



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

9659th meeting
 Tuesday, 18 June 2024, 10 a.m.
 New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Hwang. (Republic of Korea)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
China	Mr. Chen Yongchao
Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Japan	Mrs. Shino
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation.	Ms. Evstigneeva
Sierra Leone	Mr. Tejan
Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
Switzerland	Mrs. Chanda
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America.	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

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

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 AB-0928 (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 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

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

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 rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations; Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Ms. Limiaa Ahmed, Senior Programme Director of the Sudan Family Planning Association.

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

I give the floor to Ms. Pobee.

Ms. Pobee: Thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting on the situation in the Sudan, a situation that has continued to dangerously deteriorate.

It is crucial to ensure the continuing engagement of the Security Council. The warring parties do take note when we act collectively, and we must do more. Despite the efforts of the United Nations, its Member States and regional organizations, we have not succeeded in preventing the escalation of violence in the country and notably in El Fasher. We are deeply worried about the possibility that the fighting in and around El Fasher could lead to more suffering for the civilian population on a massive scale. There are atrocities being committed along ethnic lines, and we have been witnessing the severe consequences of relentless shelling and aerial bombardments in densely populated areas.

Between 16 April and 9 June, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights documented at least 192 civilian deaths in El Fasher. Since then, dozens more civilians, including women and children, have reportedly been killed. Civilians are in the line of fire and are not safe anywhere. We strongly condemn the attack on 8 June on South Hospital in El Fasher,

reportedly carried out by the Rapid Support Forces, which has deprived hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in the city of one of their last remaining lifelines.

A ceasefire in El Fasher is needed now to prevent further atrocities, protect critical infrastructure and alleviate civilian suffering. It could and should also pave the way for a broader-scale cessation of hostilities. The Security Council's adoption last week of resolution 2736 (2024) was an important signal from the Council that the escalating military confrontation must stop in order to bring an end to the deeply negative impact it is having on the lives of the Sudanese people. The resolution underlines the well-established responsibility of the warring parties and reiterates the pressing need for them to abide by international humanitarian law. It urges them to immediately de-escalate the situation in El Fasher and protect civilians throughout the territory of the Sudan. The parties must heed that call without delay. As the Council requests, the Secretary-General will actively develop recommendations to strengthen the protection of civilians more effectively.

As the Security Council meets to closely follow the developments on the ground, the fighting between the warring parties continues to rage and in fact is escalating in several other parts of the Sudan, including greater Khartoum, the Kordofan regions and Gezira state. On 5 June, the Rapid Support Forces allegedly carried out a horrific attack in the village of Wad Al-Noora in Gezira state, reportedly killing more than 100 civilians. The violence against civilians must stop now. No operational justification or even miscalculation justifies targeting them in any circumstances. If swift action is not taken, the Sudan risks becoming engulfed in more ethnic violence and becoming even more fragmented. The risk of a spillover of the conflict remains high. As the flow of sophisticated weapons continues to fuel the war, all the external players concerned should act responsibly and use their leverage over the warring parties to advance peace efforts. Their positive engagement could make a difference to the trajectory of this war and the magnitude of its human toll.

The human rights situation remains appalling. Serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law continue to be committed on a large scale, including summary executions of civilians, the arrest and detention incommunicado of hundreds of individuals in poor conditions and widespread conflict-related sexual violence predominantly perpetrated by the Rapid Support Forces. We urgently need meaningful

action aimed at ensuring accountability for those violations. The victims deserve justice.

The mediation efforts made so far have not secured a ceasefire or a sustained direct dialogue between the parties. Regrettably, there is no indication that the important discussions held in the context of the Jeddah platform will resume any time soon. We call on the parties to embrace dialogue, refrain from destructive blame games and seek every opportunity for peace.

We cannot afford to be passive bystanders. A negotiated solution remains the only way out of this conflict. The Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, visited the region in May and early June. He held discussions with General Burhan and other senior commanders of the Sudanese Armed Forces and with members of the Sudanese Sovereign Council in Port Sudan, as well as with a senior delegation sent to Nairobi by the commander of the Rapid Support Forces, General Dagalo. He urged them to spare civilians during all military operations whether conducted on land or from the air. He urged them to agree on a local ceasefire in El Fasher, emphasizing that that is essential to ensuring the safety of civilians. He also conveyed the need for an action-oriented meeting of the Humanitarian Forum, chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Clementine Nkweta-Salami, to concretely discuss and eliminate obstacles to humanitarian access. In his meeting with them, the Personal Envoy registered the commitment of both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan signed on 11 May 2023. Some fundamental differences still exist between the parties on how to advance the implementation of those commitments, and we call on them to display a constructive attitude in charting a way forward.

Mr. Lamamra continues to work on coordinated mediation efforts to advance the cause of peace alongside Member States and regional partners, including the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the League of Arab States. We welcome the Cairo communiqué that resulted from the consultative meeting convened by the League of Arab States on 12 June. The commitment to forming a technical working group of the regional and international organizations is an important step. It will facilitate the exchange of views and the coordination of diplomatic initiatives.

We are also grateful to Djibouti for offering to host a retreat for international mediators next month, to be jointly sponsored by the multilateral organizations concerned. The retreat will be crucial to the revitalization of coherent and coordinated peace efforts. It provides an opportunity to agree on shared responsibilities and a unified approach to peace in the Sudan. We are also encouraged by the decision of the African Union's leadership to launch a preparatory process for convening a Sudanese civilian political dialogue. We stand ready to facilitate an appropriate United Nations contribution. It is critical to ensure that civilian voices, especially those of women and young people, are heard. Upholding the promise of the transitional period for a fully credible democratic Government remains crucial. We look forward to continuing our work with the African Union High-level Implementation Panel in leading those important efforts with the support and contribution of the other multilateral organizations concerned.

It is high time for the warring parties to spare the Sudanese people further suffering and come to the negotiating table to engage in discussions in good faith. We encourage the parties to take full advantage of Mr. Lamamra's good offices to promote constructive interactions that can help them to take steps towards a horizon of peace. The plight of the Sudanese demands our urgent attention and decisive action. The warring parties have a responsibility to fulfil the people's aspirations and make decisions of a historic nature and scope. The people of the Sudan deserve no less.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Wosornu.

Ms. Wosornu: This is the sixth time in less than four months that we have briefed the Security Council on the humanitarian emergency in the Sudan, and the twelfth since the conflict broke out in April 2023. Each time we have warned about the relentless deterioration of conditions for people in most parts of the country. Today I regret to inform the Council that the Sudan continues to spiral into chaos. I will touch on four points — first, the horrific toll of the conflict on civilians in El Fasher and other conflict hotspots in the country; secondly, the worsening humanitarian crisis; thirdly, the current status of humanitarian access and funding for the aid operation; and lastly, the desperate need to stop the fighting.

Fourteen months of conflict have created a nightmare for civilians in the Sudan, and the people of El Fasher are at the epicentre today, as Assistant Secretary-General Pobee just mentioned. Amid unrelenting violence and suffering, the lives of 800,000 people — women, children, men, the elderly and people with disabilities — hang in the balance. Bombing and shelling continue in densely populated areas, causing widespread and long-term harm to civilians and severely disrupting the essential services that they very much depend on.

Many Member States noted the devastating effects of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas during the Council's annual debate on the protection of civilians just four weeks ago (see S/PV.9632). According to Médecins Sans Frontières, more than 1,300 people were injured in El Fasher between 25 May and 6 June. Those who can flee the city have done so. At least 130,000 people have been displaced since 1 April, mainly southwards to other parts of Darfur and westwards into Chad, where resources and basic services are already extremely stretched and in some contexts non-existent. Ms. Pobee also noted the deplorable assault on the South Hospital on 8 June, which forced patients and staff to flee for their lives. The hospital was looted and is no longer functioning. Its closure will profoundly affect people's access to life-saving medical care. Our colleagues from the World Health Organization note that the South Hospital was the only facility with surgical capacity in El Fasher, while the other health facilities in the city that are still functioning are now stretched beyond capacity. That is a recent example of the destruction of health care in the Sudan, where more than 80 per cent of hospitals and clinics are no longer functioning in some of the worst-affected areas.

What we are witnessing in El Fasher is a result of unrestrained and indiscriminate violence with little regard for the tremendous misery and suffering caused. Without decisive action now, we risk seeing a repeat of the well-documented atrocities perpetrated in El Geneina between late April and early November last year. Over the past six weeks we have repeatedly called for civilians to be protected and for the ferocious violence to stop, and the Council did the same last Thursday in resolution 2736 (2024). Those calls — again, as highlighted by Assistant Secretary-General Pobee — must not be ignored. We urge the Council to do everything possible and to use all means at its disposal to push for the implementation

of the resolution and to stop this lethal tragedy from unfolding further.

Sadly, the violence in El Fasher is just the tip of the iceberg. Four hundred and thirty days into this conflict, the level of human suffering in the Sudan is intolerable. Members will have seen the statements by the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the attack by the Rapid Support Forces in the village of Wad Al-Noora in Gezira state on 5 June. The horrific attack killed more than 100 people, including dozens of children, as Assistant Secretary-General Pobee highlighted. Indiscriminate bombings continue to blight the daily lives of millions in Darfur, Kordofan, Khartoum and Gezira states, killing, injuring and maiming civilians and damaging much of the remaining infrastructure. Conflict-related sexual violence remains rampant. The United Nations Population Fund has received reports of women and girls being raped and subjected to other forms of gender-based violence as they leave their homes in search of a basic commodity — food. According to reports from local organizations led by women, suicide rates among survivors are rising and access to gender-based violence services is shrinking. According to the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict (S/2024/384), grave violations against children in the Sudan have increased by a staggering 480 per cent — from around 300 violations in 2022 to more than 1,700 in 2023.

