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Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and a follow-on presence

I. Introduction

1. The Security Council, in its resolution [2495 \(2019\)](#) of 31 October 2019, requested the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide a special report no later than 31 January 2020, presenting an assessment of the situation on the ground in Darfur, an update on the peace process, information on the status of previously handed-over team sites of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), recommendations on the appropriate course of action regarding the drawdown of the mission and options for a follow-on presence to the mission, based on the views and the needs of the Government of the Sudan. At the request of the Secretariat, a two-week extension was granted for the issuance of the report by 14 February 2020.

II. Update on the situation in Darfur and implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

A. Political situation

Political developments in the Sudan

2. The transitional Government continued to embark upon urgent and complex transition tasks, as laid out in the Constitutional Declaration of 17 August 2019, albeit with some delays. Following the signing of the Juba Declaration for Confidence-Building Procedures and the Preparation for Negotiation on 11 September 2019 by the transitional Government, the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) of Abdelaziz al-Hilu, the formation of the transitional legislative body and the appointment of civilian State governors were postponed in order to allow for the participation of armed movements after the conclusion of peace talks.

3. On 12 November, the Prosecutor General issued arrest warrants for the leaders of the coup of 1989 that brought the former President, Omer Al-Bashir, to power, including the former Vice-President, Ali Osman Taha, the former Director of the

* Reissued for technical reasons on 17 March 2020.



National Intelligence and Security Service, Nafie Ali Nafie, the former presidential adviser and Minister of Petroleum, Awad Ahmed Eljaz, and the Secretary-General of the Popular Congress Party, Ali al-Haj. On 28 November, the former ruling National Congress Party and its associated entities were dissolved, their assets to be confiscated and returned to the national treasury. On 13 December, Mr. Al-Bashir was convicted of money-laundering and corruption and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. On 11 February, the transitional Government announced that Mr. Al-Bashir would be allowed to appear before the International Criminal Court.

4. On 14 January, clashes erupted between former members of the National Intelligence and Security Service, which had been disbanded and renamed the General Intelligence Service, and the Rapid Support Forces in various locations around Khartoum (Soba, Riyadh and Kafouri neighbourhoods) and in El Obeid, Northern Kordofan. Approximately 500 former National Intelligence and Security Service personnel protesting their dismissal and claiming arrears of their salaries and benefits started shooting in the air, and at least four people were injured in the subsequent exchanges of fire that lasted for a full day until government forces quelled them.

Peace process

5. On 14 October, the transitional Government and Sudanese armed groups began the second round of negotiations in Juba, under the auspices of the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir. The talks ended on 21 October with the signing of a political declaration between the transitional Government and SRF. The third round of talks was set to resume on 21 November but started on 10 December, with five separate tracks covering Darfur, the Two Areas of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan, and central, east and north Sudan. The deadline for concluding the talks was extended from 14 December 2019 to 14 February 2020.

6. On 17 December, the SPLM-N Malik Agar faction and the transitional Government signed an agreement on the provision of humanitarian assistance and the cessation of hostilities for the Two Areas. The agreement provided for the establishment of a joint humanitarian committee to coordinate humanitarian-related efforts, as well as a mechanism to monitor the cessation of hostilities, to be chaired by the representative of South Sudan. Members of the monitoring mechanism arrived in Khartoum on 20 January to begin their work. On 23 December, a framework agreement was presented to the transitional Government for the eastern track (Beja Congress). The following day, the final peace agreement with the transitional Government was also signed for the central track (Democratic Unionist Party and SRF). On 28 December, the transitional Government and some of the Darfur armed movements, namely the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM) and the SLA Transitional Council signed a framework agreement, outlining both national issues and those specific to Darfur to be negotiated.

7. On 24 January, the transitional Government and the SPLM Malik Agar faction signed a peace agreement covering governance and regional autonomy, wealth-sharing and security arrangements for the Two Areas in a ceremony presided over by Mr. Kiir. On 26 January, the transitional Government signed a final agreement for the northern track (Kush Liberation Movement). Meanwhile, the Darfur track was adjourned from 25 January to 4 February to allow for further consultations with the various constituencies. Talks involving the SPLM Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction remained stalled owing to the lack of agreement on the issues of secularism and self-determination.

8. UNAMID continued to provide logistical, technical and advisory support for the South Sudanese mediation process and facilitated the participation of non-State actors, in particular women, internally displaced persons, refugees and other

stakeholders, from Darfur in the talks held in Juba. It also supported a three-day women's consultation in Nyala, South Darfur, based on which a position paper on women's issues was presented to the mediator. Further consultative conferences with internally displaced persons and civil society groups were held in El Fasher on 30 and 31 January.

