



# Security Council

Eightieth year

## 9898

<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 16 April 2025, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Bonnafont . . . . .	(France)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria. . . . .	Mr. Bendjama
	China . . . . .	Mr. Sun Lei
	Denmark . . . . .	Ms. Lassen
	Greece . . . . .	Mr. Sekeris
	Guyana . . . . .	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Pakistan . . . . .	Mr. Jadoon
	Panama . . . . .	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Cho
	Russian Federation. . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. Kanu
	Slovenia . . . . .	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Somalia . . . . .	Mr. Farah
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America. . . . .	Ms. Shea

## Agenda

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

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2025/211)

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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan (S/2025/211)**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South 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: Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan; Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Ms. Jackline Nasiwa, Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2025/211, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in South Sudan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Haysom.

**Mr. Haysom:** I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief on the situation in South Sudan, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report submitted to the Council (S/2025/211).

Since my most recent briefing (see S/PV.9855), there has been a sharp deterioration in the political and security situation, which threatens to unravel the peace gains made in recent years. All our efforts are now focused on preventing a relapse into widespread conflict and refocusing attention on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. During my most recent update, I warned of an emerging standoff between the two pre-eminent parties to the agreement. That has now degenerated into direct military confrontation and escalated tensions across the country. The trigger can be traced back to events beginning in Upper Nile state since the beginning of March, when the White Army overran the Nasir-based garrison from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. Subsequent air strikes on Nasir, allegedly involving devices containing incendiary fuel, have caused significant casualties and horrible injuries, including to women and children. Humanitarians estimate that more than 80,000 people have been displaced.

The series of events in Nasir culminated on 7 March, in an attack on a United Nations helicopter in Nasir, resulting in the death of a crew member of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and numerous South Sudanese military personnel. The extraction operation during which that occurred had been conducted at the request of all parties and with assurances of safe passage from national, state and local authorities. Since then, and in the context of a deplorable downward spiral, we are receiving reports of further mobilization, respectively, of the White Army and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Upper Nile, allegedly including the forced recruitment of children into the respective ranks of the armed formations. The deployment of Ugandan foreign forces at the request of the South Sudanese Government has further stoked public anxiety. Senior civilian and military actors

of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition have been removed from official posts, been detained or gone into hiding. The arrest of First Vice-President Riek Machar reflects a new low in trust between the principal parties. Misinformation, disinformation and hate speech are fuelling political and ethnic tension, particularly on social media. Those conditions are darkly reminiscent of the 2013 and 2016 conflicts, which took more than 400,000 lives.

That situation underscores the urgent need for a collective effort by national and international stakeholders to secure a cessation of hostilities, preserve the integrity of the Revitalized Agreement and ensure necessary steps are taken to end the continuous cycles of incomplete transition.

UNMISS is engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to broker a peaceful solution alongside many stakeholders including, but not limited to, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council, its Panel of the Wise, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, His Holiness Pope Francis, the United Nations Secretary-General and the Council itself.

The message from peace partners is clear and consistent — the parties must resolve tensions through dialogue, build trust and confidence, refocus on the agreement and consensus-based decision-making and assure the people of their steadfast commitment not to return to war.

We need look no further than across the northern border to the Sudan for a stark reminder of how quickly a country can descend into catastrophic conflict. The region cannot afford another crisis that could further destabilize an already fragile landscape. To avoid that outcome, I must underscore the critical role of neighbouring States, as guarantors of the agreement, in restoring peace and stability in South Sudan.

With that in mind, I seek the support of the Council, as follows.

First, the Nasir tensions must be immediately addressed through dialogue rather than further military confrontation, which risks tipping the country into a broader conflict. The situation in Nasir is, above all, the result of political deadlocks and disagreements that have escalated into violent clashes.

Secondly, the Council must echo the recent communiqués of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the IGAD Extraordinary Summit, by urging all parties to adhere to the ceasefire and the agreement, including reinvigorating the functioning of its relevant mechanisms.

Thirdly, the Council must call for the release of detained military and civilian officials, or their treatment in accordance with legal process.

Finally, the Council must encourage the two principals to exercise restraint, address their differences constructively and through public dialogue, and manifestly put the interests of the people first.

To help secure those outcomes, UNMISS is committed to leaving no stone unturned.

South Sudan faces one of the worst humanitarian outlooks since independence, driven by escalating subnational violence, the spillover from the conflict in the Sudan, deepening economic collapse, extreme weather and a sharp decline in international aid. Regional volatility is also fuelling instability in South Sudan. Approximately 9.3 million people, three quarters of the population, need assistance and 7.7 million people are suffering acute food insecurity. A cholera outbreak continues amid a crippled health system, with 47,000 cases and 877 deaths so far. Humanitarians are doing all they can to stretch scarce resources to also support 1.1 million returnees and

refugees who have fled the war in the Sudan. However, funding cuts are dismantling life-saving services. Let me underscore that there are no quick fixes to the crisis and there is a need for strategic alignment between peacebuilding, humanitarian and development efforts, particularly around food security, climate resilience, basic services and governance.

In that volatile environment, and as emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General, the protection of civilians, in particular women and children, must be a priority. While it is the primary responsibility of the Government of South Sudan to protect its civilians, the rapidly evolving situation underlines the fact that the UNMISS protection of civilians mandate is more important than ever.

UNMISS is increasing its protection of civilians measures, including reinforcing our posture at internally displaced person sites in Juba, which are locations of particular risk. The UNMISS force has responded proactively to the situation by increasing its patrols and enhancing security at its bases, with the quick reaction forces on standby to address unexpected situations. Those measures underscore the Mission's preparedness to face deteriorating conditions and its important role in protecting civilians. That is in the context of our overarching protection of civilians strategy, which is based on projecting our physical presence to areas of priority need, flexible basing arrangements and robust troop-deployments, enhanced patrolling and procuring capabilities and equipment that are fit-for-purpose in the climate-affected terrain in which we operate. All of those efforts are being carried out in close coordination and through enhanced engagement with the national authorities to ensure a shared approach to civilian protection and conflict mitigation.

Those efforts complement our longer-term protection and political strategy, which is to foster a protective environment that supports the South Sudanese in conducting their own political and societal transformation, through the completion of the nation's long-promised democratic transition. That requires nurturing the essential enabling conditions and democratic environment, such as the civic and political space, and strengthening the rule of law, which will endure beyond a single electoral event. It is precisely because those conditions are grounded in universal principles, rights and fundamental institutions that they will prevail long after we, as a Mission, leave South Sudan. It is in that context that I note the recent launch of the civic education campaign and public consultations on the Constitution. That marks the beginning of the constitution-making process.

I must note that UNMISS faces operational limitations in all those tasks, especially in the face of the broader conflict. Our peacekeepers continue to face access denials on the ground. If the current trend continues, we are looking at a shift in conflict dynamics from subnational and community-based violence to a more complex picture involving signatory parties and foreign actors. We are already prioritizing resources accordingly, but UNMISS is a peacekeeping Mission, not an army, and cannot be everywhere, all at once.

In that context, the four pillars of the UNMISS mandate remain as important as ever. That includes protection of civilians, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, supporting the implementation of the agreement and monitoring and reporting on human rights. We seek the support of the Council to ensure mandate continuity during the crisis.

South Sudan has asked for comprehensive electoral assistance from the United Nations. We are positioning ourselves as "One United Nations" to support all phases of the electoral cycle. However, that task is made difficult without a level of serious commitment, decision-making and action from the country's political leadership.