Humanitarian workers are not being spared from the violence. Six aid workers, all Sudanese nationals, have been killed over the past six weeks. That brings the total number of aid workers killed to 24 since the war started. Those horrific trends in the violence must stop. International humanitarian law demands that parties take all feasible precautions to protect civilians during hostilities. It also strictly prohibits sexual violence and inhumane treatment. That is not optional. And ultimately, those who violate the rules of war must be held to account.

In addition to the direct toll on civilians, the conflict is also deepening humanitarian needs across the country. Famine is imminent. Almost 5 million people face emergency levels of food insecurity (level 4 in the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification). Nine in 10 of those people are in conflict-affected areas in Darfur, Kordofan, Gezira and Khartoum states. More than 2 million in 41 hunger hotspots are at high risk of slipping into catastrophic hunger in the coming

weeks. Women report having to watch their children starve because they cannot feed them. In the conflict-affected areas we are seeing the collapse of basic services, including health care and water and sanitation systems. Pregnant women are at a heightened risk of acute malnutrition. According to UN-Women, 7,000 new mothers could die in the next few months if they do not get access to food and health care. Across the Sudan, women are dying because of complications during pregnancy or childbirth. If farmers do not immediately receive the certified seeds they need for the planting season, the food security situation will worsen even further. As we have warned the Council before, the countdown is real. We have just a few weeks to deliver life-saving supplies before the rainy season starts and conditions worsen significantly. Those of us who have lived in Darfur understand that the wadis become rivers and access is simply impossible.

Despite some improvements, humanitarian operations in the Sudan continue to face serious challenges. In conflict hotspots, insecurity, looting and sustained obstructions of access paralysed aid operations during the first four months of the year. We do acknowledge and appreciate the measures that the Sudanese authorities have taken over the past six weeks to facilitate humanitarian operations, and I would like to share some statistics about that. In May, 78 per cent — 120 of 153 — of visa applications were approved by the Sudanese authorities for short-term stays. Since 1 April, 98 per cent — 472 of 481 — of travel permits submitted by United Nations agencies have been approved. And since 1 May, the humanitarian community has moved 147 trucks across borders and lines, carrying 4,900 metric tons of assistance for almost 670,000 people. We welcome those movements. If we are to prevent a massive loss of life, the facilitation we have seen over the past month and a half has to be sustained and expanded. We need to significantly scale up movements in the weeks ahead. In the second half of June and July, we plan to move more than 600 trucks across borders or lines, carrying 18,800 metric tons of supplies to support more than 1 million people. The humanitarian community is also expanding its operational footprint across the country.

We need continued rapid clearances through the Tiné crossing and continued permission to move supplies directly to their final destinations. Further progress is also needed on the issuance of long-term visas and in opening the Aweil and Panakuach border crossings for humanitarian movements from South

Sudan. Given the severity of the humanitarian situation and the urgency of the needs, we must be able to use the safest, most direct routes. As I highlighted earlier, that is especially important as the rainy season approaches, when some routes — including through Tiné — will become far less accessible or even impassable. In that regard, we welcome the call in resolution 2736 (2024) for the reopening of the Adre border crossing.

Six months into the year, the humanitarian appeal is woefully underfunded. We have so far received \$441 million in contributions, which is unfortunately only 16 per cent of the total \$2.7 billion requirement. In the context, I should recognize the announcement by the United States last week of the provision of an additional \$315 million for the humanitarian response in the Sudan and neighbouring countries. And yesterday the United Arab Emirates announced its allocation of \$70 million of the \$100 million pledged in Paris to humanitarian agencies. We are in a race against time to prevent a massive loss of life in this unprecedented protection and food-security crisis in the Sudan. Every day that we wait for funding to come, more lives are at risk.

As the Council has heard in my statement today, and in 11 others over the past 14 months, we have three asks — to protect civilians and the infrastructure they need for survival; to ensure unimpeded, sustained and expanded humanitarian access to people in need; and to increase the funding for the aid operation. But let me make it clear that the ultimate ask is for this horrific conflict to stop. That was the demand from the women, men and children I met in Port Sudan six weeks ago. They want their lives back. I once again urge the Security Council and all Member States to do everything in their power to bring the war, and its untold suffering, to an end.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Ahmed.

Ms. Ahmed: I would like to thank members for the opportunity to brief the Council on the impact of the brutal war in the Sudan on the rights of women and girls. I am Dr. Limiaa Ahmed, Senior Programme Director for the Sudan Family Planning Association, a leading national non-governmental organization (NGO) providing sexual and reproductive health services, with a special focus on marginalized and internally displaced

women and young girls. In 2023, I fled the Sudan, my home and my community, as a result of the war.

It has now been more than a year since the outbreak of the latest conflict in the Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a war that has robbed so many of my people of their safety, rights and livelihoods. Today more than 16,000 people are dead, nearly 10 million are displaced and 18 million are facing acute food insecurity. The conflict is also a war on women, who are the primary targets of gender-based violence and a majority of the displaced and those adversely affected by hunger. The Sudan is now at the centre of one of the world's largest displacement crises and on the cusp of becoming the world's largest hunger crisis, with United Nations officials warning that famine is imminent. As the needs have grown, so have the challenges to humanitarian assistance and service delivery. In March and April this year, some 860,000 people were denied humanitarian aid in the states of Kordofan, Khartoum and Darfur owing to violent clashes and bureaucratic restrictions.

The escalating violence by the RSF in El Fasher has already had a devastating impact on civilians — at least 200 people have been killed, more than 1,000 civilians have been injured and more than 129,000 people have been displaced. As the Security Council recognized with the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) last Thursday, there must be an immediate halt to the siege of El Fasher in order to prevent further mass atrocities and to protect civilians. In addition, an estimated 1.8 million people in El Fasher are at imminent risk of famine and in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. Without urgent international action to stop the war in the Sudan, there will be catastrophic consequences for civilians. As recently noted by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, that includes the risk of genocide and other related crimes.

I am here to ask for the Council's help, as the people of the Sudan can wait no longer.

Since April 2023, United Nations experts and civil society have warned that gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence are widespread and have risen at alarming rates, leaving at least 6.7 million people at risk. A number of survivors of sexual violence have died by suicide. Sudanese women and girls are facing the risk of sexual violence and exploitation in displacement, in transit, in temporary shelters and at border crossings; insecurity and looting; increasing rates of forced marriage and a lack of access to sexual

and reproductive health services in countries hosting internally displaced persons. In RSF-controlled areas, women and girls have been abducted and held in inhumane and degrading slave-like conditions, where they are reported to be forcibly married or held for ransom.

Through my work with the Sudan Family Planning Association, I have seen some of those facts and figures play out in reality. In the past 12 months, we have delivered more than 33 million sexual and reproductive health services, including services related to HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and gender-based violence, through our 15 branches across the Sudan. I have heard first-hand the experiences of a group of displaced women and girls who fled war in Gezira and were raped by members of the RSF. Those women received sexual and reproductive services, including abortion care, under the supervision of Sudan Family Planning Association staff and were then hosted in shelters run by national NGOs, as those survivors were abandoned by their families with no social, financial or legal support.

Like all other Sudanese civil society organizations, Sudan Family Planning Association staff have worked under very difficult and distressing circumstances to deliver services related to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, socioeconomic and psychological support and capacity strengthening. Owing to the ongoing conflict, we have lost one of our staff; our clinics have been burned, looted and damaged; and we have had to relocate our headquarters to areas outside of RSF control. Despite those challenging circumstances, including insecurity, risk and bureaucratic restrictions, we are determined to continue our mission to meet the increasing needs of women and girls in local communities.

Women's rights and women-led organizations have spared no effort to assist women and girls affected by gender-based violence. However, our organizations are severely underfunded and do not have the capacity to cope with the scale of violence against women and girls. It is essential that the international community support and fund local and national organizations like ours, without which life-saving services for women and girls are not possible.

The women of the Sudan have been resolute in their calls for peace and an end to all violence against civilians, including all acts of sexual and gender-based violence. Today, I am appealing to the Security Council

and the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the Sudan, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, to escalate diplomatic efforts to urge parties to the conflict to end the war and prioritize a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 2736 (2024), demanding an immediate cessation of hostilities, especially the fighting in El Fasher, was an important step. I now urge the Council to ensure its full implementation, including by continuing to urge all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, protect civilians and civilian objects, and commit to an immediate ceasefire.

As also noted in resolution 2736 (2024), it is critical that all parties ensure rapid, safe, unfettered and sustained humanitarian access across the Sudan for civilians in need, including by removing bureaucratic and other restrictions. I further call on donors to urgently scale up funding for the 2024 humanitarian response plan for the Sudan, which, as of May, was only 16 per cent funded, and to expand funding for local responders, who are the backbone of the response to the current crisis, including women-led and women's rights organizations. Given the scale and the urgency of the crisis, it is also critical that the United Nations and the Security Council identify credible options on the ground for assuring humanitarian operations across the Sudan and documenting violations of international law.