B. Security situation

9. The overall security situation remained unchanged in most parts of Darfur, but West Darfur experienced a series of violent incidents from 29 December to 1 January, which left 65 persons dead. Civil unrest continued throughout Darfur, with 85 cases resulting in one fatality and 12 persons injured, compared with 54 cases resulting in nine fatalities and 20 persons injured during the previous reporting period. The most significant demonstration was in Sortony, North Darfur, on 25 November, when approximately 1,000 internally displaced persons rejected any plan for returning to their places of origin in the current situation and looted an office and a clinic run by humanitarian organizations. There were similar demonstrations and attacks against aid groups in other camps and towns in North Darfur, including in Zamzam on 3 December and Kabkabiyah on 22 and 23 January.

Fighting between forces of the transitional Government of the Sudan and armed movements

10. The clashes between SLA Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW) and the Sudanese armed forces in Jebel Marra decreased, corresponding to the start of the peace talks in Juba. During the reporting period, 21 incidents of armed clashes were recorded, resulting in 17 fatalities, compared with 24 incidents resulting in 26 fatalities during the period from 15 July to 14 October. Of the 17 fatalities, 14 were due to infighting between SLA-AW factions, mainly in the Daya area north-east of Golo, over the question of their participation in the peace process. The status of the peace talks also triggered demonstrations in some camps for internally displaced persons, including in the Hamidiya and Hasahisa camps in Zalingei, Central Darfur, the Kalma camp in South Darfur, the Kabkabiyah and Tawilah camps in North Darfur and the El Geneina camp in West Darfur from 15 to 22 October, followed by another protest in Kabkabiyah on 12 January, which prevented the selection of representatives to participate in the Juba talks.

Intercommunal conflict and land issues

11. For the period from 15 October 2019 to 31 January 2020, UNAMID recorded a total of five intercommunal clashes resulting in 70 fatalities, compared with 10 intercommunal clashes and 30 fatalities in the period from 15 July to 14 October. The most significant incident took place in West Darfur, when a personal dispute between an Arab and an internally displaced person led to a full-scale assault by armed Arab tribesmen, reinforced by elements of the Rapid Support Forces, against the Krinding camp for internally displaced persons on 29 December. The hospital in El Geneina was also looted, and on 30 and 31 December the Rapid Support Forces and armed Arabs attacked 18 returnee villages south and south-east of El Geneina, and an additional three villages in the vicinity of El Geneina. The total number of casualties as at 3 January was estimated to be 65, in addition to 54 persons injured.

12. There was a sharp increase in attacks against farmers by pastoralists in the current harvest season. In total, 102 land-related incidents, predominantly of crop destruction, resulted in 23 fatalities, compared with 60 incidents and 5 fatalities in the same period in 2018. The areas most affected included Saraf Omra, Kabkabiyah, Tawilah and Shangil Tobaya in North Darfur, where Northern Rizeigat pastoralists

have been attacking Fur and Tunjur internally displaced persons, returnees and farmers; Kass and Mershing in South Darfur; and the Nertiti-Thur area in Central Darfur, where the Nawaiba branch of Northern Rizeigat pastoralists continued to harass internally displaced Fur, preventing their access to farmlands.

13. UNAMID, in collaboration with local authorities and the native administration, conducted 19 dialogue forums in Nertiti, Central Darfur, and Saraf Omra, Tawilah, Kabkabiyah and Shangil Tobaya, North Darfur, that brought together approximately 2,500 participants, including 1,000 women, to address causes of conflicts between the farming and pastoral communities. The transitional Government also enhanced its protection efforts by deploying joint teams comprising the Sudanese armed forces, the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese police force in the hotspot areas.

Incidents against United Nations personnel and installations

14. A total of 37 incidents targeting UNAMID and United Nations and humanitarian personnel was registered during the reporting period, 31 of which were crime-related, in comparison with 51 incidents documented in the previous report.

C. Protection of civilians

15. In Jebel Marra, approximately 8,600 people were newly displaced, owing to the infighting within SLA-AW since October 2018. The area also witnessed conflict-related sexual violence, sexual and gender-based violence and physical assaults against civilians, especially internally displaced persons. A total of 95 criminal incidents were reportedly perpetrated by armed persons in military uniform, as well as armed elements from nomadic communities.