Meanwhile, discussions continue with our host Government on the status of the UNMISS Tamping base. Despite receiving an initial ultimatum to vacate the

site, our approach has been to conduct a constructive negotiation towards a phased relocation that maintains the Mission's critical functions at the site. We welcome the opportunity to continue our engagement with the Government on that basis, readily making available land and facilities as they become available and free for transfer.

Let me underscore once again that there is a serious and growing risk that conflict dynamics may steer South Sudan dangerously off track. The Revitalized Peace Agreement remains the only viable framework to break the cycle of violence in South Sudan. The overriding imperative now is to urgently avert a relapse into full-scale conflict, refocus efforts on accelerating the implementation of the agreement and advance the transition towards South Sudan's first democratic elections. Another war is a risk that South Sudan simply cannot afford and neither can the wider region.

I thank the Council for its continued support.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Haysom for his briefing, which included precise conclusions and several suggestions.

I now give the floor to Ms. Wosornu.

**Ms. Wosornu:** When I previously briefed the Security Council on South Sudan in August 2024 (see S/PV.9705), I warned of a perfect storm of stressors, with humanitarian, economic, political, security and environmental crises unfolding simultaneously. Regional volatility is also deepening, as members heard in the closed consultations on the Sudan yesterday. Eight months on, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General described, the situation has deteriorated dramatically, into what the Secretary-General recently described as a humanitarian nightmare. If the political crisis is not averted, the humanitarian nightmare will become a reality very quickly.

Allow me to focus on three critical issues today: the rapidly escalating violence and its impact on the humanitarian system, the compounding effects of pre-existing crises and the challenging operating environment and funding constraints.

This year, 9.3 million South Sudanese — three-quarters of the population — require some form of humanitarian assistance. Children make up half of that total. The violence that swept through Upper Nile state from mid-February has escalated tensions nationwide, with armed clashes and aerial bombardments causing dozens of casualties. Approximately 130,000 people have been newly displaced, including many thousands who are reported to have crossed into Ethiopia. The rising violence and displacement have increased the exposure — as always — of women and girls to gender-based violence, including sexual violence and exploitation.

Yesterday, during her visit to Malakal, Upper Nile, Ms. Kiki Gbeho, Humanitarian Coordinator, heard first-hand accounts of the impact the violence is having on people. Six health facilities have been forced to shut down owing to attacks and destruction. Earlier this week, services at Ulang Hospital in Upper Nile — a lifeline for 174,000 people — were suspended following extensive looting. In addition to the civilian casualties, the violence has claimed the lives of four humanitarian workers, bringing the total this year to five. Humanitarian access remains severely restricted in terms of reaching those in need, and critical medical supplies are rapidly running out amid an ongoing cholera outbreak — again, as members heard from Special Representative Haysom. In the capital, Juba, approximately 9,600 people are reported to have moved into displacement camps in search of safety and protection.

Last week, the World Food Programme warned that vulnerable families in the north-east of the country are at a critical tipping point, with hunger nearing record levels. With the pre-harvest lean season now beginning, almost 7.7 million people are acutely hungry — up from 7.1 million in the same period in 2024. Beyond the current violence, we are also seeing market disruption, high inflation and reduced

purchasing power continuing to limit household access to food. Our assessments project that 650,000 children under the age of five are at risk of severe acute malnutrition this year. A reduction in nutrition services, spreading violence and mounting displacement are likely to deepen food insecurity and malnutrition in the coming months, especially for women and children. Humanitarian access in South Sudan continues to face significant challenges owing to insecurity, bureaucratic impediments, physical constraints and complex political dynamics. The damage and looting of humanitarian facilities and the risks of violence complicate movement into hard-to-reach communities caught up in the conflict. More than 100 access-related incidents were reported since the beginning of the year — similar to the same period last year.

The conflict in the Sudan, now in its third year, continues to have a profound impact on South Sudan. Two years since the conflict broke out, in April 2023, more than 1.1 million refugees and returnees have crossed the border. The unprecedented influx has placed immense pressure on local services, food supplies and already fragile infrastructure, particularly in border areas such as Renk, Malakal and Aweil.

We are particularly concerned about the impact on refugee women and girls, who always face heightened risks of sexual violence and reproductive health complications. We are also concerned about growing ethnic divisions and tensions with overstretched host communities. Competition over limited resources is likely to fuel further instability, exacerbate local grievances and increase the threat of intercommunal violence, putting humanitarian workers at risk. The conflict in the Sudan is also contributing to an economic crisis in South Sudan, affecting trade, causing inflation to soar to 180 per cent and reducing State oil revenues. Despite ongoing response efforts, the cholera outbreak first identified in Renk county, near the border with the Sudan, has continued to spread. The outbreak — the worst in the nation's history — has infected 49,000 people and claimed more than 900 lives. Health partners have rolled out countryside vaccination campaigns that have reached 5.2 million people so far. However, the risks will grow as the rainy season begins. Last year, severe flooding affected around 1.4 million people across the country. More broadly, the climate crisis continues to drive displacement, disrupt food production and escalate competition over scarce resources, fuelling localized violence.

In the face of huge challenges, the humanitarian community continues to deliver. By the end of February, about 1.3 million people had been reached with some form of humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian aid alone cannot resolve political crises, but this year our ability to even mitigate the humanitarian effects is being severely undermined by unprecedented funding cuts. Our scarce resources are already overstretched. With the very worrisome outlook, the window of opportunity must be seized to avert a humanitarian nightmare with a relapse of widespread conflict. That demands urgent, concerted and decisive action on multiple fronts by national and international stakeholders.

Allow me to end with three asks.

First, there must be immediate and sustained action to prevent a further deterioration of the situation, including securing an immediate cessation of hostilities. That requires our collective efforts to keep the country from descending into chaos and conflict spilling over into neighbouring countries.

Secondly, all parties must recommit to dialogue to resolve their differences and fully adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law. Civilians must be protected from all forms of violence, including indiscriminate and ethnically motivated attacks. The safety of humanitarian workers and assets also needs to be safeguarded.



Thirdly, without immediate and flexible funding, we will be unable to sustain and deliver on the scale that the humanitarian response requires. We will not be able to deliver a response commensurate with the high levels of need. The 2025 humanitarian needs and response plan requires \$1.7 billion to support close to 5.4 million people. That is the reprioritized number that we need. We remain grateful to our donors for their generosity. The people of South Sudan are counting on Council members' support. Lives are at stake.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Director Wosornu for her briefing and the requests that she has made to the Council.

I now give the floor to Ms. Nasiwa.

**Ms. Nasiwa**: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in South Sudan, where escalating violence threatens a relapse into civil war.

I am Jackline Nasiwa, Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice, an organization advancing human rights, justice, women's empowerment and civic engagement in South Sudan. My briefing today will focus on the urgency of finding a political solution to the persistent conflict in South Sudan, on the shrinking political and civic space and on the important role of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

South Sudan is confronting a political crisis that is tearing the country apart. It is also putting the lives of civilians at risk, including through indiscriminate aerial bombardment. The crisis is jeopardizing everything that we hoped to gain during the transitional period, such as justice, judicial reform, a citizen-driven constitution-making process, security sector reform and preparations for democratic elections in 2026. The people of South Sudan can no longer wait to vote for leaders who are accountable to them.