Finally, I echo the Council's call to all parties to immediately cease all acts of sexual and gender-based violence and hold those responsible to account and to take all possible steps to ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in all peace talks and political processes concerning the conflict, as well as in the design and delivery of the humanitarian response.

Sudanese women have paid the price of the war with their lives and with their bodies. As the Council has championed since 2000 with the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and the establishment of the women and peace and security agenda, there can be no peace in the Sudan without women, whose voices must be at the heart of prevention, participation, protection and recovery efforts. Millions of Sudanese women and girls are looking to the Council to act now.

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

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

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Director Wosornu for their briefings today, and I am grateful to Ms. Ahmed for her powerful statement on the devastating impact of the conflict on millions of innocent civilians. I also welcome the participation of the representative of the Sudan in our meeting.

I will make three points.

First, the United Kingdom welcomes the adoption by the Council of resolution 2736 (2024), which sent a clear call for urgent de-escalation in El Fasher and demanded that the Rapid Support Forces halt their siege of El Fasher immediately. The situation in El Fasher is appalling. Civilians have been terrorized by systematic attacks, including on hospitals; shocking sexual and gender-based violence and aerial bombardments. A full-scale attack on the city would be catastrophic for the 1.5 million Sudanese civilians sheltering there. We call on all sides to commit to protecting civilians and to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law.

Secondly, our briefers just described the enormity of the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan. More than 2 million people are currently at severe risk of famine. We condemn the deliberate obstructionism, aid diversion and the looting of aid convoys that prevent life-saving supplies from reaching those most in need. The Sudanese people will move further towards famine if humanitarian assistance continues to be restricted. We note the much-needed recent progress on issuing visas and travel permits, and we call on the Sudanese Armed Forces to immediately open the vital Adre border crossing. Furthermore, the United Kingdom calls on the warring parties to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian workers across the regions they control.

Thirdly, we welcome the continued efforts of civilian peace initiatives. The future of the Sudan belongs to Sudanese civilians. For peace to be achieved, the warring parties must accept that there can be no victory on the battlefield, only further suffering. We call on the warring parties to immediately return to negotiations in good faith and without preconditions.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom reaffirms its full backing to Personal Envoy Lamamra and his work to coordinate regional mediation efforts to restore peace. The Security Council must continue to play its part in supporting those efforts.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus one (A3+), namely, Algeria, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and my own country, Guyana.

The A3+ members wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe and Ms. Wosornu for their valuable insights. And we listened carefully to the presentation made by Ms. Limiaa Ahmed, Senior Programme Director of the Sudan Family Planning Association. We also welcome the participation of the representative of the Sudan in this meeting.

Just last week, while the Council considered the situation in El Fasher (see S/PV.9655), the A3+ expressed its strong concern about the intensification of the fighting in the Sudan. The conflict has created a critical and dire humanitarian crisis and has caused increased civilian casualties, the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure and widespread displacement, as we heard from our briefers. The blatant disregard for the safety of civilians must end. The A3+ supported the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) on the situation in El Fasher with the conviction that the Council must react swiftly to the alarming situation on the ground. We call on the parties to commit to a cessation of hostilities and to lay the foundations for a sustainable solution to the conflict, with the continued support of the international community. Unfortunately, all reports indicate that civilians are bearing the brunt of the conflict, particularly women, children and the elderly, despite multiple calls for their protection. The eighth report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (S/2024/384) highlights the shocking increase in grave violations against children in the Sudan since the outbreak of the conflict in April 2023. The A3+ remains concerned about the recruitment and use of children, the killing and maiming of children and the commission of sexual violence against children, as well as attacks on schools and hospitals.

Today we reiterate our demand for the warring parties to comply with international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and ensure adequate protection for civilians in the Sudan. We have witnessed the efforts of the humanitarian agencies to provide support to the Sudanese people, including those who are internally displaced or seeking asylum around the region. Those efforts require the support of the international community and all parties to the conflict. It must also involve ensuring

safe and unhindered access to all those in need, cross-line and cross-border aid delivery, protection and the sustained facilitation of administrative requirements to assist the most vulnerable. As the conflict wages on and in the absence of a United Nations mission on the ground, we underscore the need for continued monitoring and reporting on human rights violations and on protection matters. For the A3+, ending the devastating conflict depends on the commitment of the parties involved. We encourage them to put the interests of the Sudanese people first. All mediation efforts, particularly the Jeddah talks and initiatives being led by Personal Envoy Lamamra and the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, will continue to receive the full support of the A3+.

The A3+ emphasizes the critical role of the international community, regional organizations and the Council in supporting the Sudan to achieve sustainable peace. In that regard, the A3+ calls on the international community and donor partners to urgently scale up humanitarian assistance and funding, as well as to honour recent pledges to avert the imminent risk of famine. It is deeply worrisome that the humanitarian response plan remains only 16 per cent funded, and we call for that situation to be addressed with urgency. We reiterate our call to those external parties fuelling the conflict — whether through the supply of arms and ammunition, recruitment, financing or any other means — to stop immediately.

In conclusion, the A3+ calls for strong solidarity with the people of the Sudan and the Council's sustained commitment to the stability, sovereignty and prosperity of the Sudan. Peace must prevail in the Sudan as an urgent imperative and should be prioritized.

Mr. De La Gasca (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking Ms. Martha Pobe, Assistant Secretary-General; Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Ms. Limiaa Ahmed, Sudanese civil society representative, for the information they provided. We listened closely to their briefings. I also want to acknowledge the presence of the representative of the Sudan in this Chamber.

Ecuador condemns the massacre perpetrated in Wad Al-Noora, the attack on the South hospital in El Fasher and the death of humanitarian workers. It also repudiates the ethnic violence that, according to several reports, has been committed by the Rapid Support Forces. In the light of those facts, the efforts of the Human Rights

Council's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan and the International Criminal Court to investigate human rights violations and crimes against humanity are timely and must be supported.

The humanitarian crisis in the Sudan, especially in the Darfur region, is alarming and unsustainable. In Darfur, food insecurity has reached the most critical level, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 5, while in the rest of the country it is at the emergency level, IPC 4.

The situation of children in the Sudan is disturbing, with a 285 per cent increase in grave violations against children since the start of the conflict. It is crucial to protect them, release child soldiers and strengthen efforts to remove explosive devices, particularly in areas inhabited by civilians. The situation of women and girls in the Sudan is deplorable, and in particular the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war is unacceptable.

Violence against the civilian population violates international humanitarian law, and the parties to the conflict should be reminded that, among other obligations, they must do the following.

First, they must avoid affecting civilian infrastructure, which is essential for humanitarian access and the provision of essential services.

Secondly, they must ensure the safety and freedom of movement of humanitarian workers in accordance with the Council's resolutions, including resolution 2730 (2024), to allow unhindered humanitarian access throughout the country.

Finally, they must ensure freedom of movement for those wishing to leave conflict areas for safer places.

Resolution 2736 (2024), adopted last week on the situation in El Fasher, calls for an immediate halt to the fighting and the withdrawal of fighters that threaten civilians and humanitarian access. We recall that Security Council resolutions are binding.

The work of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, and of the African Union High-level Panel on the Sudan are essential, and we hope that they will contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The political path to peace must ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of Sudanese women.

I conclude by saying that all countries must comply with the arms embargo and refrain from any external interference, as that would contribute to the escalation of the conflict at a time when it is vital to silence the guns.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I would like to thank Director Wosornu, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Ms. Ahmed for briefing the Security Council, and you, Mr. President, for your leadership and your advocacy for the people of the Sudan.

We gather for today's meeting to discuss the situation in the Sudan and resolution 2715 (2023), which terminated the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). That termination came after the Sudanese authorities decided that the United Nations Mission no longer served the needs of the Sudanese people. Of course, that is despite the fact that the Sudanese warring parties are not concerned about the Sudanese people, particularly women and children, who are the greatest victims, as we heard from our briefers today. Indeed, as the United States said in adopting that resolution, with the war in the Sudan spiralling into a regional crisis and humanitarian disaster, the work of UNITAMS is more critical than ever before.

Since that vote in December (see S/PV.9492), the catastrophe in the Sudan has only gotten worse for the people of the Sudan. Again, women and children are at the forefront of the suffering, as we heard from Ms. Ahmed. As the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continue their senseless war, civilians have paid an unacceptable price. It is one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, and we know that famine has likely descended. Five million people are already experiencing severe hunger and are at risk of sliding into famine, including 730,000 children, who are suffering from severe acute malnutrition. Reports indicate some Sudanese have been forced to eat tree leaves to try to survive. And over recent weeks, El Fasher, once one of the last safe havens for civilians, has been raided, attacked and bombarded by indiscriminate shelling by the RSF. As the RSF tightens its siege and continues its incursion into the city, hospitals have been looted and forced to close, leaving just one hospital to treat hundreds of civilians caught and wounded in the fighting. Food markets have become bare, and aid and other critical supplies have been cut off.

It is imperative that the RSF immediately stop those unconscionable attacks and that both the RSF and SAF de-escalate and agree to a ceasefire, which is the only way to ensure civilians are protected. Special Envoy Perriello is working diligently with Personal Envoy Lamamra and others to that effect.

Let me be clear — there is no military solution to that senseless war, none whatsoever. That is why last week the Council came together (see S/PV.9655) to demand an end to the fighting in El Fasher; to insist that humanitarian aid flow freely across all routes, including through the Adre crossing; and to call for the immediate cessation of hostilities across the Sudan leading to a sustainable resolution to the conflict.