16. UNAMID continued to provide physical protection in response to intercommunal clashes in Jebel Marra. The military component conducted a total of 4,720 patrols, including 1,062 visits to villages and 589 visits to camps for internally displaced persons. The police component conducted a total of 2,288 confidence-building patrols, including to camps for internally displaced persons and other areas of concern, such as return villages, water collection points, farming areas and migration routes. In addition, UNAMID provided 68 escorts for humanitarian agencies. As part of the efforts to enhance protective environments and ensure the protection capacity of the Sudanese law enforcement agencies, UNAMID police personnel provided training on public order management for 85 Sudanese police personnel and 35 seminars for an additional 68 officers (65 men and 3 women) on sexual and gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence, family and child protection and human rights.

17. UNAMID also sought to promote the delivery of people-centred justice, resulting in community engagement and improved coordination between the police and the prosecution services. UNAMID conducted three capacity-building training sessions on trial monitoring and criminal justice coordination and observation in the Jebel Marra area in November and December 2019 for a total of 90 participants, including 33 women. It also provided training on prison management for 120 officers (including 19 women) and two middle-level management courses for 60 managers (including 4 women) working at prisons in Darfur.

18. The women's protection networks, supported by UNAMID, continued to serve as an important mechanism for early warning on security threats, including risks of sexual and gender-based violence. Specifically, their mapping of security and protection risks enhanced UNAMID patrols in hotspots.

19. UNAMID addressed threats relating to explosive remnants of war through survey, clearance and disposal tasks in 1,227 villages during the reporting period. It cleared 187 hazardous areas, destroyed 11,145 explosive remnants of war and 22,716 small arms ammunition and conducted risk awareness for 146,971 beneficiaries vulnerable to such remnants, namely 24,483 men, 25,872 women, 52,333 boys and 44,283 girls. Furthermore, UNAMID destroyed 35 weapons surrendered by former combatants of JEM and continued to support capacity-building of the National Mine Action Centre and other partners involved in mine action activities through coordination and training.

D. Humanitarian situation

20. From October to December 2019, 43,585 returnees and 8,710 internally displaced persons were registered in Darfur by the Displacement Tracking Matrix programme of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Central and West Darfur accounted for the largest group of internally displaced persons registered during that period. As at 30 January, the intercommunal violence in West Darfur mentioned in paragraph 11 above had led to the estimated internal displacement of over 46,000 persons, while an additional 11,000 had fled to Chad as refugees. North Darfur and South Darfur registered a significantly higher proportion of returning internally displaced persons during that period (33,123 and 17,400, respectively), indicative of a greater return rate. In Um Dukhun, Central Darfur, IOM registered 4,351 Sudanese returnees from abroad.

21. The economic crisis in the Sudan continued to have an impact on food security and livelihoods across the country, including in Darfur. Although the Famine Early Warning System Network reported that staple food prices had started to decline with the onset of the harvest season, high transportation costs have prevented prices from falling to the usual level.

22. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conducted several missions to support the arrival of new refugees from the Central African Republic in Um Dafug in South Darfur, where their number stood at 11,350 individuals. In November 2019, UNHCR recorded the highest number of new arrivals, amounting to 7,173 individuals in Nyala, South Darfur.

23. On 21 and 24 November, the Humanitarian Aid Commission revoked the permits of over 50 national aid organizations, reportedly for activities that were not consistent with government regulations and the provisions of their technical agreements. Also in November, the transitional Government demonstrated greater willingness towards the opening of humanitarian space, which enabled humanitarian missions, supported by UNAMID, to gain access to areas under the control of SLA-AW around Golo (with an estimated population of between 85,000 and 100,000) and Feina, South Darfur. Humanitarian organizations had been absent from Feina for nearly 10 years.

24. Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Nations co-hosted a high-level round table in London on 17 January, attended by 19 donors and representatives of the transitional Government of the Sudan. The donors affirmed the importance of scaling up humanitarian assistance to the Sudan and frontloading resources early in 2020.

E. Human rights situation

25. UNAMID continued to document serious human rights violations in Darfur. Notwithstanding the prevalence of underreporting, owing to challenges related to access, 89 cases of possible human rights violations and abuses involving 152 victims, including 16 minors and 37 women, were documented between 15 October and 22 January, an increase of 13 incidents compared with the 76 cases involving 261 victims, including 40 women, documented between 7 July and 14 October. The cases reported relate to possible violations of the right to life and physical integrity (assault), arbitrary arrest and detention, forced displacement, sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence. The cases were allegedly perpetrated by armed men described as “Arabs” and “unidentified armed civilians” and members of government security forces, including the Rapid Security Forces.

26. UNAMID undertook public advocacy and awareness campaigns in October and November, especially in areas of Jebel Marra controlled by SLA-AW. On 26 November, UNAMID was allowed access to the village of Manabu and engaged with the SLA-AW Salih Borsa faction, which committed itself to cooperating with UNAMID on monitoring and documenting human rights violations. In a subsequent visit on 18 December, UNAMID accepted a request from the faction to organize training for its personnel on human rights and international humanitarian law.