The current conflict is exacerbating the already dire humanitarian situation, the widespread food insecurity and the displacement. It has also had a devastating impact on women and girls. According to UNMISS reports, 65 per cent of women and girls in South Sudan face some form of gender-based violence during their lifetime — one of the highest rates in the region. Through our work with survivors of sexual violence in Juba, Bentiu, Mundri and Bor and in protection of civilians camps, my organization has witnessed first-hand the stigma afflicting survivors, who desperately need life-saving services, such as sexual and reproductive healthcare and psychosocial care, and recognition and support for children born as a result of conflict-related sexual violence.

The people of South Sudan are tired and traumatized and cannot heal in an environment of unending violence and political uncertainty. The immediate needs on the ground are for civilian protection and unobstructed aid delivery. While I commend the recent efforts by UNMISS to increase safety measures around the protection of civilians site in Juba, those efforts should be expanded to areas such as Nasir, Malakal and Ruweng, among others, which are also in dire need. Civil society and survivors have also, time and again, called for accountability, nationwide disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the training and professionalization of the national army in relation to human rights and the protection of civilians as essential to breaking the cycle of violence and ending impunity in South Sudan. In addition, humanitarian workers, who face violence and bureaucratic impediments, must be allowed to safely reach those in need, especially women, children and the elderly.

The international community and UNMISS must prioritize an immediate ceasefire and long-term peace. Despite its slow implementation, the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan remains

the only viable option for the people of South Sudan to transition to democracy. Yet today it is on the brink of collapse. We, as civil society, urge the Council to pressure the parties to jointly declare an immediate cessation of hostilities and recommit themselves to the Revitalized Agreement. In addition, I strongly recommend that the Security Council call for a resumption of the Tumaini Peace Initiative, which would not only bring in holdout groups that did not sign the Revitalized Agreement but would also provide an opportunity to address the challenges of nation-building. Lastly, it is also critical that the international community urgently support grass-roots peacebuilding and devise early warning and atrocity prevention mechanisms to de-escalate violence.

The current crisis has further eroded the already shrinking civic and political space, with arbitrary arrests and detentions of politicians and journalists without due process of law. That has restricted civic engagement, weakened democratic processes and undercut regional peace efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union, the Troika and the European Union to de-escalate the current crisis, enhance mediation efforts for dialogue and support the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. Such an environment denies citizens their fundamental rights to the freedom of expression, assembly, association and access to information and puts the lives of human rights defenders at risk in South Sudan and in the region. For a young democracy like South Sudan, dissent must be tolerated to foster a culture of dialogue and transparency and inculcate core values of respect for human rights. I therefore urge the Security Council to call for the release of all political detainees and the opening up of civic and political space. All parties must ensure an environment that is conducive for safe, peaceful and democratic elections.

Any political and peace process must be inclusive of women, faith-based leaders and civil society. While the percentage of women in the presidency has increased to 40 per cent, with the recent appointment of a second female Vice-President, there has generally been a lack of adherence to the 35 per cent quota for women's participation. Regrettably, the National Elections Commission includes only two women out of the nine Commissioners, and there are zero women on the State High Elections Commissions. UNMISS should deploy experts and intensify support for the transitional governance institutions and civil society to fast-track women's participation beyond the 35 per cent quota at all levels of Government.

Lastly, as the Council deliberates on the renewal of the UNMISS mandate, I must underline how essential the United Nations is for South Sudan at this particular moment. UNMISS can play an important role in de-escalating the current crisis and preventing violence, protecting civilians, including against gender-based violence, and monitoring violations of international humanitarian and human rights law to ensure that South Sudan meets its international obligations. UNMISS should increase efforts to better support peaceful, free and fair elections, assist the parties in achieving key benchmarks for a process to draft a permanent constitution and create the conditions for the protection of civic and political space. Furthermore, given the risks to women and girls that I have described in my statement today, it is essential to prioritize gender across the implementation of the UNMISS mandate. I urge all Council members to work together to preserve and renew this mandate in full at this perilous moment for my people.

The people of South Sudan cannot afford another senseless and destructive war, nor any form of politically motivated communal violence. We, as women's human rights groups and civil society, remain committed in our pursuit of a lasting peace. Today we need your support more than ever.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Nasiwa for her briefing.



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

**Ms. Shea** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Nicholas Haysom, Director Edem Wosornu and Ms. Jackline Nasiwa for their informative briefings today. We do appreciate their insights.

The United States is alarmed by the deteriorating security situation in South Sudan. The spread and intensification of conflict between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and opposition forces are deeply concerning. With the arrests of First Vice-President Machar and senior Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition officials, the entire peace process appears to be collapsing.

The impact of this conflict on the people of South Sudan is especially worrisome. We are deeply troubled by reports of ground attacks, aerial bombardments and indiscriminate use of barrel bombs that have killed many civilians and displaced tens of thousands. All sides must abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including those relating to the protection of civilians. Escalating political divisions in South Sudan threatened to bring the country back to broader conflict.

We echo recent statements from the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development calling for maximum restraint and the prioritization of dialogue and highlighting the need to resolve differences through peaceful means. We urge all members here today to condemn the ongoing violence and to put strong pressure on South Sudan's leaders to cease violence, de-escalate political tensions, engage in dialogue and recommit to fully implementing the peace agreement.

We commend the tireless efforts of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to support peace and stability in South Sudan, and we express our gratitude to UNMISS personnel as they work to implement their mandate in these difficult circumstances.

The Council and UNMISS can only do so much without political will from the transitional Government of South Sudan. The transitional Government appears convinced that it can perpetually extend its existence while failing to implement key aspects of the peace agreement and failing to use public revenue to address public needs. These failures continue to fuel conflict and insecurity. While political and business elites profit from South Sudan's resources, 92 per cent of the population live in extreme poverty, and millions are experiencing acute food insecurity. In addition, the transitional Government has not paid civil servants and security forces for nearly 15 months. The Secretary-General reports nearly 400 incidents of movement restrictions imposed on UNMISS by the transitional Government in the past three months. The transitional Government has continued with its unacceptable request that UNMISS vacate their Topping headquarters, which is critical for Mission operations.

The intensification of violence in South Sudan is deeply concerning, threatening to return the country to widespread conflict and a worsening humanitarian crisis. The peace process only remains viable with the full commitment of all parties, and we are deeply troubled by actions that jeopardize the peace process. Now, more than ever, we must call on the transitional Government to ensure that UNMISS has the ability to carry out its mandate without hindrance for the benefit of the people of South Sudan.

We look forward to working with fellow Council members to ensure UNMISS is supported by the transitional Government, and we implore our fellow Council members to continue pressing South Sudan's leaders for a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict.

**Mr. Kanu** (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus (A3+), namely Algeria, Guyana, Somalia and my country, Sierra Leone.

We thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their important and timely briefings. We also take note of the valuable contribution of Ms. Jackline Nasiwa, Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice. We welcome the participation of the representative of South Sudan in today's meeting.

The A3+ expresses deep concern over the recent developments that have led to the deterioration of the political and security situation in South Sudan. The reported fractures within the national unity Government, including the detention of senior officials such as the First Vice-President and Cabinet ministers, risk undermining the conducive environment necessary for sustaining peace. We urge the South Sudanese authorities and relevant stakeholders to place the interests of the people above all else and to prioritize the consolidation of the hard-won gains, anchored in national cohesion and trust, as envisaged in the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

Recognizing the importance of collective responsibility, we encourage the leadership of South Sudan to engage in inclusive and direct political dialogue to resolve their differences. It is imperative that all actions be undertaken in line with the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement to preserve the political and security stability that had been achieved. We call on all parties to refrain from acts that could undermine the agreement and to take urgent steps to ensure the protection of civilians. We commend the critical role of UNMISS in supporting these efforts.