For its part, the United States recently announced a surge of more than \$315 million in additional humanitarian assistance to support the people of the Sudan. More is clearly needed.

However, this is not the moment to sit back and sit by, not as long as the humanitarian crisis worsens by the day and as the warring parties continue to carry out unthinkable atrocities. We urge the Council to continue to keep the Sudan at the top of its agenda and take further actions until peace has been achieved for the Sudanese people.

We must also continue calling on external actors to stop fuelling and prolonging the conflict and enabling the atrocities, by sending weapons to the Sudan. Last week, the Council was briefed by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan (see S/PV.9656). Today, we remind Member States of their obligations to comply with the United Nations arms embargo in force in Darfur. Most of all, we must continue to call for the resumption of ceasefire talks that include civilians, including women, and a return to civilian governance that the Sudanese people want, deserve and have worked so hard for.

The Council, the United Nations writ large and key stakeholders in the region, including the African Union, the League of Arab States and the broader international community, must work together to advance peace and advance a better future for the Sudan.

The lives of millions of Sudanese hang in the balance, as we have heard from our briefers. There is not a moment to lose.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): I would like to thank Ms. Pobeč, Ms. Wosornu and Ms. Ahmed for their sobering briefings. I also welcome the representative of the Sudan at this meeting.

For too long, war has inflicted suffering on the people of the Sudan. It has devastated every facet of Sudanese society. As the conflict continues and spreads, the unspeakable human suffering becomes greater. We must urgently reverse that horrific trend of violence.

Let me make three points.

First, the path to sustainable peace is not paved with military action and weapons, but dialogue and political process. Both parties must return to negotiations. We call on the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to comply with resolution 2736 (2024), to silence their guns and engage in efforts for an immediate and durable ceasefire. Additionally, we call on the warring parties to implement the commitments agreed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, without delay. We support the regional and international mediation efforts, including those led by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. Lamamra. We value his ongoing engagement with the parties to the conflict, the African Union, the League of Arab States, regional and neighbouring countries and international partners. The arms embargo put in place by the Council must be respected by all States and parties. We call on all external actors to stop any interference that could fuel further instability and to support efforts for a durable peace.

Secondly, the conflict has disproportionately affected women and girls, exposing them to the pervasive use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, which we unequivocally condemn. We call for accountability for such heinous acts. We support the International Criminal Court Prosecutor's efforts to investigate alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur and to prioritize investigations of crimes involving sexual, reproductive and other gender-based violence. As attested to by all briefers today, the ongoing attacks on the health-care system in the Sudan are depriving women and girls of essential, life-saving reproductive health and protection services. Attacks against civilian facilities necessary for basic services, including water, sanitation and health care, must stop. All parties must respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We strongly condemn attacks and violence against humanitarian and medical workers. We extend our deepest condolences to

the families and colleagues of those who have tragically lost their lives in the noble pursuit of helping others.

Thirdly, the devastating spiral of conflict-induced hunger and the imminent risk of famine are deeply troubling. We remind the parties to the conflict that starvation as a method of warfare is strictly prohibited by international humanitarian law. An immediate and sustainable ceasefire, coupled with unimpeded humanitarian access, is essential to avert the risk of famine and protect the children of the Sudan from further suffering. Humanitarian organizations must have sustained, full, immediate and unhindered access to assess and address the population's needs. We urge parties to ensure cross-border and cross-line access via all possible routes and to remove all impediments to swiftly deliver aid, and we welcome increased cooperation by the Sudanese authorities in that regard.

In conclusion, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide warned multiple times and with increased urgency of the growing risk of genocide and other atrocity crimes. We need to heed her calls. The Council united around resolution 2736 (2024) last week. We need to reflect further on what else the Council should do to ensure compliance with the resolution and with the sanctions and on what else we should do to spare the Sudanese population suffering.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): I also would like to thank Ms. Martha Pobe, Ms. Edem Wosornu and Ms. Limiaa Ahmed for their statements and welcome the presence of the representative of the Sudan this morning.

France is extremely concerned by the fighting around and in the town of El Fasher in North Darfur. The military operations that are under way are threatening hundreds of thousands of civilians, who have already been displaced to escape the conflict and who are now trapped. The operations are aggravating an already catastrophic humanitarian situation and carry with them a risk of famine.

Under those conditions, a strong statement from the Council is essential. France welcomes the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024). We welcome the efforts of the British penholder, which we have fully supported.

In that respect, I would like to stress several demands made by the Council.

First, the Rapid Support Forces must put an end to the siege of El Fasher and immediately cease fighting.

The security of civilians is at stake. All parties to the conflict must ensure the protection of civilians and respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Serious violations committed against children must also cease. We condemn the attacks on essential civilian infrastructure, particularly medical and humanitarian facilities.

Secondly, all parties must allow the complete, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance across borders and front lines. We call on them to work closely with United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors to ensure that aid reaches all those in need. Faced with the gravity of the humanitarian crisis, it is essential that the commitments made by international partners and neighbouring countries at the humanitarian conference on the Sudan, held in Paris on 15 April, be honoured.

Thirdly, all Member States must refrain from arming, financing or providing logistical support to the parties. That was the thrust of one of the demands in the declaration of principles that was adopted on the margins of the Paris conference. The Council recalled that those who violate international humanitarian law or the arms embargo may be subject to sanctions, in accordance with resolution 1591 (2005).

Fourthly, the parties must do everything necessary to bring about a sustainable resolution of the conflict through dialogue. That includes an immediate cessation of hostilities and the resumption of the Jeddah talks. In that regard, I welcome the support of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the Sudan.

On those four points, France will continue its efforts, following on from the humanitarian conference that was held in Paris. Moreover, we are committed to supporting the mobilization of Sudanese civilians in order to allow a credible and sustainable alternative to military power to materialize.

France stands ready to continue working to ensure the full mobilization of the Council. We will do so on the basis of the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of resolution 2736 (2024) and its recommendations to ensure the protection of civilians in the Sudan.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Martha Pobe, and the Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Ms. Edem Wosornu, for their assessments of the current situation in the Sudan, in connection with the implementation of the resolution on the termination of United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) (resolution 2715 (2023)). We listened attentively to the civil society representative. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations.

The situation in the Sudan remains complex. None of the parties has a strategic advantage there. Since April 2023, there have been ongoing intense hostilities between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Those hostilities have resulted in significant casualties, including civilian casualties. We condemn the brutal attack by the Rapid Support Forces against Wad Al-Noora in Gezira state. We call for the lifting of the siege on El Fasher. In addition, the situation is further compounded by outbreaks of intercommunal violence. We highly value the efforts of the United Nations country team, under the stewardship of Ms. Clementine Nkweta-Salami, in helping to provide assistance to the Sudanese population.

The humanitarian situation in the Sudan remains dire. According to the United Nations, approximately 18 million citizens in the Sudan are experiencing acute food shortages. Approximately 10.7 million have been forced to flee their homes; of them, more than 9 million people have been internally displaced, and more than 1.5 million have found refuge in the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

On 15 April, an international conference on the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Sudan was held in Paris, following which an announcement was made that an amount exceeding €2 billion was collected. At the same time, it is puzzling that the organizers did not invite the Sudanese official authorities to participate in that conference. It is unacceptable for the difficult humanitarian situation to be used as a pretext for interfering in the domestic affairs of the Sudan. That is what we saw happen last week, when the Security Council was discussing resolution 2736 (2024) (see S/PV.9655). One of the key elements of that resolution was the opening of cross-border access through the Adre border crossing. We believe that cross-border deliveries are not possible without the consent of the country's authorities and may pose significant risks to the reputation of the United Nations. All other means of delivering humanitarian assistance in cooperation

with Port Sudan need to be fully leveraged to deliver assistance to the population in all regions of the country where such needs exist. We are heartened by the fact that that is the approach that was highlighted today by the representative of OCHA as well.

It appears that the armed conflict may go on for a long time. Various political and diplomatic efforts aimed at reaching a settlement, including intra-Sudanese contacts under the auspices of the United States and Saudi Arabia in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, have yet to yield tangible results. We support the efforts of Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, to achieve peace and stability in the Sudan as soon as possible. We hosted him in Moscow on 20 February. We hope that he will be able to restore the reputation of the United Nations in the eyes of the Sudanese people following the unsuccessful—to put it mildly—activities of the former leadership of UNITAMS. The indisputable advantage of Mr. Lamamra's mediation efforts as compared to the similar work of emissaries to the Sudan from individual countries is that the Personal Envoy does not shy away from liaising with all the various parties to the conflict in the Sudan and maintains their trust. He should continue to exercise his quiet diplomacy, which is his strong suit. We believe that the Security Council has a collective responsibility to preserve and support that kind of role for Mr. Lamamra.

The Russian Federation regards the Transitional Sovereign Council of the Republic of the Sudan as the highest legitimate authority in that country. We support the preservation of the Sudan's unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as maintaining the possibility for a sustainable and comprehensive resolution of the crisis by the Sudanese themselves, within the framework of a national dialogue and without external interference.

The protracted crisis has triggered an increase in centrifugal tendencies and threatens the Sudan's statehood. The negative consequences will inevitably be felt primarily by the Sudanese themselves, as well as the residents of all neighbouring countries. All responsible members of the international community should commit to preventing such a scenario. We once again stress that the preservation of the Sudan's State institutions is the priority. Ensuring a peaceful settlement of the conflict is in interest of all Sudanese. Once the acute phase of the conflict is over, it will be necessary to take practical steps to rekindle the inter-Sudanese dialogue.