27. Following the signing of an agreement with the transitional Government to establish a country office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Sudan on 25 September, an OHCHR technical team visited the Sudan in October. Subsequently, a senior human rights officer was deployed to Khartoum to begin setting up the office.

Children and armed conflict

28. Under the framework of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict, UNAMID continued to verify and report on incidents of grave violations against children. During the period from 7 July to 22 January, 37 incidents of grave violations affecting 66 children (40 boys and 26 girls) were verified, a decrease from the 53 violations affecting 94 children (68 boys and 26 girls) documented during a similar period in 2019. Of the 66 children affected, 44 (38 boys and 6 girls) were killed or maimed by direct shooting or explosive remnants of war; 21 (20 girls and 1 boy) were raped; and 3 boys were abducted. Other grave violations committed by armed groups and State security forces included the occupation by the armed forces of a school for military operations in Jawa, in the eastern part of Jebel Marra, and an attack and looting by SLA-AW of the bariatric clinic, also in Jebel Marra. The Rapid Security Forces and Arab militia attacks in El Geneina affected 24 children, with 11 boys killed, 8 boys and 2 girls injured and 3 girls raped, while 12 schools were destroyed. UNAMID and the United Nations Children’s Fund continued to engage with the armed forces, the Rapid Security Forces and SLA-AW to address these issues.

29. UNAMID also continued to conduct capacity-building for local authorities to institutionalize child protection within government security forces and to promote local ownership of child protection among communities. It trained 105 members of the Sudanese police force and 1,297 internally displaced persons on child protection and juvenile justice.

F. Transition planning

30. The joint transition cell continued to coordinate transition planning, monitoring and implementation on the basis of the joint transition action plan of UNAMID and

the United Nations country team. The cell conducted consultations on the establishment of State liaison functions with country team partners in El Geneina in October 2019 and Ed Daein in December 2019. A joint workshop with the transitional Government was held on 2 December in El Fasher to discuss lessons learned from the first two phases of the establishment of the functions. Based on those inputs, the cell approved projects for the third phase of the establishment of the functions and activities in the greater Jebel Marra area for implementation between January and March 2020.

State liaison functions

31. To consolidate peacekeeping gains and restore confidence in the rule of law, the State liaison functions facilitated justice and human rights dialogue forums, community policing and inclusive engagement and oversight in priority camps for internally displaced persons and returnee areas. These activities benefited over 1,130 justice and corrections stakeholders at different State institutions, civil society organizations, professional associations and groups of internally displaced persons, nearly 35 per cent of whom were women, resulting in improved awareness of the judicial system, coordination and accountability. In addition, two rural courts were opened, in Kuraynik and Makada, West Darfur, and 177 district court and rural court judges and 5 female legal court staff were trained on dispute resolution. Two prison dormitories for men were completed, in Ed Daein and El Geneina, and justice and corrections centres were opened in East Darfur and in the Kalma camp.

32. In the durable solutions pillar, the activities of the State liaison functions were focused on issues pertaining to land management, livelihoods and basic services in return areas. In North Darfur, seeds and agricultural implements were distributed to 300 households in the villages of Tukaylat and Kuaaim. In South Darfur, the functions held a one-day conference on land tenure with 100 participants, including 35 women, and supported the State government on land management issues. They also conducted a total of 20 missions to six camps for internally displaced persons and 12 return areas in South Darfur, supported three workshops and five consultative meetings with local stakeholders and distributed non-food items in 10 villages in the Kass, Katilla, Graid, Neteiga, Edd al-Fursan and Bileil localities. They also monitored the construction of 14 buildings, including police offices, multi-purpose community centres and rural courts in Mallit, Korma, Kornoi, Umm Barru and Tinah. In North Darfur, the functions visited return areas in Kutum, Tine, Karnoy, Umm Baru and Kabkabiyah and conducted monitoring activities with the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission and the Humanitarian Aid Commission in the Abu Shouk, Salam, Kassab and Zamzam camps for internally displaced persons. In addition, two missions to verify returns were conducted in Kabkabiyah and Kutum.

33. In the human rights pillar, the activities of State liaison functions included support for transitional justice mechanisms, the capacity-building of national and security institutions and the monitoring of incidents and violations. In North Darfur, a total of 40 participants, including 18 women, were trained in Tawilah on issues relating to drug and substance abuse among children and young people. In addition, the mobile monitoring team facilitated a one-day workshop for 38 community leaders from the Abu Shouk, Salam and Zamzam camps in El Fasher on human rights monitoring. The functions also organized a workshop on sexual and gender-based violence in East Darfur for 40 women from civil society organizations.