The A3+ underscores the importance of regional initiatives in de-escalating tensions and promoting durable peace in South Sudan. In this regard, we reaffirm our support for the continued engagement of the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in facilitating dialogue among the parties to the Revitalized Agreement and other key stakeholders. We welcome the efforts of the AU, including the recent visit of the AU Panel of the Wise to South Sudan, aimed at fostering national dialogue. We urge the authorities to ensure meaningful engagement with regional actors and to leverage these efforts for a peaceful resolution. We also call on neighbouring countries and other actors with influence to act constructively in support of the peace process and refrain from any actions that may further exacerbate tensions.

The A3+ strongly condemns the attack on the United Nations helicopters during an evacuation mission on 7 March, which tragically resulted in the death of one United Nations crew member and serious injuries to two others, along with the killing of 28 South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers, including a general. We urge the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity to conduct a swift, credible and transparent investigation into the incident and ensure accountability. Attacks against United Nations personnel may constitute war crimes and must not go unpunished.

We remind all parties of their obligations under international law to protect civilians. Reports of aerial bombardments in densely populated areas constitute grave violations of international humanitarian law and breach the permanent ceasefire provisions of the Revitalized Agreement. Such actions are detrimental to the peace process and must cease immediately.

The A3+ remains gravely concerned about continuing reports of conflict-related sexual violence, including against children, intercommunal violence and the

recruitment of child soldiers by various armed groups. We call on the Government of South Sudan to strengthen the national legal framework. And allocate adequate resources to enhance the capacity of the judiciary and law enforcement to prosecute such crimes. We call for international support for these efforts.

South Sudan stands at a critical juncture in its journey as an independent nation. The leadership must ensure that the revised electoral road map towards elections in December 2026 remains on course. That milestone can be reached only if bold political choices are made and the necessary political will and resources are committed to supporting the institutions responsible for delivering credible elections.

In that regard, the A3+ welcomes the AU Commission's efforts to prioritize electoral support through the AU Peace Fund. We further appeal to the international community and Member States to mobilize the resources required to facilitate credible, transparent and inclusive elections in 2026. That includes enabling civic space, supporting constitutional and census processes and strengthening cooperation with UNMISS to ensure effective implementation.

We urge the leadership of South Sudan to take urgent steps to build trust and confidence among all stakeholders and to expedite the deployment of the necessary unified forces. That is essential for sustaining momentum in the political process, particularly in advancing the electoral road map.

The people of South Sudan have endured immense suffering. We must ensure that their calls for peace, unity and democratic participation are met with action and resolve.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Director Wosornu and Ms. Nasiwa for their sobering remarks today. I welcome the participation of the representative of South Sudan in our meeting.

I will make three points.

First, the United Kingdom is deeply concerned about recent political tensions and increased fighting across South Sudan between parties to the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and other opposition forces, including the ongoing conflict in Upper Nile state. We were appalled by the attack on a United Nations helicopter in Nasir, which resulted in the death of a contractor of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The current escalation risks South Sudan's hard-won peace. A return to widespread conflict would devastate the country and have damaging consequences for the broader region, especially in the context of the ongoing crisis in the Sudan. The escalation of violence in the Upper Nile state has already caused dozens of civilian casualties and displaced at least 120,000 people. We therefore urge the parties to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access to civilian populations in Nasir and Ulang, who are in need of emergency assistance and protection.

Secondly, we are concerned by the arrest and ongoing detention of First Vice-President Riek Machar. That action undermines the core principles of the 2018 peace agreement. Alongside the African Union (AU) and other international partners, we call for that action to be reversed to enable both parties to return to dialogue. We welcome efforts by regional partners, including the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to work with the South Sudanese leadership to de-escalate tensions. We call on South Sudan's collective leadership to cease hostilities, release political detainees, including First Vice-President Machar, and engage seriously with regional mediation efforts.

Thirdly, the recent instability is a reminder of the importance of UNMISS as a peace partner for South Sudan. The United Kingdom commends the work of UNMISS to de-escalate tensions and protect civilians. In this challenging context, their work to

monitor human rights violations and support the provision of humanitarian assistance is critical. We call on the South Sudanese leadership to ensure that the Mission has freedom of movement, without political interference, so that it can effectively carry out its mandate from the Council.

**Mr. Jadoon** (Pakistan): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Mr. Nicholas Haysom, as well as Ms. Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and Ms. Nasiwa for their briefings and valuable insights.

The Secretary-General's recent report (S/2025/211) on the situation in South Sudan and the briefings we just heard highlight the risk of a reversal of the gains made over the past seven years under the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. During the meeting on South Sudan held on 5 February (see S/PV.9855), the discussions were focused on how to consolidate the gains and move forward towards elections. Unfortunately, in less than two months, the discourse has shifted. The situation has worsened. We share the concerns about possible further deterioration in the political and security situation in South Sudan, and hence the need to de-escalate and address the underlying cause of that downward slide.

I wish to make following points for addressing the current crisis.

First, the house arrest of First Vice-President Riek Machar and other senior officials of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Army in Opposition has undermined the peace process. We support the demand of the African Union (AU) and others for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Machar and detained opposition figures to restore trust in the political process. The Revitalized Peace Agreement should be fully implemented without delay.

Secondly, we urge the parties to engage in direct dialogue for the benefit of the people of South Sudan. We support inclusive dialogue between the Government and the opposition. We commend the efforts made by Special Representative Haysom in helping to de-escalate the situation and call on the parties to engage in good faith with him and with the regional mediation efforts, particularly by the African Union, the AU High-Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Thirdly, the humanitarian crisis is being compounded by the rise in political tensions. Three quarters of the population — 9.3 million people — need assistance, and 7.7 million are suffering acute food insecurity. The 2025 humanitarian needs and response plan is only 10.5 per cent resourced. The funding gap must be urgently met to prevent famine and disease outbreaks. The bravery and commitment of humanitarian workers operating under challenging circumstances in South Sudan deserve our full appreciation and support.

Lastly, UNMISS remains a force of stability. We greatly appreciate the sacrifices and efforts of UNMISS peacekeepers aimed at consolidating peace and development in South Sudan under challenging circumstances. On 7 March, in a rescue attempt by Government forces in the Upper Nile region, an UNMISS helicopter was shot at, with one crew member losing his life. Attacks on peacekeepers amount to war crimes, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

UNMISS has been instrumental in reducing community violence through its patrolling. In a single month — March 2025 — UNMISS conducted 8,551 patrols — by land, air and river — to protect civilians, deter conflict and ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid, as well as logistical supplies to UNMISS bases. UNMISS engineering contingents are rehabilitating thousands of kilometres of

roads and other critical infrastructure to support safe communication, travel, trade, and peacebuilding.

Peacekeeping engineers from Pakistan have built and are maintaining 80 kilometres of dykes in Bentiu, protecting 300,000 people stranded on a tiny sliver of land surrounded by 5,400 square kilometres of flood waters. Keeping in view the crucial tasks being performed by UNMISS, we encourage the South Sudanese Government to cooperate fully with the Mission in the performance of its mandate and meeting its operational needs. In that regard, the issue of the Tamping base must also be resolved amicably.