In order to ensure that the dialogue is inclusive, it is important to involve all influential political forces and ethnic and religious groups in the country, including respected regional leaders with authority. We believe that progress on that track will help to facilitate broad national consensus.

In our view, any destructive external interference in the affairs of the friendly nation of the Sudan is unacceptable. We believe that the Sudanese people can and must resolve their internal problems independently. Imposing socioeconomic solutions and universal so-called democratizing templates of dubious value from the outside has proven to be flawed and counterproductive. Given the complexity of the crisis in the Sudan, there is a need for a cautious approach — which I stress is not the same as inaction. It should take into account the views of all stakeholders rather than focus on making overtures to solely one part of the so-called civil society.

Experience has shown that Security Council sanctions have not done much to normalize the situation in the Darfur region, into which weapons have continued to be smuggled illegally. We believe that any new restrictions imposed by the Council, including the possible expansion of the sanctions regime beyond Darfur, will not help to bring peace any closer to the region. Nor do we support the illegal unilateral restrictive measures that Western countries impose in order to artificially reshape the Sudan's political landscape.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Director Wosornu for their sobering briefings, as well as Ms. Ahmed, Senior Programme Director of the Sudan Family Planning Association, for her testimony today. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan in today's meeting.

We are meeting today just days after the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024), demanding that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) halt the siege on the city of El Fasher and calling for an immediate halt to the fighting. We strongly reiterate those calls, recalling the appeal for an urgent cessation of hostilities both in the region and throughout all of the Sudan. All parties to the conflict must ensure the protection of civilians and comply with their obligations under international law.

As we have heard today, there is a desperate need to stop the fighting. The war in the Sudan is unleashing an appalling humanitarian situation. The country is

facing the world's largest displacement crisis and, as we also just heard, famine is imminent. Ensuring full, rapid, safe, unhindered and sustained cross-border and cross-line humanitarian assistance into Darfur and other conflict-affected areas is paramount. We look forward to building the momentum necessary to follow up on the humanitarian conference held in Paris in April. That includes effectively utilizing the extensive funds mobilized and ensuring that they reach the most affected populations. Malta has joined partners in providing a financial contribution in support of the Sudan Humanitarian Fund.

We condemn in the strongest terms the use of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, in particular that committed by members of the RSF against Masalit women. Today's observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict arrives at a timely moment. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to supporting survivors.

We are also deeply disturbed by the continued high number of grave violations against children, including the recruitment, use and abduction of children, as well as the killing and maiming of children, especially by explosive weapons with wide-area impacts in populated areas. We are concerned about the lack of specialized protection capacity for women and children following the termination of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan. In that regard, we call on the warring parties to issue orders to their chain of command on sexual and gender-based violence and grave violations against children, including a prohibition of attacks on and military use of schools and hospitals, and to implement them.

Malta supports coordinated efforts towards accountability. Those include the work of the International Criminal Court in relation to Darfur and the Human Rights Council's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan, which we hope can be operational soon. We recall that there are also grounds for targeted sanctions against violators of international humanitarian law or human rights law or perpetrators of other atrocities under the sanctions regime established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005). On that note, we stress that the proliferation of weapons across the Sudan, fuelled by external actors, has led only to further violence and suffering. We therefore join the Council's call urging all Member States to refrain from such external interference and to adhere

to their obligations to comply with the arms embargo. They should focus on steering their efforts towards mediation between the parties and on engaging with external parties to stop their interference.

In conclusion, dialogue and mediation are the only paths to ending the war. Peace, democracy and economic recovery can be fully realized only if the rights and needs of all Sudanese men, women and children are placed at the centre of peace talks. We urge mediators to prioritize the full, equal, meaningful and safe inclusion of women. As Ms. Ahmed mentioned, there can be no peace without women. We are confident that Personal Envoy Lamamra's coordinating efforts, including with the African Union, can bear fruit, and we encourage stakeholders to step up their efforts towards an immediate and sustainable ceasefire.

Mrs. Shino (Japan): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Ms. Pobee; Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Wosornu; and Ms. Ahmed for their briefings.

At the outset, Japan welcomes the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) on El Fasher and thanks the United Kingdom for leading the negotiations constructively.

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has caused all manner of tragedies, including the killing of civilians, hunger, sexual and gender-based violence, the recruitment of children, the displacement of persons and the creation of refugees. The fighting must end immediately.

In that regard, I would like to stress five points today.

First and foremost, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces must immediately cease hostilities throughout the Sudan, including localized conflicts, and reach a ceasefire agreement as soon as possible. They must respect the Council's resolutions and engage seriously with international and regional peace efforts, such as the Jeddah talks. Japan encourages Personal Envoy Lamamra to redouble his efforts to use his good offices to complement and coordinate those endeavours.

Secondly, full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access, including cross-border and cross-line, must be allowed. Japan strongly calls on all parties to allow and facilitate such access. We welcome recent improvements in facilitation by the Sudanese authorities in issuing visas and travel authorizations. We also

note that the 2024 humanitarian response plan is still significantly underfunded. The timely disbursement of pledged funding is critical.

Thirdly, international law must be upheld by the fighting parties. Japan demands that the parties comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including by ensuring the protection of civilians. Japan calls on the parties to allow civilians to move to safe areas, especially, but not only, in and around El Fasher.

Fourthly, the arms embargo measures must be strictly implemented. Supplies of weapons and ammunition from outside only prolong the conflict. Japan repeats its call for an end to any external interference that fuels the conflict and foments instability.

Lastly, we call on all parties to the conflict to ensure an orderly transition to civilian rule while securing the meaningful participation of women in political decision-making. Such participation is a precondition to creating lasting peace and security in line with the women and peace and security agenda. In that regard, Japan, in partnership with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), supported the participation of approximately 180 women in the meeting of Sudanese civilian actors in Addis Ababa in May. Also, last week in Tokyo, our Minister for Foreign Affairs and Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, Executive Secretary of IGAD, confirmed their continued cooperation for achieving peace and stability in the Horn of Africa. Japan urges all parties to the conflict to listen to the voices of those women calling for an immediate ceasefire.

In conclusion, I would like to call on my fellow Security Council colleagues to speak with one voice to send a robust message for peace and security in the Sudan.

Mrs. Chanda (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa and the Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for their briefings. I would like to thank Limiaa Ahmed in particular for her courageous and alarming testimony.

The continued suffering of the Sudanese people and the enormous toll being paid by civilians are unacceptable. We are shocked by the brutal violence against them, and this month's massacre in Wad Al-Noora allegedly committed by the Rapid Support

Forces (RSF) is just one of the most recent examples. With the siege of El Fasher and the continued fighting in other parts of the country, it is likely that further atrocities will come to light. Ensuring accountability for all those crimes is essential. That point was also made by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan at the Human Rights Council today. By adopting resolution 2736 (2024), the Council sent a strong and clear message to the RSF and to all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities immediately.

In that regard, I reiterate the following points.

First, respect for international law, in particular international humanitarian law and human rights law, is not a choice but an obligation. Switzerland strongly condemns all violations in that respect, in particular sexual violence against women and girls. Moreover, the most recent annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (S/2024/384) shows a sharp increase in grave violations of children's rights, including verified cases of recruitment for active combat, in particular in Darfur. The parties listed in the report for such violations must immediately engage with the United Nations to define concrete measures to end such violations. We also reiterate our call and that of the Council to Member States to respect the arms embargo, violations of which are subject to sanctions under resolution 1591 (2005), and to refrain from any external interference that fuels the conflict.

Secondly, humanitarian and medical personnel and facilities must be protected in accordance with international law, as set out in resolutions 2286 (2016) and 2730 (2024). We are dismayed by the continuing attacks, including last week's RSF attack on El Fasher's South Hospital, one of the only remaining functioning hospitals in the region. Switzerland condemns those acts in the strongest possible terms. We express our sincere condolences to the various organizations on the loss of their staff, most of whom were locals. The most recent cases concern Médecins sans frontières, Relief International and the Sudanese Red Crescent.

Thirdly, the imminent risk of famine for hundreds of thousands of Sudanese was highlighted in resolution 2736 (2024). The parties have an urgent responsibility to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered access across borders and front lines. It is particularly urgent for that to happen before the rainy season, which will further complicate the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We acknowledge the progress made by the Sudanese authorities in the past few weeks on visas and travel

permits. We call for continued cooperation in that regard. Switzerland continues to fund the humanitarian response and underlines the importance of respecting the commitments made at the Paris conference.

In conclusion, a negotiated and lasting solution remains the only way out of this conflict. It will not be resolved on the battlefield. The parties must return to the negotiating table to find a peaceful, inclusive and Sudanese-led solution. We fully support the efforts of the Personal Envoy at all levels. That includes the planned retreat of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the United Nations in Djibouti, announced at the consultative conference held in Cairo last week.

In the face of that human-made tragedy, we must remain united in our commitment to ending the conflict, revitalizing the political process and meeting the aspirations of the Sudanese people for a lasting and just peace. Resolution 2736 (2024) must be fully implemented.

Mr. Chen Yongchao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobebe, Ms. Wosornu and Ms. Ahmed for their briefings and welcome the representative of the Sudan to today's meeting.