34. Human rights activities in the State liaison functions also included initiatives to facilitate national institutional development. On 27 January, the regional office of the National Commission for Human Rights in Darfur, constructed through the State liaison function framework, was handed over. The regional office will be an important step in strengthening the governance and effectiveness of the national human rights

institution, as well as the development of the transitional justice architecture, especially in the context of the ongoing transition in the Sudan.

35. The expansion of the State liaison function in the greater Jebel Marra area is in progress. UNAMID and the United Nations country team are in the process of identifying priority issues and locations and delivery mechanisms, and the local authorities and United Nations agencies agreed to conduct joint assessment missions to those areas.

III. Course of action on the drawdown

36. As noted in the previous special report (S/2019/816), UNAMID has developed a drawdown and liquidation plan that envisages a sequenced closure of 14 UNAMID bases, the repatriation of uniformed personnel and a significant reduction in the number of civilian personnel from April to October 2020, coinciding with the end of the current mandate. The drawdown process will be followed by administrative and logistical liquidation activities for a period of at least six months. The plan is aimed at preserving the requisite capacity for the protection of civilians and the implementation of other priorities until operations cease, in particular in Jebel Marra. Nevertheless, the contingency readiness of the troops may be constrained, as UNAMID begins to prepare for the withdrawal of formed units and their contingent-owned equipment, the security maintenance of United Nations personnel and assets during drawdown and all aspects relating to liquidation, from asset disposal to archiving.

37. As recommended in the previous report, the closure of team sites has been planned in two phases, starting with Nyala, Khor Abeche, Shangil Tobaya, Menawashei, Saraf Omra, Tawilah, Sortony and Kutum in the first phase and followed by Kass, Nertiti, Kalma, Golo, Zalingei and Kabkabiyah in the second phase. Once operations through those camps are discontinued, troops and formed police units deployed there will be repatriated, except for a reserve capacity of up to one battalion to be retained for “in extremis” situations until the end of the current mandate. In the subsequent liquidation phase, any force elements would be dedicated to protecting United Nations personnel and premises, including for the movement and extraction of United Nations-owned and contingent-owned equipment, with cooperation from the Sudanese authorities.

38. On 27 December, the former UNAMID “super camp” in Nyala, which had been handed over to the government authorities in accordance with a memorandum of understanding signed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 19 November, was vandalized. Hundreds of residents, including uniformed personnel, looted the camp until 31 December. One of the two UNAMID formed police units, assigned for security and protection relating to the Kalma camp for internally displaced persons, was in part of the Nyala camp, owing to the lack of accommodation capacities in Kalma, but the United Nations police personnel were not targeted. A criminal case has been opened by the Sudanese authorities and a legal committee was established by the Attorney General of the Sudan to investigate the damage, destruction and looting of the premises and assets.

39. The Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations provide a clear framework for the transfer of United Nations property, with support for mandated objectives being the foremost objective. If the Security Council agrees to a follow-on field mission in the Sudan, the new mission and its integrated partners, including the United Nations country team, will be the prioritized recipients of assets following the drawdown of the remaining UNAMID sites and the disposal of other property, including infrastructure and equipment. All disposal of property to support the transition in Darfur should be based on a careful capacity assessment, across all

relevant actors, led by the country team, and might also recognize the hybrid nature of the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union in UNAMID.

40. The handover of closed sites to the Sudanese authorities has been guided by the principle of civilian end use. However, the looting of the former camps in El Geneina and Nyala has underscored the need to review the framework. Until a new modality is established, the handover of team sites and assets is suspended. Various modalities will be considered, including the enhanced engagement of the United Nations country team and other local partners in the handover process, and possible options to ensure that those sites will not be left vacant but remain occupied for civilian purposes. The revised handover framework will be finalized at the workshop on liquidation issues convened by the Department of Operational Support in April, which will also reflect the decision of the Security Council in terms of a follow-on mechanism, as this will affect the handover parameters.

41. Furthermore, the intercommunal clashes in West Darfur have highlighted concerns about remaining security challenges in the areas from which UNAMID has withdrawn. The Sudanese security elements are either implicated in these violent incidents or lack capacities to respond, and it is uncertain whether the reserve force can respond to such a magnitude of violence. UNAMID and the transitional authorities have agreed to reactivate and convene regular meetings of a joint security coordination mechanism that has existed between the transitional Government, UNAMID and the United Nations country team in Khartoum to discuss security issues.