UNMISS is currently operating with 3,000 troops fewer than its authorized strength. The military assessment has been clear that the Mission needs those troops to perform its mandate effectively. Keeping in view the deteriorating situation on the ground, UNMISS must be adequately strengthened and reinforced to face the new realities on ground.

**Mr. Alfaro de Alba** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his leadership at the helm of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as its personnel, who, with dedication and commitment, continue to carry out the mandate of this important Mission in extremely complex conditions. We also thank Ms. Edem Wosornu and Ms. Jackline Nasiwa for their important and detailed contributions, and we acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representative of South Sudan in the meeting.

Panama is following with concern the recent developments in South Sudan, particularly the deterioration of the security situation and the heightened political tensions, on which the briefers updated us with their contributions. We recognize the importance of diplomatic initiatives promoted by regional actors to contain the conflict, especially in view of the risks of the regionalization of the conflict. In that regard, Panama appreciates the efforts reflected in the communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council meeting held on 18 March on the situation in South Sudan. We urgently call for those initiatives to be translated into concrete results that consolidate political leadership and the peace process. However, we are alarmed by the recent escalation of conflict between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and opposition groups in several parts of the country, particularly following the arbitrary arrest of First Vice-President Riek Machar and senior officials. That situation poses a significant threat to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the democratic transition process. We urge all parties to respect the cessation of hostilities agreement and to comply with it fully and without delay.

Of equal concern is the growing impact of the conflict on the civilian population. We strongly condemn violence against civilians, in particular the incidence of conflict-related sexual violence against women and children, which constitutes a grave violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. Panama urgently calls on the authorities to investigate those crimes, ensure accountability and take immediate measures to protect their population. In that context, we express our deepest concern about the more than 100 grave violations against minors verified by the United Nations in 2024, especially the recruitment of more than 50 children. Moreover, the emergence of unidentified armed groups responsible for those violations presents an alarming challenge.

The humanitarian and economic context remains dire, with more than 6 million people acutely food insecure. That difficult situation is compounded by the effects of the conflict in the Sudan, climatic shocks and a severe cholera outbreak affecting approximately 49,000 people. We also take note of the finalization of



the electoral calendar by the National Elections Commission, ahead of the holding of elections in December 2026. However, we note with concern the delays in the civic education campaign and the public consultation process, key elements of the constitution-drafting process. We urge the parties to redouble their efforts to move forward with the implementation of the outstanding provisions of the Revitalized Agreement, as outlined by the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and UNMISS at the beginning of this year. We reiterate our commitment to sustainable peace in South Sudan and to multilateral efforts aimed at achieving an inclusive political solution, with full respect for human rights and international law.

**Mr. Sekeris** (Greece) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on South Sudan. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haysom, for his valuable briefing; to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Director, Ms. Edem Wosornu; and to the civil society representative, Ms. Nasiwa.

We salute the dedication of the staff of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), who continue to carry out their mandate despite major political, security and humanitarian challenges. As the Security Council prepares to renew the mandate of UNMISS later this month, we must ensure that the Mission has the necessary resources to respond to the evolving situation on the ground. At this point, I would like to make three observations.

First, on the political front, South Sudan is once again at a crossroads. Despite the commitments set out in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, recent outbreaks of violence, particularly in the Nasir region, and the use of aerial bombardments against civilians have seriously undermined confidence in the peace process. Greece firmly condemns the tragic loss of United Nations personnel during a recent evacuation and the repeated restrictions on the freedom of movement of peacekeepers, which illustrate the growing threats to humanitarian and United Nations personnel. All the parties responsible must be held accountable for their violations of international humanitarian law.

With regard to the planned closure of the Topping base — a key logistical and operational centre for UNMISS in Juba — a realistic, practical and economically viable solution must be found.

We are also concerned about the signs of growing political polarization. The detention of key Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition figures, the suspension of opposition participation in the transitional mechanisms and the deployment of foreign military forces undermine not only the Revitalized Agreement, but also the territorial integrity and sovereignty of South Sudan and regional stability.

Secondly, in this fragile context, the women and peace and security agenda must remain a central priority and be reflected in the renewal of the UNMISS mandate. South Sudanese women and girls continue to suffer disproportionately from conflict-related sexual violence. We strongly condemn that violence, which must be punished and followed by appropriate support for the victims. Greece is also deeply concerned about the continued recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. The verification of more than 100 grave violations against children in 2024 underscores the urgency of implementing the 2020 comprehensive action plan to end and prevent all grave violations.

Thirdly, the humanitarian situation remains critical. More than 9 million people are in need of humanitarian aid, including refugees fleeing the conflict in the neighbouring Sudan. Violence against humanitarian workers, displaced civilians and vital infrastructure is unacceptable and must stop immediately.



In conclusion, Greece reaffirms its unwavering support for peace, accountability and inclusive governance in South Sudan. We reiterate our firm commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of South Sudan. We stand in solidarity with its people and reaffirm our continued support for their aspirations to peace, security and sustainable development.

**Ms. Lassen** (Denmark): Let me thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Director Wosornu and Ms. Nasiwa for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of South Sudan to the Chamber.

What we have heard today on recent developments in South Sudan has been nothing short of alarming. Reports of brutal violence against civilians and a looming risk of a return to civil war are extremely concerning. Denmark urges all the actors to immediately cease their armed operations and put the people of South Sudan first.

I will focus on four key points.

First, the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan remains the most viable path forward, and all parties must recommit to it. The agreement was crafted to provide guidance towards lasting peace. It established mechanisms for resolving political differences and holding the perpetrators of past crimes accountable. Now is the time to recommit to those mechanisms, not to turn away from them. As we heard today, the collapse of that agreement could have catastrophic consequences. The leaders on both sides have a responsibility to do everything in their power to avoid that. The arrest of First Vice-President Machar does not foster an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and peace. We urge President Kiir Mayardit to reverse that decision. Likewise, the continued violation of the arms embargo must be stopped, as must other means of external military engagement, which is fuelling the conflict.

Secondly, mediation efforts by regional organizations and regional leaders at the highest level are essential. Those are not distant observers, but trusted and credible partners. As do others, Denmark fully supports the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in their outreach and mediation efforts, and we strongly urge the parties to engage. The African Union delegation, led by the Panel of the Wise, is a commendable initiative. We call on the South Sudanese leaders to allow that delegation to conduct those mediation efforts free from interference. The Panel must have the opportunity to consult with all parties.

Thirdly, alongside regional leadership, we recognize the indispensable role played by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). We are alarmed by recent attacks on UNMISS personnel and assets and call for full accountability for those responsible. We note the increase in violations of the status-of-forces agreement and call on the Government of South Sudan to fully comply with its provisions. In those challenging circumstances, from renewed clashes to the adverse impacts of climate change, the Council has a responsibility to ensure that UNMISS can fulfil its mandate effectively, including through a robust presence and adequate resources. The Mission must be able to protect civilians, including women, youth and children, who are especially vulnerable in the fragile context. It must also be able to support the safe and meaningful participation of women in the peace process. Furthermore, it must be enabled to support efforts to combat impunity and to promote accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights, including sexual and gender-based violence.

Fourthly, that violence is taking place against the backdrop of an already dire humanitarian situation, with millions displaced as a result. As the Director of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs highlighted, it has also exacerbated a widespread cholera outbreak and caused acute food insecurity, pushing communities to the brink. In addition, South Sudan remains extremely dangerous

for aid workers. We call on all actors to uphold international and humanitarian and human rights law. That is particularly urgent amid diminishing donor funding.