As the armed conflict in the Sudan continues, it is the strong desire of the Sudanese people and the urgent expectation of the international community to de-escalate the situation and restore peace in the country soon. Lately, the international community has paid great attention to the situation in El Fasher. The Security Council has had many discussions and adopted resolution 2736 (2024) on the situation in El Fasher last week. We call on the relevant parties to effectively implement the provisions of the resolution, cease the siege and offensives against El Fasher, allow civilians to evacuate and seek refuge, and end hostilities as soon as possible to ease the situation in and around El Fasher.

China has followed closely the humanitarian situation in the Sudan. Under international humanitarian law, civilians will be protected from all forms of violence in armed conflict. The reported attacks on civilians in Wad Al-Noora in Gezira state and the resulting large number of casualties are very disturbing. China notes the commitment and efforts of the Sudanese Government to protect civilians and calls on all parties to abide by international humanitarian law and minimize civilian casualties, especially by

guaranteeing the basic rights of women and children. China welcomes the recent opening by the Sudanese Government of some humanitarian routes and its facilitation of visa issuance. We support constructive cooperation between the Sudanese Government and its international humanitarian partners to continue to ensure the prompt delivery of sufficient aid to the Sudanese people in need.

It should be emphasized that cross-border humanitarian access concerns a country's sovereignty. International humanitarian organizations should remain neutral and impartial and obtain prior consent from the Sudanese Government for all cross-border operations. There is a surge in humanitarian needs in the Sudan, with some 9 million people forced to flee their homes and more and more living under the threat of hunger. To alleviate the Sudan's humanitarian crisis, it is not enough to emphasize only humanitarian access — the severe funding shortfall deserves greater attention as a fundamental challenge. The international community, especially traditional donors, should honour their commitments in full and on time in a greater effort to save lives and protect civilians.

As China has stressed many times, military means will lead nowhere, and a political settlement is the only way to usher in peace in the Sudan. We hope that the parties to the conflict will soon return to dialogue and the negotiation of a lasting ceasefire. China supports all diplomatic efforts that are aimed at restoring peace in the Sudan and supports Personal Envoy Lamamra's continued efforts to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the African Union to create favourable conditions for the parties to the conflict to overcome their differences through dialogue and to open up more space for the political settlement of the Sudan question.

All Member States should respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Sudan, work together to advance peace talks and contribute to the early restoration of peace in the Sudan.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Republic of Korea.

I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobee, Director Wosornu and Ms. Ahmed for their informative yet sombre briefings.

We deeply regret that resolution 2724 (2024), adopted in March, urging an immediate cessation of hostilities, has not been implemented. In that regard,

we welcome the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) last week regarding the situation in El Fasher.

In the light of the devastating and harrowing situation in the Sudan, we would like to emphasize the following points.

First, the cessation of hostilities in and around El Fasher and throughout the Sudan is crucial. Silencing the guns is essential for the protection of civilians and humanitarian access. We also underline the importance of local mediation mechanisms and the significant role of local leaders in achieving a localized ceasefire that can contribute to de-escalation across the country. We support Mr. Lamamra's engagement with all parties in that regard.

Secondly, we reiterate our call for all parties in the Sudan to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. In particular, we are extremely disturbed by the ongoing ethnically motivated sexual and gender-based violence across the Sudan and the six grave violations against children. We once again would like to express our deep concern about the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women and girls, as highlighted at the joint media stakeout of the group of signatories of the statement of shared commitments on women and peace and security this morning. We urge all parties to the conflict to maintain strict command-and-control systems over their forces. In that regard we support the efforts of the International Criminal Court and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan to ensure accountability for perpetrators.

Thirdly, there must be full, rapid and unhindered humanitarian aid for civilians facing a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, including famine. We note the recent efforts by the Sudanese authorities to facilitate humanitarian aid but call for further cooperation, including the reopening of the crucial Adre border crossing, as called for by resolution 2736 (2024).

Fourthly, regional actors must refrain from exacerbating instability in the Sudan. External interference in the form of supplying arms to the warring parties must stop. We reaffirm the need for all parties to the conflict and Member States to comply with the arms embargo established by relevant Security Council resolutions. As Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, we especially reiterate

our unwavering support for the work of the Panel of Experts in monitoring and reporting on arms embargo violations, despite severe challenges to its work.

Fifthly, Sudanese parties to the conflict must realize that the conflict cannot be resolved on the battlefield and must return to the negotiating table without further delay. That senseless war cannot be justified for any reason, nor does victory in such a war confer legitimacy. In that regard, we welcome Mr. Lamamra's initiative to work towards convening a retreat with key actors. We are also encouraged by the engagement of the African Union and Egypt with Sudanese civilian political forces, including women.

Sixthly and finally, given the scale of the catastrophe and the lack of attention it has received, we strongly believe that the United Nations role is more essential in the Sudan than anywhere else. In the wake of the termination of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, we need to discuss the necessity of peace operations in the Sudan as one possible option for the Security Council.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am confident that you will manage its work well. I would also like to thank Ms. Martha Pobe, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa; Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Ms. Limiaa Ahmed, Senior Program Director, Sudan Family Planning Association.

There has been noteworthy progress since the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024) concerning the prohibitions therein, which have been maintained by Council members. However, the resolution does not send a strong message to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) with regard to their violations or to the United Arab Emirates which sponsors those violations. They should be addressed as well.

I would like to thank the delegations of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other Council members for speaking with one voice on that issue, which constitutes the first step towards ending the war.

The military aggression launched by the Rapid Support Forces, supported with weapons from the United Arab Emirates, are deliberately and systematically targeting villages and towns. Those militias are taking advantage of the fact that the Council has not taken a decisive stance against their actions, which are aimed at preventing the protection of civilians in agricultural areas and dispersing them so as to disrupt the planting season and exacerbate the food insecurity in order to trigger a famine. That is harming fragile sectors and affecting older persons, mothers and children and worsening the economic repercussions in a country that is facing a war of aggression. That will also cause further displacement, halt production, disrupt agriculture and force millions of people to live on humanitarian aid in a country that is capable of providing food for the entire world thanks to its water and fertile land. It is turning the Sudan into a model of destructive settlements of demographic groups coming from the Sahel.

The support of the United Arab Emirates continues to flow to the Rapid Support Forces through Chad, southern Libya and Central Africa. This week, following the battle that took place in Darfur, which was subjected to shelling by the Rapid Support Forces, bands of mercenaries arrived there through Umm Dukhon, Tiné and the Chadian Adre. They have evacuated their injured to Am Djarass and Abéché hospitals and to the United Arab Emirates through an air bridge. The Security Council has failed to address that situation, contenting itself instead with generalizations, and has been reluctant to mention the RSF and its regional and international sponsors. That will affect the future of food security in the Sudan and in Africa and give rise to a terrorist prototype composed of groups of displaced persons, migrants and ethnic gangs who seek to destroy the Sudanese State. We have also observed movement by a group led by the Chadian rebel Mohamed Bakhit, known as "Doydoy", from an area in southern Libya heading to Kufra, then to the Chadian region of Am Djarass and from there into the Sudan with 12 combat vehicles carrying approximately 100 fighters on board to participate in the war alongside the terrorist militia which is determined to topple the city of El Fasher.

The Libyan Subul al-Salam battalion, which is loyal to General Khalifa Haftar's forces in Kufra city, is also actively delivering shipments of ammunition and mortars from the warehouses of the 106th Brigade led by Khaled Khalifa Haftar to the rebel militia members and introducing them into the Sudan via Am Djarass

in Chad. That is why we have sought, time and again, to collect information and present it to the Council, in order to alert it of a new threat to peace and security in Africa. The Government of the Sudan is faced with the aggression of rogue militias whose tentacles extend into the countries of the Sahel and the Sahara. The Security Council must strengthen the role of the Sudan in confronting that new plague, which is no less dangerous than the coronavirus disease pandemic, and identify by name the State sponsoring that plague, which is subjecting the people of the Sudan to gradual genocide and the burning of towns and villages.

As for the questions posed by Mr. Lamamra to the Government of the Sudan, we would like to make the following comments.

The Government of the Sudan is committed to upholding international law and human rights law, including in the course of military operations. The Sudanese Armed Forces adhere to the rules of engagement which prioritize the protection of civilians and refrain from targeting places where civilians are present, civilian facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, the Sudanese Armed Forces have been issuing alerts through various media outlets and platforms warning citizens to avoid staying in specific areas under the control of the rebels, which are considered legitimate targets under international humanitarian law. The rebels are spreading allegations that the Government's warplanes are targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. They are doing so to elicit condemnation of the Sudanese Armed Forces. However, it was proven that the rebels were the ones who were shelling civilian areas at the same time as the Sudanese Armed Forces air sorties and they were responsible for the civilian casualties.

The Sudan is committed to protecting humanitarian workers and to granting them access to areas wherever there are people in need, provided that the aid is delivered through the crossings approved by the Sudanese Government in accordance with its agreement with the United Nations. The six Sudanese relief workers who were killed died in areas under the control of the Rapid Support Forces.

The Sudanese Government is committed to facilitating the entry of people and aid from all neighbouring countries through the aforementioned routes and the three airports, namely, Kadugli, El Obeid and El Fasher. The Government is committed to facilitating the entry of humanitarian workers without

complications and as quickly as necessary in order to avoid disruptions caused by the rainy season.