42. In this regard, it is further recommended that UNAMID redeploy military and police advisers to co-locate with State-level security mechanisms, such as the State security committees, with a view to providing advisory and planning support for protection activities, including for violence prevention, mitigation and rapid response. The military and police advisers would assist the State-level authorities in addressing early warning signs and identifying hotspots, engaging community representatives in devising patrols and resolving their security concerns, and would possibly play a role in the implementation of a peace agreement, if required as a result of the talks held in Juba.

43. These security advisory capacities could potentially be absorbed into a post-UNAMID mechanism, should the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council so decide. In that connection, some of the sites scheduled to be closed during the second phase, such as Kalma and Golo, could be retained for the use of a follow-on mission as a platform for future peace implementation by the United Nations, if the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council so decides.

44. Otherwise, all operations will cease in order to ensure the closure of the team sites by 31 October 2020, including in those high-profile areas. Commensurate with the repatriation of uniformed personnel, UNAMID will reduce the size of substantive civilian components and mission support sections in a phased manner, in accordance with priorities and workloads during the drawdown.

45. Once all team sites are closed, the geographical footprint of UNAMID will be limited to the logistics base in El Fasher, where a small civilian team will carry out all liquidation activities, protected by a residual force and a formed police unit. The offices in Khartoum and Port Sudan will support liaison with the transitional Government and port operations to facilitate the movement of UNAMID cargo.

46. The United Nations and the African Union will have to address various risks involved in the drawdown process, ranging from those relating to the handover and disposal of assets to security and reputational concerns. Some of the largest camps for internally displaced persons, including in Kalma, will remain volatile, not only from external threats, such as militia attacks, but from internal splits among different factions. Unless the departure of UNAMID is managed in such a way that alternative

local and national protection capacities with the confidence of internally displaced persons are in place, the drawdown process itself could become vulnerable. The African Union and the United Nations will have to ensure that these risk factors will be considered for the mandate and configuration of a follow-on mission.

IV. Options for a follow-on presence

47. Following the request made by the Security Council for options for a follow-on presence to UNAMID, a multidisciplinary team from the Secretariat visited the Sudan in December. Throughout December and January, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Sudan also led an internal mapping exercise and held consultations with Sudanese stakeholders and international partners. On 27 January, the Prime Minister of the Sudan, Abdalla Hamdok, sent a letter conveying the position of his Government on the reconfiguration of the United Nations presence. On 10 February, the joint task force of the Tripartite Mechanism was convened in Addis Ababa, attended by the Assistant Under-Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, as well as the Special Adviser on the Sudan. The participants discussed, in broad parameters, possible post-UNAMID requirements, as described below.

Overall political objectives

48. The fundamental and overarching objective is to support the Sudan in succeeding in its transition. In the Constitutional Declaration, a range of critical tasks for the 39-month transition period are set out, including governance and institutional reforms, the reorganization of public administration and finance and a guarantee to promote and ensure the political, social and economic rights of women. The civilian-led transitional authorities face considerable challenges in implementing these political benchmarks. Given the range and depth of the necessary reforms, political and technical support will be warranted in a number of substantive areas. The African Union and the United Nations will have a pivotal role to play in supporting the transition, together with other partners.

49. One of the key priorities in the Constitutional Declaration is the resolution of all internal conflicts. The negotiated settlement of the long-standing conflicts in Darfur, the Two Areas, Eastern Sudan and other flashpoints will be a requisite for sustainable peace, putting an end to continued armed clashes, large-scale displacement and human rights violations, including in relation to children and armed conflict and conflict-related sexual violence. Depending on the outcome of the ongoing peace talks in Juba, the potential role of the post-UNAMID mechanism in supporting the implementation of a peace agreement could vary from ceasefire monitoring to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants, security sector reform, justice and accountability, arms control and the clearance of unexploded ordnance.

50. Peacebuilding requires further efforts beyond the implementation of peace agreements. In Darfur, residual clashes between the government forces and armed groups persist in the Jebel Marra area; violence against civilians and human rights violations and abuses – some at the hands of security forces – are still prevalent; and over 1.8 million internally displaced persons are still in camps. Remedies to this violence, some deriving from intercommunal clashes exacerbated by the role of militias, would range from grass-roots conflict prevention, mitigation and reconciliation to strengthening human rights and rule of law institutions, supporting

durable solutions for the return of internally displaced persons and refugees; land reform; security sector reform; and transitional justice and monitoring and mentoring. The Two Areas and other conflict-affected regions are also likely to face significant peacebuilding challenges.