In conclusion, we cannot allow the world's youngest nation and its people to endure the horrors of war once again. Denmark stands ready to continue its support to UNMISS and the people of South Sudan.

**Mrs. Blokar Drobič** (Slovenia): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Director Wosornu and Ms. Nasiwa for their sobering briefings. I also welcome the representative of South Sudan to the meeting.

The escalating violence and tensions that are threatening and undermining the fragile gains of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, leading to possible State-wide conflict, are deepening our concern for the world's youngest State and its people.

Let me address three points.

First, there is an urgent need for de-escalation and stabilization in South Sudan. We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, engage in dialogue and work collectively to preserve and build on the gains achieved through the peace agreement. We are horrified by the impact of the armed clashes on the civilian population, particularly aerial bombardments. We strongly condemn those actions and remind all parties, including all external actors, of their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. Civilians must never be targeted. On the contrary, civilians must be protected. We commend the engagement by the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and countries in the region and encourage their continued efforts. We urge all parties in South Sudan to recommit to the cessation of hostilities agreement and the Revitalized Agreement and to resolve political differences through established mechanisms. We call on all parties to uphold their commitments, release political detainees, including First Vice-President Riek Machar, and return to direct and inclusive dialogue.

Secondly, we strongly condemn the attack on the UNMISS helicopter on 7 March that claimed several lives, including that of a United Nations crew member. We extend our condolences to the victims' families and reiterate that attacks on peacekeepers may constitute a war crime. Those responsible must be held accountable. As we approach the renewal of the Mission's mandate, Slovenia reaffirms its support for UNMISS and its vital role in protecting civilians; advancing peace; promoting and assisting in the full, safe, meaningful and effective participation of women, youth and civil society in the peace process and transitional governance structures; fostering community cohesion; and enhancing local capacity for resilience. In that context, we commend Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom's de-escalation efforts. However, we remain alarmed by the ongoing violations of the status-of-forces agreement and urge the Government to fully respect and implement its provisions. The robust mandate of UNMISS remains critical.

Thirdly, we are deeply concerned about the impact on civilians of what the Secretary-General described as "dark clouds of a perfect storm". There is no shortage of challenges in South Sudan — from climate shocks and prolonged spillover from the conflict in the Sudan, to intercommunal violence, additional large-scale displacements and ongoing human rights violations and abuses, including alarming levels of sexual and gender-based violence. The country is now experiencing unprecedented food insecurity — the worst since its independence. As the conflict escalates and hunger worsens, women and children once again bear the brunt of the crisis while humanitarian efforts remain hampered. The ongoing crisis is exacerbating an already fragile humanitarian environment. We call on all parties to ensure the safety and security of civilians and humanitarian workers and to enable safe, unhindered humanitarian access.

In conclusion, South Sudan, still healing from a devastating civil war that claimed more than 400,000 lives, stands at another critical juncture. We reiterate our call on all parties to engage in good faith, and through dialogue, to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Nicholas Haysom; the Director of Operations and Advocacy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Edem Wosornu; and the representative of South Sudanese civil society, Ms. Jackline Nasiwa, for the information that they have shared with us. We welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Permanent Representative of South Sudan.

We are concerned by the escalating situation in the Republic of South Sudan, including episodes of resumed hostilities between supporters of the opposition and the Government forces, resulting in military and civilian casualties. We trust that the parties to the South Sudanese political process will promptly reach an agreement and halt the armed confrontation, that they will demonstrate the political will to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the Revitalized Peace Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and that they will make the necessary efforts to ensure strict compliance with the new timeline for the transitional period, including the important step of constituting unified armed forces, in order to guarantee progress in the peace process.

Our understanding is as follows. The situation in South Sudan is under the control of the current Government. President Salva Kiir Mayardit has given assurances that he will not allow the country to slide into the abyss of renewed civil war. Meanwhile, steps are being taken by Juba to bolster security in the capital.

We believe that the shared objective of the Security Council must be to support the authorities' efforts aimed at stabilization, rather than to create unnecessary pressure. It is important that further steps be taken to find common ground among the antagonists, with the assistance and mediation of parties trusted by the South Sudanese themselves, and the reciprocal, accusatory rhetoric of the leading political forces in South Sudan be avoided.

We are gravely concerned by reports of the possible use of South Sudanese territory as a staging area to support one of the parties to the conflict in the neighbouring Sudan. We trust that the sovereignty of the Republic of South Sudan will not be called into question and that the relationship between the two fraternal countries will be founded on a spirit of both partnership and good neighbourliness. That is especially necessary in the light of the economic interdependence between the Sudan and South Sudan.

We have taken note of the decision of the Government of South Sudan to postpone general elections in the country to December 2026. We believe that the matter of conducting elections is one of South Sudanese domestic policy.

We support international efforts to normalize the situation and to reinforce peace and security in the Republic of South Sudan. We pay tribute to the mediation efforts of the African Union and the member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). We trust that the ministerial level subcommittee on South Sudan put together following the Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government will be able to effectively facilitate the stabilization of the situation on the ground.

At this complicated juncture, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) continues to meaningfully contribute to the implementation of the specific provisions of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict

in the Republic of South Sudan. We recall the inadmissibility of any acts of force against United Nations peacekeepers. We emphatically condemn all acts of violence against Blue Helmets, representatives of humanitarian organizations and civilians. We hope that the Mission's leadership and the host country will, through dialogue, reach mutually acceptable solutions on the question of the UNMISS Tamping base.

**Mr. Sun Lei** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representative Haysom and Director Wosornu for their briefings. I also listened attentively to the statement by Ms. Nasiwa. We welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of South Sudan at today's meeting.

Recently, the situation in South Sudan has remained tense, with intensified clashes in areas such as Upper Nile state resulting in casualties and a deteriorated humanitarian situation. In the light of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2025/211), I wish to emphasize the following points.

First, it is crucial to safeguard national peace and stability. We commend President Mayardit's statement affirming that the country will not go back to war. We call on all parties in South Sudan to put the overall interests of the country and the people first, to exercise maximum calm and restraint and to make every effort to prevent the situation from spiralling out of control and the conflict from spreading. At the same time, we call for the swift resumption of dialogue and consultations to tackle disputes and differences by peaceful means. We support the Government in fulfilling its primary responsibility to protect civilians and in continuing to advance intercommunal dialogue and reconciliation to achieve peaceful coexistence. We support the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of South Sudan.

Secondly, regional-level good offices must be strengthened. We welcome the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) convening meetings and issuing communiqués on the situation in South Sudan. We support the leading role of the United Nations-AU-IGAD trilateral mechanism in actively facilitating peace and dialogue and in prioritizing African solutions to African issues. Regional partners are doing their utmost regarding mediation. We call on those countries with influence over the parties to play a constructive part in jointly bringing about de-escalation. It is imperative that the international community support those regional-level good offices, allow them the time and space required and refrain from undue pressure that may exacerbate tensions.

Thirdly, external assistance must be increased. China commends the Government for its coordination with United Nations agencies in providing assistance to the more than 1 million refugees and returnees flowing in from the Sudan and for taking proactive measures to ensure the safety of Sudanese nationals within its border. As the rainy season approaches, the risks of widespread flooding, disease outbreaks and food shortages may further worsen the humanitarian situation on the ground. The international community should increase, rather than decrease, its assistance in order to jointly support the response to those humanitarian challenges.

