Both parties must put an immediate end to the war and return to the path of negotiations.

We will continue to engage in the forthcoming discussions and remain attentive to the updates of the Secretary-General on the implementation of today's resolution, in particular with regard to the protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian law.

Mr. Kuymizakis (Malta): Malta thanks the United Kingdom as penholder for its extensive efforts on this file and all Security Council members for engaging constructively.

Malta voted in favour of this important resolution (resolution 2736 (2024)), which resoundingly calls upon the Rapid Support Forces to end the siege of the city of El Fasher immediately. The text further calls for the urgent cessation of hostilities in the region while demanding all parties to the conflict to ensure the protection of civilians and to comply with their obligations under international law.

The resolution issues a robust message on illicit transfers of arms and military materiel to Darfur, reminding all parties to the conflict and Member States who facilitate such transfers of their obligations to comply with the arms embargo measures and that such violations may be designated for targeted measures under resolution 1591 (2005). The proliferation of weapons across the Sudan, particularly those fuelled by external actors, has only perpetuated the conflict and loss of life. We join the Council's call on all Member States to refrain from such external interference.

We express deep concern regarding the catastrophic humanitarian situation across the country, including the imminent risk of famine, in particular in Darfur. We are deeply troubled by the recent assault on the El Fasher South Hospital, which tragically claimed the lives of humanitarian personnel. Similarly, we are appalled by the reports of the massacre in Wad Al-Nura in El Gezira state. The ongoing pillaging of humanitarian supplies is intolerable. We underscore the need for full, rapid, safe, unhindered and sustained cross-border and cross-line humanitarian assistance into Darfur and other conflict-affected areas.

Malta reiterates that those responsible for the untold suffering of civilians must be held accountable. On that front, we condemn all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, including cases of sexual and gender-based violence and the recruitment of children.

The prompt implementation of this resolution is imperative. We welcome today's adoption as a significant effort to uphold the commitment to an immediate and sustainable ceasefire and to ensure the protection of civilians. We continue to lend our support to Personal Envoy Lamamra, whose synergizing efforts, including with the African Union, are critical to help to advance a comprehensive political process, which also seeks the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women. We look forward to regular updates on all elements of the resolution.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China voted in favour of the resolution on the situation in El Fasher just adopted by the Security Council (resolution 2736 (2024)).

The recent escalation of the situation in El Fasher and other locations has resulted in hundreds of thousands of civilians being caught in the crossfire. The developments on the ground are unsettling and have attracted heightened international attention. Allowing the fighting to continue will only exacerbate the suffering of civilians, deepen the humanitarian crisis and bring more turmoil to the entire region. In view of that, China supported the adoption of the resolution by the Council to promote a cessation of hostilities, de-escalate the situation without delay and ensure maximum protection of civilians. The international community should redouble its mediation efforts and help parties to the conflict to find a political solution towards lasting peace.

The Sudan is currently facing a grave humanitarian crisis, and the lack of funds represents the primary challenge. Almost halfway through 2024, the Sudan humanitarian response plan is only 16 per cent funded. The resolution that has just been adopted encourages all parties to fully and promptly fulfil their pledges and scale up humanitarian aid. We call on the international community, especially traditional donors, to provide assistance at scale to effectively help the Sudan to improve its humanitarian response capabilities and ensure that aid operations reach everyone in need to the greatest extent possible. China supports securing full and rapid access for humanitarian supplies and welcomes the tremendous efforts made recently by the Sudanese Government to that end.

At the same time, it must be emphasized that, on such questions as humanitarian access, the international community must fully respect the Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, take seriously the legitimate concerns of the Sudanese Government, strictly abide by the humanitarian principles of the United Nations and avoid instrumentalizing or politicizing aid operations. The future of the Sudan lies in the hands of Sudanese people themselves.

China sincerely hopes that the Sudan will emerge from the shadow of war and restore peace and tranquillity as soon as possible, and we remain committed to playing a constructive role to that end.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia abstained in the voting on the resolution prepared by the United Kingdom on the situation in El Fasher in the Sudan (resolution 2736 (2024)).

Although the British authors made certain efforts to work on the text, especially in terms of moving commas at the final stage, it was simply impossible to ensure a vote by consensus on the resolution, because it is at odds with the reality on the ground and ignores the principal comments of the Sudanese themselves, which were also raised by the African members of the Council.

Initially, the text was presented as an attempt to respond swiftly to the events around El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, and to call on the Rapid Support Forces to end their siege. However, more than two weeks have passed since the text was first discussed. During that time, thanks to the efforts of our Western colleagues, it has undergone serious changes, and now the situation in El Fasher remains nothing more than a pretext. It is difficult to determine what exactly

the resolution truly seeks to achieve, apart from the obvious: to keep the eye of the United Nations on the situation and to propose decisions that are questionable from the point of view of respect for the sovereignty and unity of the country.