51. One of the pre-eminent existential challenges facing the Government of the Sudan and its transitional programme is the continued economic crisis. Addressing the economy is a political imperative, since the failure to improve the living conditions will render the transitional Government exposed to internal and external shocks. On 30 January, the Peace and Security Council discussed the listing of the Sudan as a State sponsor of terrorism and the impact of economic sanctions on the country's economy. The economic empowerment of women requires specific attention, as does the economic empowerment of young people, who would benefit from access to information, quality education and employment opportunities. Coordinated international efforts could assist the Sudanese counterparts in identifying and articulating their priorities and mobilize donor support. The engagement under the leadership of the resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator ensuring coordination of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes will also make sure that development cooperation and humanitarian assistance are aligned with and linked to national development strategies.

52. Based on the above, a post-UNAMID presence in the Sudan would have the following core objectives:

(a) To support achievement of the political benchmarks in the Constitutional Declaration, including the Constitution and elections;

(b) To support implementation of peace agreements in the conflict-affected areas, including security arrangements, such as ceasefire monitoring and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, if required, and accountability and transitional justice;

(c) To support national-led peacebuilding and the strengthening of human rights and rule of law institutions, and the scaling-up of support for recovery and development to build resilience and mitigate protection risks;

(d) To facilitate international support for economic reform that would set the country on a path to sustainable development.

Risk analysis

53. The transition process will be inherently uncertain and could be potentially unstable, as the fabric of the governance system that had been in place for decades goes through a rapid transformation. The risk is compounded by the vulnerability of the Sudanese economy. The issue of subsidies remains sensitive, and any reform of the security sector needs to be weighed against competing priorities, including the need to balance the budget, introduce accountability and potentially accommodate more combatants after the talks in Juba are concluded. Without immediate improvements in the political, social and economic conditions, protests are likely to continue, as seen in Darfur.

54. In Darfur, armed violence between rebel groups has declined, but the fundamental conflict drivers remain unresolved and exacerbate intercommunal tensions. The main perpetrators of violence are tribal militias, whose size and firepower often exceed those of the Sudanese police and who have used physical and conflict-related sexual violence to displace communities and prevent them from returning to their farmlands. The five most volatile camps for internally displaced persons, namely in the Sortony (21,500 persons), Kalma (129,694), Menawashei (18,816), Nertiti (59,482) and Golo localities (5,695), have experienced attacks by

militias and breakaway factions of armed groups. Cross-border dynamics in relation to Chad and Libya, as well as the Gulf region, could also be a source of concern, with the movements of armed elements and goods.

Key factors in the planning of a post-Operation mechanism

55. Additional factors need to be considered in the planning of the future presence. In a letter dated 27 January 2020, Mr. Hamdok, called for the establishment of a Chapter VI peace support operation in the form of a special political mission, with the following building blocks:

- (a) Support for the implementation of the Constitutional Declaration;
- (b) Support for the ongoing peace negotiations and the implementation of peace accords, including monitoring and technical assistance for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, ceasefire monitoring and arms collection;
- (c) Support for the mobilization of international economic assistance;
- (d) Technical support on constitution-making, legal and judicial reform and civil service and security sector reform;
- (e) Consolidation of gains in Darfur, through peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance, development initiatives and the restoration of State authority, with additional engagement in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan;
- (f) Support for the repatriation and reintegration of internally displaced persons and refugees, reconciliation, transitional justice, protection of civilians and police capacity-building, as well as human rights monitoring and capacity-building.

56. The proposed tasks, some of which were reiterated in the second letter sent by Mr. Hamdok, on 27 February, are aligned with the strategic objectives outlined above. In addition, the principles set out below should guide planning by the African Union and the United Nations.

57. **“All of the Sudan”.** A mission based in Khartoum could also support the implementation of peace accords, peacebuilding and development assistance and cooperate with humanitarian actors, while recognizing the divergent needs and concerns of the centre and the conflict areas, which requires tailored approaches.

58. **Time-bound.** The future presence in support of the transition should be limited to the duration of the transition period, as requested by Mr. Hamdok. As such, the African Union and the United Nations should plan for the end of their transitional support from the onset. Any further engagement would need to be discussed with the future elected Government.

59. **Innovation.** Taking into account the areas of required support outlined in the previous special report and also proposed in Mr. Hamdok’s letter, the post-UNAMID planning process presents an opportunity to be innovative, including by considering all the relevant tools available to the peace and security pillar and beyond and based on collaboration with the United Nations country team and partners across the board.

60. **Light footprint.** The primary mode of engagement should be to accompany the civilian-led transitional Government. The post-UNAMID presence should also rely on partnerships with international actors to support the priorities of the Sudanese authorities.

61. **Flexibility.** The talks held in Juba have not yet concluded, and the sequencing of some key political benchmarks requires further deliberation by the Sudanese stakeholders. Given the level of uncertainty, the design of the post-UNAMID presence should respond to requirements as they evolve, starting with the more

apparent needs, such as immediate political support for the transition and support for peacebuilding in conflict-prone areas throughout the country. A sequenced “building blocks” approach is recommended, with the possibility of seeking additional support, if required.