Fourthly, it is essential to support the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in its mandate fulfilment. We strongly condemn the attacks against UNMISS personnel and reiterate that no attacks targeting peacekeepers are acceptable. We urge all parties to ensure the safety and security of UNMISS camps and personnel. The Security Council will discuss the renewal of UNMISS mandate this month. As a major troop-contributing country to the Mission, China will constructively participate in consultations and will support the Mission in better fulfilling its mandated responsibilities.

Since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in 2018, South Sudan has been striving to overcome internal and external challenges, steadily advancing the peace process. While

the process has been fraught with challenges, all parties have been committed to implementing the agreement as a shared objective, achieving a great deal of tangible progress on the ground. Those were not easy achievements, and they deserve to be cherished all the more by all of us. The current state of the Revitalized Agreement is regrettable. China calls on all parties in South Sudan to strengthen unity and mutual trust, cease hostilities, accelerate the implementation of all provisions of the agreement and stay on the right track towards the political transition. We stand ready to continue providing support for peace and stability in South Sudan alongside the international community. The overall security landscape in the Horn of Africa is concerning, with multiple intertwined hotspot issues generating negative spillover effects that threaten regional peace and stability. We support the Council in closely monitoring the developments on the ground, playing a constructive part and earnestly fulfilling its vital responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

**Mr. Cho** (Republic of Korea): I thank Special Representative Haysom, Director Wosornu and Executive Director Nasiwa for their comprehensive and sobering briefings. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of South Sudan in this meeting.

Since South Sudan's independence in 2011, despite multiple setbacks, including the civil wars of 2013 and 2016 and the fourth extension of the transitional period in September 2024, regional and international actors have continued to serve as guarantors of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. However, the recent surge in violence threatens to reverse the hard-won progress made since the 2018 agreement and could push the country back into full-scale civil war. In that context, I would like to highlight four points.

First, we urge all parties to immediately cease hostilities and engage in constructive, direct dialogue. Ongoing violence, including aerial bombardments affecting civilian areas and the detention of Vice-President Machar, are deeply concerning. Such acts of violence jeopardize the Revitalized Agreement and may constitute the violation of resolution 2729 (2024), which urges the parties to implement a permanent ceasefire. In that regard, it is imperative that the Security Council issue a resolute and united message to address the deteriorating situation that undermines the spirit of the Revitalized Agreement.

Secondly, we call on the host Government to respect the freedom of movement of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) based on the status-of-forces agreements, given the deteriorating security situation. We condemn in the strongest terms the attack against UNMISS personnel and assets and call once again on all parties to guarantee the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers at all times. In addition, the host nation must engage in full and timely consultation with UNMISS on all operational matters, including the Topping base. As a troop-contributing country, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its full support for UNMISS.

Thirdly, regional actors must recommit to their role as peace guarantors, as they did in previous mediation efforts that helped to end civil war. To prevent further instability arising from the spillover of the Sudan conflict, we urge both Sudanese warring parties to refrain from actions that may escalate the tension in South Sudan. In addition, we are particularly alarmed by the foreign presence and intervention in South Sudan. Such growing partisan roles heighten the risk of regional escalation. In that regard, we welcome the engagement of the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other regional partners through high-level meetings and mediation. We urge South Sudan to respond constructively to those initiatives.

Fourthly, escalating violence worsens the already dire humanitarian crisis and underscores the urgency of civilian protection, particularly for women and girls. The rise in violence also exacerbates the threat of conflict-related sexual violence.



and the recruitment or abduction of children for combat. We draw attention to the joint statement on women and peace and security this morning and urge all parties to implement its recommendations. We call for stronger international support for humanitarian efforts. For its part, the Republic of Korea is partnering with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Food Programme to promote peacebuilding, to assist the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and to enhance food security in climate vulnerable communities under our support programme for conflict-affected and fragile countries.

Secretary-General Guterres recently depicted the situation in South Sudan as darkly reminiscent of the past civil wars. South Sudan's leaders must reject violence and recommit to the spirit of the Revitalized Agreement. In conclusion, I will recall one line from the preamble to the Revitalized Agreement: "Determined [...] not to repeat mistakes of the past".

**Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana): I deliver this statement on behalf of the delegations of Slovenia and Guyana in our capacity as the informal co-focal points on conflict and hunger in the Security Council.

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, Director Wosornu and Ms. Nasiwa for their briefings and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of South Sudan at this meeting.

South Sudan is experiencing a convergence of crises — the recent escalation of political tensions and violence, the fragility of the peace agreement, decreased humanitarian funding, relentless climate shocks, an economic recession, a persistent health catastrophe and growing food insecurity. Guyana and Slovenia are deeply concerned about the impact of those challenges on civilians, particularly on the most food insecure. According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report on South Sudan, issued in November 2024, an estimated 7.7 million South Sudanese people — 57 per cent of the population — will be severely food insecure between April and July 2025. Refugees and returnees fleeing the war in the Sudan are at particular risk, since approximately 31,000 returnees are at risk of famine. We are deeply disturbed by the recent surge in violence, particularly in regions such as Upper Nile state, Western Equatoria and Great Bahr el-Ghazal.

Those developments in South Sudan come on the heels of several pre-existing challenges, including the cholera outbreak plaguing the country since October 2024, and climate-induced shocks, which frequently result in region-wide floods such as the one that devastated agricultural land in Jonglei state. Limited food supplies are also a source of tension, reinforcing the relationship between food insecurity and conflict. Active conflict is further hampering humanitarian operations, with food distribution being currently put on hold in six states owing to insecurity, thereby deepening operational challenges in an environment already seen as one of the most dangerous for humanitarian workers. Against that backdrop, Guyana and Slovenia underscore the following points.

First, international humanitarian law mandates the protection of objects indispensable to civilian survival, including foodstuffs, agricultural areas, crops and livestock. International humanitarian law further limits actions that could impede access to food, such as attacks on food supplies and agricultural areas. Those measures were further reinforced by the Council itself in resolution 2417 (2018). We call on all parties to adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to ensure the protection of civilians and to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access.

Secondly, the complexity of the challenges in South Sudan requires a comprehensive conflict-, climate- and gender-sensitive response that encompasses resilience-building, targeted aid, capacity-building, addressing obstruction



challenges and safe passage for humanitarian workers. Special emphasis is placed on the need for measures to respect and protect humanitarian and United Nations personnel working in South Sudan.

Thirdly, special attention must be given to those who are too often disproportionately affected by conflict, including women, children and displaced persons. Protection risks related to negative coping mechanisms and conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence must be taken into account. Measures must be put in place to protect the most vulnerable, particularly in advance of the lean season, in which the situation is likely to deteriorate without targeted intervention. The unified voice of the Council remains critical in that regard.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Guyana and Slovenia's unwavering commitment to dialogue de-escalation and lasting peace in South Sudan — one in which the full democratic aspirations of its people are realized, including through a peaceful, transparent and inclusive electoral process. That foundation is a critical step in overcoming the country's humanitarian and development challenges, including food insecurity.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

First of all, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Nicholas Haysom; the Director of Operations and Advocacy, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Edem Wosornu; and Ms. Jackline Nasiwa, Executive Director of the Center for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice, for their statements. I welcome the Permanent Representative of South Sudan.

South Sudan stands at a critical juncture, which requires us to be vigilant and assume our responsibilities. The concerns that the briefers voiced demand our attention. Intercommunal violence has escalated, particularly in the Upper Nile region, claiming numerous lives. We are seeing aerial bombardments strike civilian areas. Those clashes have devastating consequences for civilians, in particular women, children and displaced communities. Women are contending with an upsurge in conflict-related sexual violence.