The Sudanese Government stands ready to immediately implement the ceasefire in the city of El Fasher, provided that the Rapid Support Forces adhere to the terms of the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan, signed on 11 May 2023, and to resolution 2736 (2024), adopted two days ago, by lifting the siege and returning its forces to their pre-siege positions.

The Sudanese Armed Forces remained in their positions inside the city of El Fasher. Meanwhile, the rebel militia mobilized its forces from Darfur and Khartoum states, along with mercenaries from countries in the region, and besieged the city of El Fasher, thereby aggravating the humanitarian situation. The Sudanese Armed Forces have remained in a defensive position, in exercise of their constitutional right, since the rebellion of the militia in April 2023. The Sudanese Government is calling on the Security Council to bring pressure to bear on the countries supporting the rebel militia to stop doing so, as continuing to supply the rebels with ammunition and weapons is the main reason that the situation in El Fasher has deteriorated and that the war has been prolonged.

The Sudanese Government is committed to facilitating the entry of aid through the routes and crossings, which include the Tiné crossing with Chad and the Joda crossing with South Sudan. The Government has a reservation with regard to the crossings that are not under State control to ensure that they are not misused. We adhere to our sovereign right in that regard and have examples of such misuse. It should be taken into account that transporting aid from Port Sudan to other parts of the Sudan is three times less expensive than transporting it through neighbouring countries.

The Government of the Sudan believes that the amount of food available in the Sudan is sufficient to cover the needs of the citizens, and it urges the United Nations to purchase food from the local market in order to reduce costs and support Sudanese farmers. The interim Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report on the situation of food security in the Sudan has not yet been released, but the indicators expected to be included in the report show that there are parties that want to undermine the report by declaring a famine in the Sudan so as to weaponize it against the Government after the armed aggression failed to make progress. That is in line with the abuse of the issue of sexual violence,

of which 98 per cent of the cases are perpetrated by members of the Rapid Support Forces, who go so far as to boast about it in candid videos.

The Sudanese Government agrees to conduct a comprehensive joint assessment with the United Nations of the three airports in question whenever possible. It is committed to expediting travel authorizations and facilitating cross-border movement, in accordance with directives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, while reserving its right to refuse granting a visa to any person it deems to be a threat to its national security.

With regard to the statement issued by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on 3 May, the Sudan took immediate measures to protect civilians, including by committing to refrain from attacks on civilian areas, allowing civilians to leave to safer areas and guaranteeing the non-involvement of the Sudanese Armed Forces in sexual or gender-based violence, in accordance with the reports which we will refer to.

The Government is facilitating unhindered cross-line and cross-border humanitarian access in order to allow civilians to receive humanitarian assistance, thereby refuting allegations of obstruction of humanitarian action. The Government of the Sudan is simplifying and expediting administrative and bureaucratic procedures related to the delivery of humanitarian aid. The Humanitarian Aid Commission recently authorized the entry of 31 trucks through the Tiné crossing, carrying humanitarian aid from the World Food Programme. In coordination with the Commissioner of North Darfur state, a team was formed that will include a representative from the intelligence of the Sixth Infantry Division and a State representative from the General Intelligence Service to coordinate and inspect the trucks when they enter the country through the Tiné crossing.

I would like to clarify an important matter pertaining to the Adre crossing, whose opening the United States has insisted on. Indeed, this morning, before the meeting began, the representative of the United States herself contacted me regarding the opening of that crossing. The Adre crossing was not announced as one of the agreed crossings before the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024), the resolution most recently adopted by Council. In spite of security and military reservations about its use for purposes other than humanitarian ones, the Government authorized

the crossing of 60 aid trucks through that crossing in March.

To give Council members a clearer picture of the Adre crossing, the crossing is located in a city in eastern Chad, approximately 27 kilometres to the west of El Geneina by road and a four-hour drive from the Chadian city of Abéché. The camps in Adre are temporary, and the refugees living in them will be transferred to permanent camps when preparations are completed. Temporary refugees are located in three areas: the Kuraynik and Murnei camps south of Adre; the Atshanah camp south-west of Adre; and a camp in the town of Am Djarass, north-east of Adre. There is only one centre providing voluntary services, sponsored by such Sudanese initiatives as the Clinic for You initiative, which receives 120 patients a day with limited staff and serves 350 meals to children daily. The clinic relies on donations from Sudanese nationals living abroad and the International Organization for Migration's Global Appeal, which provides medicine, as well as generators and refrigerators, provided by Sudanese doctors in the United Kingdom, although there is also a need for fuel.

The Save El Geneina initiative is another Sudanese project that provides medicine, as well as teams to provide recreational programmes for children, training for women, psychological support and legal counselling, including with a focus on protection. Furthermore, there is an initiative that supports safe spaces for women and girls, which carries out skills development programmes for women and children. There is also the Ambilia camp for disabled persons, located eight kilometres south-west of Adre, which provides support to people with special needs and those wounded in war and includes a health centre. Those who need operations are sent to Port Sudan and other locations. There are also Sudanese volunteer-operated legal centres, such as the Peace Centre for Legal Aid and the Roots Centre for human rights and violation monitoring. However, there is an urgent need for more medical teams and medicine, especially to combat hepatitis, gastroenteritis, watery diarrhoea, skin diseases and malnutrition. There is a need for more medical clinics and increased means for diagnosis and treatment, in addition to more paediatricians and cleaning products. We also need an emergency centre where small emergency surgeries can be performed on patients before they are transferred to other hospitals.

The Sudan's task team confirmed that the Chadian authorities restrict the movement and work of non-Chadian actors and do not provide funding support to non-Chadian initiatives and organizations. We recently met with the Resident Coordinator in the Sudan, Ms. Nkweta-Salami, at which time she assured us that she had no humanitarian concerns to discuss. She said that the Sudanese Government had cooperated with the United Nations in providing support to those in need amid emergency circumstances and the crisis caused by the war. My country also issued 100 visas of a total of 120 applications in its most recent batch of visas. The only challenge to providing humanitarian assistance has been the shortage of funding, as only 16 per cent of the humanitarian response plan has been funded.

With regard to the health situation, the Minister of Health, Mr. Haitham Muhammad Ibrahim, has reaffirmed the Ministry of Health's commitment to facilitating the delivery of assistance and medical support and supplies, despite the obstacles to health work as a result of the lack of funding. However, many health institutions are no longer operational owing to the militia attacks that target them and their medical staff. Citizens have also been displaced to areas where the Sudanese Armed Forces are present which has put great pressure on health facilities. The rehabilitation of the health sector from the destruction caused by the militia will cost nearly \$11 billion. We also want to point out that a number of medicines that did not comply with the required standards have entered the Sudan through Chad and South Sudan.

The head of the Gezira Scheme has confirmed that there is an abundance of agricultural production and food crops. However, there are difficulties in delivering the products to those in need owing to the continued aggression and practices of the Rapid Support Forces and its looting of all the agricultural inputs of the Gezira Scheme, including fertilizers, enhanced seeds, pesticides, crops and agricultural warehouses, in order to deliberately exacerbate food scarcity and incur famine, in coordination with some regional and international actors.

The Sudanese Armed Forces, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the National Medical Supplies Fund, succeeded in air-dropping 20 tons of life-saving medicine and other medical supplies to North Darfur. Those medical supplies were delivered to all areas by land, air and sea in fulfilment their

obligations under international humanitarian law. The Humanitarian Aid Commission has highlighted the measures taken by the Government to deliver relief and humanitarian assistance to Darfur and open the crossings with Egypt, Chad and South Sudan, as well as Port Sudan and other internal corridors, including via land and river corridors and the airports in El Fasher, Kadugli and El Obeid.

We have also facilitated the issuance of visas for humanitarian personnel, as well as permits and authorizations for the movement of staff and assistance convoys. We ask that visa applications be submitted well in advance, taking into account the national laws and regulations governing humanitarian work and respect for the State's sovereignty. Some activities are carried out by certain entities that have been established by the Rapid Support Forces, with the knowledge that the Humanitarian Aid Commission is the only Sudanese body entrusted with coordinating humanitarian work. Those entities are therefore illegal. In that context, we recall that certain international organizations excessively apply for visas despite having not provided sufficient international assistance.

We would like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar and the State of Kuwait for the humanitarian assistance they provide. The United Nations ranks fourth in terms of the humanitarian assistance provided. The Sudan's policy is to facilitate access to humanitarian assistance to all regions and all citizens, without any restrictions or exceptions. In that context, the Government reiterates its commitment to the Jeddah Declaration and the subsequent humanitarian commitments. That constitutes the binding legal framework on all humanitarian aspects, including the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country.

In February, the Government of the Sudan announced the opening of humanitarian corridors — not on the request of any international body or United Nations agency — but because it sensed the importance of opening of such corridors, which were agreed internally and externally, to facilitate the flow of humanitarian assistance. The external routes are via Egypt, South Sudan and Chad. The Chadian-Sudanese Tiné crossing has been operating unhindered for all United Nations agencies and international organizations since February.

The Government has also facilitated the opening of humanitarian corridors for the delivery of aid to South

Kordofan, West Kordofan and Blue Nile states through negotiations with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)-North Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction, because it firmly believes in facilitating the unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance to those in need. However, those efforts were met with intransigence on the part of the SPLM, as witnessed by the mediating State of South Sudan. The Government still hopes to reach a cessation of hostilities agreement with the SPLM to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to those affected.