We cannot agree with the proposed call to all Sudanese parties to ensure free humanitarian access, including cross-border shipments. We draw Council members' attention to the fact that the questions of national border control and border crossing of any goods is a sovereign matter for the authorities in charge. Any attempt to impose artificial exceptions to that fundamental principle, and even delegate authority to a non-State actor, is a flagrant infringement on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. I underscore that there must not and should not be any cross-border deliveries of humanitarian assistance without the consent of the official authorities of the Sudan. We call on the United Nations humanitarian wing to adhere strictly to the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance.

We call on some Council members to stop hiding behind noble intentions to ensure humanitarian access to the Sudan. It is clear that they are doing that to promote their own agenda, which is far from constructive. As the experiences of some of the member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council have shown, the delivery of a large portion of humanitarian goods to the Sudan under the current circumstances is quite possible and has been successfully carried out. It is simply a question of the willingness of our Western colleagues to follow that positive example and start to cooperate with the Sudanese authorities. At the same time, we trust that Port Sudan will be able to put forward its views on the suitable modalities for expanding humanitarian access.

We do not quite understand why some delegations are attempting to call for new reports on the Sudan, albeit incorporated into the reports on resolution 2715 (2023). We have repeatedly noted that there are no United Nations personnel on the ground in the Sudan who are able to prepare such reports, and as such personnel write remotely, they cannot objectively reflect the developments in the country.

We are not inclined to overdramatize the problem of hunger in the Sudan either. We agree that the country is facing serious challenges in ensuring food security. However, the challenges are not primarily tied not to a lack of food, but rather to difficulties in distributing

it to a number of regions beset by hostilities and the difficult financial situation of the population. Rather than artificially instrumentalizing the topic of famine, priority should be given to cooperation with the Sudanese authorities in addressing the problem of food and providing support for agriculture. I draw Council members' attention to the fact that the abuse of the topic of inevitable famine will undermine the credibility of United Nations assessments of the situation with regard to food security.

We note that resolution 2724 (2024), whose adoption was rushed through the Council in March during the holy month of Ramadan, has remained only on paper. However, instead of seeking its implementation, the sponsors introduced an essentially similar document. The current resolution also does not contain any substantive proposals to address the complex situation in the Sudan. The document clearly does not take into account the views of the Sudanese side and is not based on any agreements that have been reached.

We note that the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, will be in New York next week. He will be able to shed light on his efforts and provide the Council with guidance on pragmatic steps to be taken. Unlike some Western envoys, he travels not only around the region but also to the Sudan itself. Therefore, the question is why the British coordinators, who dragged out this out for two weeks since the fighting began in El Fasher, did not wait for that briefing. Either they do not trust the conclusions of the United Nations mediator or they wanted to pre-empt his conclusions.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that the Security Council must consider all conflicts on a case-by-case basis and not impose artificial reactions to them for political purposes. All conflicts differ significantly in terms of their history, the nature of their foreign and domestic dynamics, military capabilities, the possibility of refugees leaving to neighbouring countries and the scope of humanitarian assistance. We are convinced that, in the Sudanese context, priority should be given to efforts aimed at preserving State institutions and the unity and territorial integrity of the country by arriving at a political solution to be defined by the Sudanese people themselves.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): Slovenia welcomes the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) and thanks the United Kingdom for its leadership. The situation in El Fasher

requires our united, clear and immediate response. The Council must not remain silent in the face of the human catastrophe unfolding in the Sudan, and with today's adoption, its calls to the warring parties are again loud and clear. We call for the full implementation of the resolution.

Slovenia voted in favour because it believes that the Council has a duty to voice its concern about the severe conditions in El Fasher and throughout the Sudan. In that respect, we also strongly condemn the deadly attack in the Wad Al-Noora village.

The humanitarian situation in and around El Fasher, besieged by the Rapid Support Forces, is beyond alarming. We emphasize the need for immediate, safe and unhindered cross-border and cross-line humanitarian access to El Fasher and all of Darfur. Access to basic necessities, such as food, water, health care and medical supplies, must be ensured. We commend the dedicated work of humanitarians, who continue their efforts in the most challenging circumstances.

Slovenia again calls on all parties to the conflict to prioritize the protection of all civilians and to adhere strictly to their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law. We unequivocally condemn all forms of indiscriminate violence against civilians, particularly the targeting

of women and children, ethnically motivated killings, all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and grave violations against children in armed conflicts. Displacement camps should be a safe haven for civilians, women, children and the wounded, and under no circumstances targets of further attacks, exacerbating the physical and emotional trauma of the victims. Attacks against civilian infrastructure used in the provision of essential and life-saving services must end. We strongly condemn the attacks on humanitarian and medical facilities, such as the recent attacks on South Hospital in El Fasher.

We reiterate our call to all parties to immediately cease all hostilities and to resume peace talks. We continue to support the efforts of Mr. Ramtane Lamamra and those of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, regional leaders and neighbouring countries, as well as international partners, to bring an end to the crisis. We also repeat our call to Member States to refrain from any form of external interference that further fuels the conflict and to comply with the existing arms embargo.

Slovenia remains committed to supporting peace, security and justice in the Sudan.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.