A deterioration in the situation must be averted, and France joins the appeals for de-escalation and dialogue. It is crucial for the parties to return to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 2018 and to abide by it in both letter and spirit. Peace in South Sudan, hard-won after years of brutal civil war, is fragile. Unilateral measures that contravene the Revitalized Agreement, specifically the placing of the First Vice-President under house arrest, are a cause for concern. We support the African Union's call for his release.

France draws particular attention to the need for progress in the revitalization of the agreement, namely, the deployment of the requisite unified forces, the drafting of a constitution in an inclusive process that affords women and all sectors of South Sudanese society their rightful place and preparations for free and transparent elections. The authorities must revert to the spirit of dialogue and compromise in the interests of the Sudanese people, in particular by reactivating the mechanisms for which the agreement provides. Furthermore, France calls on all States to refrain from any action that would inflame tensions and would cause the conflict in the Sudan to spill over into South Sudan — a serious threat to regional stability.

It is incumbent on all to comply with the arms embargo and to take collective action aimed at fostering inclusive dialogue among the South Sudanese people. Accordingly, the Council must shoulder its responsibilities. We support the idea of a Council resolution on the situation in South Sudan, irrespective of whether the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is renewed. Let

us speak with one voice. Let us remind the parties of their obligations under the peace agreement and under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. And let us support regional efforts from the outset.

In this difficult climate, France also expresses its unwavering support for UNMISS and Special Representative Haysom. We strongly condemn attacks on the Mission's personnel and point out that attacks on peacekeepers constitute war crimes. UNMISS and the South Sudanese authorities must be able to continue working in close cooperation in fulfilment of the mandate and in accordance with the status-of-forces agreement.

Lastly, the international community must continue to galvanize efforts in support of the South Sudanese people, whom, as we heard, continue to be afflicted by violence, malnutrition, epidemics and floods. Needs are considerable and, despite the many and varied crises, the South Sudanese people must remain at the forefront of our concerns.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

**Mrs. Adeng** (South Sudan): I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your presidency of the Security Council for the month of April, and I assure you of our delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would like also to acknowledge and appreciate the presence of Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Ms. Edem Wosornu and Ms. Jackline Nasiwa, and I equally appreciate their comprehensive reports.

At the outset, we would like to wish and express our deepest condolences and unequivocal condemnation of the heinous attack on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) helicopter in Nasir on 7 March, which claimed the lives of humanitarians and UNMISS personnel. We extend our deepest condolences to the families and pledge a full and impartial investigations to hold those responsible accountable. It is also worth noting that the Government has already launched that investigation and is committed to bringing those responsible to justice and ensuring the safety and security of all United Nations personnel operating in the country.

It is also worth noting that, during the crisis of 7 March, not only did soldiers of the South Sudan Defence Forces lose their lives; some of their family members were killed along with them. That is an act whose perpetrators must be brought to book. The Government will do everything it must to ensure that that happens.

As a sovereign nation striving for peace and stability, we remain committed to transparency and accountability, in cooperation with all stakeholders that support our nation's progress. The Government of South Sudan remains steadfast in its commitment to the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. Despite the challenges, we are moving forward. However, we recognize that the current political situation in the country has raised concern among our international and regional partners. We are grateful to the African Union for its support, particularly the recent visit of Mr. Raila Odinga on behalf of President William Ruto of Kenya, the Panel of the Wise on behalf of the African Union, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, the Eritrean Presidential Envoy and the European delegation, whose engagement reaffirms the continent's and the international community's commitment to the peace process in South Sudan.

We also wish to inform the Council that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is scheduled to visit South Sudan at a time that is convenient to IGAD. The Government is working tirelessly with the partners to ensure that

the implementation of the peace process continues and progresses in a manner that ensures inclusiveness, transparency and credibility.

The voice of the people of South Sudan remains clear and unwavering. We are calling for peace from every corner of our nation. Citizens are urging their leaders to uphold and protect the gains made since the signing of the peace agreement. The Government hears their voices and reaffirms our collective duty to ensure that that peace is not only preserved, but also strengthened.

As the Security Council considers the mandate of UNMISS, we request that the Mission continue to work in close partnership with our national institutions, align its efforts with evolving realities on the ground and support the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. We acknowledge the observation presented in the April 2025 assessment by the Secretary-General and the provisions highlighted by the African Union, IGAD and UNMISS. Those institutions have stood beside us since our independence, and we remain grateful for their partnership in our journey to peace and a democratic future.

We recognize the importance of conditions identified for peaceful and credible elections. The Government welcomes the finalization of election-specific timelines by the National Elections Commission and reiterates the determination to hold inclusive and credible elections at the end of the transition period. While challenges remain, particularly in launching civic education and constitutional consultations, we are taking concrete steps to advance the critical milestones with urgency and seriousness.

I stand before the Council today to address the recent developments and the ongoing implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. The Government of South Sudan has taken note of the concerns raised by the Secretary-General, the African Union Peace and Security Council, IGAD and other regional and international partners regarding the current security and political situation in our country.

First, let me reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the full and faithful implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement. We are mindful of our duty to safeguard the gains made since the signing of the agreement in order to ensure that South Sudan remains on the path to peace, unity and democratic transition. We recognize the devastating impact of the localized violence and the involvement of armed youth groups, and the Government is strengthening its national policing and deploying mobile courts in affected areas to ensure justice and accountability. In partnership with regional and international partners, we are investing in rule-of-law mechanisms and enhancing national reconciliation efforts to address the roots of intercommunal strife. At the same time, the operationalization of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing Act of 2024 and the Compensation and Reparations Authority Act marks a historic opportunity for our nation to reckon with the past, repair the wounds of the conflict and move forward in unity. Those are not just legal frameworks — they are instruments of healing, justice and reconciliation for our people.

However, we must not ignore the shadows that loom over those gains. The arrest of Mr. Riek Machar and several members and officials of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition has triggered fears of a reversal in the peace process. However, President Salva Kiir Mayardit has assured the people of South Sudan and our partners that we must not return to war and that we must remain fully committed to the Revitalized Peace Agreement. We recognize the fragility of the moment and are working diligently to de-escalate the tensions, restore dialogue and protect the integrity of the peace process. Our nation cannot afford to return to conflict, and it welcomes the calls by the African Union, IGAD, the United Nations

and the Security Council for restraint and consensual decision-making. We will not allow short-term grievances to undermine the long-held aspiration of our people.

Beyond the political front, we are aware of the deep humanitarian crisis facing our people. More than 6.1 million of our citizens are at risk of acute food insecurity; the conflict in the Sudan, the cholera outbreak and climate shocks have only worsened that situation. Women and children are always the ones who bear the brunt of such suffering. We are working with urgency to facilitate humanitarian access, support vulnerable communities and stabilize our economy, even as we grapple with resource constraints. We thank our people for their remarkable generosity in hosting more than 1.1 million refugees fleeing the crisis in the Sudan. South Sudan remains committed to upholding international obligations to protect civilians, including foreign nationals, and will continue to act against retaliatory violence.

Once again, South Sudan is at a crossroads. We can either allow discord and division to unravel the progress that we have made, or we can choose a harder, noble path to peace, unity and reform. For the people of South Sudan, the choice is clear: we choose peace, and the Council's continued support is greatly appreciated.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): 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 11.50 a.m.*