Unhindered humanitarian assistance continued to flow to Darfur states by the Government. However, the party obstructing the aid by delaying its delivery or looting it is known to all. Nevertheless, none of the signatory organizations or agencies has condemned the Rapid Support Forces.

The Government remains committed to facilitating and simplifying the procedures to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need, including through the issuance of visas, despite the challenges and obstacles posed by the Rapid Support Forces' systematic destruction of the police institutions and headquarters. The Ministry of the Interior is making great efforts to restore those institutions so that it can assist the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in issuing entry visas to organizations and agencies with permits in order to enable them to provide humanitarian assistance.

We are facing some issues with regard to the delivery of goods, especially grains, to some areas in Gezira, Kordofan and Darfur states. That of course does not mean that we are on the brink of famine, because famine is related to the provision of grains from local production or external import. Moreover, the reports issued by official entities such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations indicated that the state of grain production in the Sudan was far from famine but did mention certain challenges in the delivery of food grains. Nevertheless, all the international signatory organizations and United Nations agencies have mentioned the shortfall in funding by the donors.

With regard to sexual violence, we would refer to the report prepared by the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa, one of the regional civil society organizations, issued on 23 January, which documented 104 cases of kidnapping and enforced disappearance

of young women and girls attributed to the Rapid Support Forces, with the number of victims increasing whenever the rebel militias attack new areas. The report stated that those abducted are used for domestic chores and forced labour, and that they are subjected to sexual violence. The families of the kidnapped women are also threatened, and the kidnapped women are forcibly deported in order to cover up those crimes. The militia is using child recruitment and detaining several thousand civilians in different areas under inhumane conditions in order to use them as human shields. The Arab Lawyers Union therefore decided to form a committee to investigate the rebel militia's crimes.

Moreover, Ms. Sulaima Ishaq Mohamed Al-Khalifa, General Director of the Unit for Combating Violence against Women and Children, revealed that 159 cases of sexual violence were recorded during the first year of the war. That figure represents only 2 to 3 per cent of the cases of sexual violence registered so far. Services have been suspended as a result of the demolition of infrastructure while difficulties in gaining access to it have affected the full inventory of data and cases, particularly in the states of Darfur and Kordofan, in addition to the challenges of gaining access to urgent reproductive health services for pregnant women. The Unit, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, has established a joint action plan to support the national mechanism for the protection of women and girls in the states of White Nile, Gezira, Gedaref, Kassala and the Red Sea, including the establishment of specialized trauma treatment centres in those states.

After the Rapid Support militia attack on Gezira in 2023 and after its fighters penetrated deep into the state, the rate of displacement increased, which exacerbated the suffering of women and girls who were displaced to the White Nile, Gedaref and Kassala owing to the suspension of the health and justice services available to survivors, including submitting official reports and complaints against rapists and perpetrators. The rate of internally displaced persons ranges from 36 per cent in Khartoum to 21 per cent in South Darfur and 12 per cent in North Darfur. The frequency of sexual violence continues to rise in areas overrun by the Rapid Support Forces, and such violence is used not only as a means of coercion to remove civilians from their homes, but also as a despicable form of security extortion of civilians in areas that were safe before the attack. The militia exerts pressure on civilians and coerces them in those areas, forcing them to join the militia and fight in its ranks against the Sudanese Armed Forces. It uses them as a

weapon against other civilians for purposes including ethnic humiliation, forced displacement, insecurity and ethnic and ideological terrorism. The report indicates that the increase in the rate of sexual violence committed by the Rapid Support Forces occurred after attacking homes and terrorizing families in North Kordofan, greater Khartoum and Darfur states.

The Rapid Support Forces, led by Ali Yaqoub, launched an attack on El Fasher on Friday, 14 June, coinciding with the adoption of resolution 2736 (2024), which calls on them to end the siege of the city. In the attack, the militias used many of their local elements, as well as mercenaries from Chad, Central Africa and the Sahel, along with armoured vehicles and mortars, to bring down the city and eliminate civilians from the indigenous tribes of Darfur. The videos that those militias revealed confirm their intention to liquidate the Zaghawa in the cities of Nyala, Zalingei, El Geneina, Kabkabiyah and Saraf Umrah. The armed and joint forces countered those attacks, which led to the death of militia leader, Ali Yaqoub.

In conclusion, a number of massacres were committed by the Rapid Support Forces while the Council deliberated on Thursday (see S/PV.9655 and S/PV.9656), namely, the village of Sheikh Al-Samani in the southern state of Gezira was bombed, a massacre leading to the killing of scores of women and children; another massacre was committed in the village of Wad Al-Noora, killing 270 civilians; and other attacks were launched targeting dozens of villages in Gezira, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, West Kordofan, Omdurman and Khartoum. Attacks were launched on camps for displaced persons, such as Abu Shouk camp.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor to respond to the ludicrous allegations made by the representative of the Sudan, who represents the Sudanese Armed Forces, one of the warring parties in the Sudan.

At the outset, the United Arab Emirates expresses its deep concern about the tragic consequences of the worsening conflict on the brotherly Sudanese people. Yesterday the United Arab Emirates announced that it would allocate another \$70 million in aid to the Sudan through key partners and United Nations agencies, with a further \$30 million to support neighbouring countries.

That comes on top of \$130 million in aid over the past 10 months from the United Arab Emirates.

With millions of Sudanese people facing a looming famine, it is unconscionable that the Sudanese Armed Forces continue to obstruct and deny basic humanitarian assistance in violation of international humanitarian law. We call on both sides of the conflict to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, to reach a ceasefire and to move to a civilian transition. We believe that the Sudanese people deserve justice and peace. They need a ceasefire, a credible political process and the unhindered flow of humanitarian aid. Excuses and finger-pointing only prolong civilians' suffering.

The representative of the Sudanese Armed Forces should be asked: if they seek an end to the conflict and civilian suffering, then why will they not come to the Jeddah talks? Why are they blocking aid? What are they waiting for? They should stop grandstanding in international forums such as this one and instead take responsibility for ending the conflict that they started.

The President: The representative of the Sudan has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Whoever wants peacemaking in the Sudan must first come with goodwill. The United Arab Emirates is a country that is sponsoring systematic and ethnically based terrorism in the Sudan, as proven by the report issued by the Panel of Experts on the Sudan in December 2023 (see S/2024/65). We have gathered all the data, evidence and imagery and submitted them to the Security Council for discussion. However, the United Arab Emirates, through its evil intentions, obstructed the meeting in its required format, which has meant that the Council has been unable to take the final step of condemning the United Arab Emirates for its aggression. The Sudan is not alone in saying that. It has been said by the United Nations, the United States and a large number of United States, European and British newspapers and investigators, as well as human rights organizations. The United Arab Emirates is the accused party, and it cannot be a partner in peace or submit any theory or proposal in that regard.

The Council thanked the Government of the Sudan for its cooperation, for not obstructing aid and for issuing permits and visas. The Sudanese people are not in need of the money that the United Arab Emirates is giving them as humanitarian assistance. The Sudan

would be richer than the United Arab Emirates if it had stability. The Sudan would be the richest country in the world. The United Arab Emirates must stay away from the Sudan. That is the first requirement that will allow stability to be achieved in the Sudan. It must stop its support for the militia.

One week ago, we submitted to the presidency of the Council six United Arab Emirates passports that we found in Khartoum as part of the joint operations carried out by the Rapid Support Forces, and so far the presidency has not revealed that even though we called on it to do so. We did not steal those six passports from the suitcases of United Arab Emirates citizens but found them on the battlefield. We found other Chadian passports as well, and we will continue to call on the Council to disclose them. However, we always notice that there is a party obstructing that process. The people of the Sudan deserve peace, and the Sudan can make its own peace as long as the United Arab Emirates stays away from us.

Regarding the Jeddah talks, the Sudan is a founding member of that forum. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield knows that.

The Sudan was the first to participate in those talks. The Rapid Support Forces, which are supported sponsored and incited by the United Arab Emirates to fight in the Sudan and perpetrate crimes and rapes, did not implement the Jeddah commitments upon motivation by the United Arab Emirates.

The Sudan has no fear because justice is on our side, and the sword of righteousness is sharp and fatal. Therefore, I hope that you, Mr. President, will make public the evidence that we submitted to you in the closed meeting, including the six passports, so that we can prove to those who are unaware how involved the United Arab Emirates is in the Sudanese war, in which thousands of Sudanese have been killed.

We do not want any support from the United Arab Emirates because Allah is our supporter. When the Sudan supported States and liberation movements, the United Arab Emirates did not exist and was not even on the world map. Therefore, we know how evil it is. We are the ones who created its glorious present with our arms and intelligence.

I call on the Security Council to speak bravely and to take the last step, which is to openly name and condemn the United Arab Emirates in order for the war to stop.

The President: The representative of the United Arab Emirates has asked for the floor to make a further statement. He will be the last speaker. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Abushabab (United Arab Emirates): We see this as a shameful abuse of the Council by one of the warring parties of the Sudan, using this platform to spread false allegations against the United Arab Emirates to distract from the grave violations that are happening on the ground.

There will be no military victory or military settlement of the conflict in the Sudan. The only way to settle will be through the negotiating table.

The representative of the Sudanese Armed Forces has mentioned allegations that he has sent through letters to the Security Council. We have indeed responded to the false allegations that the representative of the Sudanese Armed Forces has shared with the Council. We understand that there is a further letter coming to the Council, and we will respond to that letter once more.

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

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.