62. **“One United Nations”.** The United Nations should adopt an integrated and unified structure to maximize coordination, coherence and harmonization through a “One United Nations” approach, with a view to avoiding a proliferation of projects and activities.

63. **African Union-United Nations and other partnerships.** A continued political partnership between the African Union and the United Nations remains critical, considering the decisive action taken by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in April 2019 to oppose the military seizure of power and the African Union Commission’s role in facilitating the subsequent political agreement. The leadership of the African Union in monitoring and enforcing the implementation of the Constitutional Declaration will be essential. In that regard, in a communiqué dated 30 January, the Peace and Security Council stressed that the role of the African Union in the peace process should be elevated. The potential role of the African Union as a guarantor of a peace agreement has also been underscored by some Sudanese interlocutors. United Nations-African Union cooperation in the post-UNAMID context could take various shapes, with the objective of maximizing the two organizations’ comparative advantage. This could include a senior-level coordination mechanism that meets regularly and reports to both headquarters on respective activities. The two organizations could also envisage joint operations on specific functions, in addition to regular coordination on the ground. Various forms of partnership could also be explored with other regional organizations, including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and Member States. Such partnerships can be strategic and political, or operational and technical, depending on comparative advantages, to maximize collective impact.

64. **Civilian protection.** This is the responsibility of the Sudan, while a post-UNAMID mechanism may provide advisory and capacity-building support for the authorities that would need to fulfil it. If a follow-on mission includes a mandate indicating the physical protection of civilians, such a mandate, which has not been requested to date by the transitional Government of the Sudan, would require a very significant deployment, commensurate with the size of the area of operations. Short of this, a post-UNAMID mechanism would not be in a position to provide such protection and should therefore not be expected to do so. Other protection modalities should be explored, including advocacy, the continued role of the women’s protection networks established by UNAMID, community policing, partnership with humanitarian and human rights groups and potential collaboration with other protection partners, such as the civil society groups practising unarmed approaches to civilian protection.

65. **Gender equality and the issue of women and peace and security.** These must be at the core of international support for the transitional Government in fulfilling its commitments on gender equality, women’s rights and participation, including in peace negotiation.

Modalities of support in the Sudan during the transition period following the drawdown

66. To support the proposed core objectives, and reflecting the factors outlined above, several options have been considered regarding the post-UNAMID presence. An enhanced United Nations country team, is one option, but the associated constraints have led to its dismissal, including questions regarding the extent of

political engagement possible outside the remit of the Peace and Security Council and the Security Council and the unpredictability of funds to support the agencies, funds and programmes in the Sudan, in particular if additional tasks emerge as a result of the peace process in Juba. Similarly, the option of a robust peacekeeping mission was not pursued extensively, given the advanced stage of transition in Darfur and the assessment in previous reports that it was no longer the appropriate instrument to address the remaining challenges throughout Darfur or to be expanded nationwide.

67. The recommended option would thus be the establishment of a political and peacebuilding integrated support presence, headquartered in Khartoum, with responsibility for all of the Sudan, taking into account the request expressed by the Sudanese authorities. The mission would be focused on the core political objective of supporting the country's transition, including through peacebuilding, support for the implementation of a peace agreement, human rights monitoring and support for transitional justice, and providing support for the development priorities of the transitional Government.

68. The presence would be led by a head of mission to ensure high-level support for national actors to meet the priorities set out in the Constitutional Declaration. The presence on the ground, driven by a political mandate, should complement the technical and development-focused role of the country team. Given the wide-ranging humanitarian and development challenges, such functions could be under the purview of a deputy head of mission, who would concomitantly fulfil the role of resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator.

69. The mission should have access to the complete spectrum of both African Union and United Nations tools, as appropriate. The mandate should be flexible enough to allow the deployment of individual police and/or military advisers to provide advisory support on the security aspects of peacebuilding and assist in monitoring the peace agreement, if requested. There may also be a need for a uniformed component for the purpose of providing security for the mission and its staff, or other tasks in the interest of the mandate of a new mission, as agreed with the Sudanese authorities.

70. The presence could also be structured along distinct thematic pillars in line with the core objectives mentioned above, and the work and timeline of the pillars could be sequenced as needed. The duration of each pillar could also vary, depending on the requirements (e.g., the peace implementation pillar would be shorter than the peacebuilding pillar).

71. As required, specific pillars or their subpillars may be administered by the United Nations and the African Union with other international organizations. For example, support for ceasefire monitoring could be conceived in partnership with regional organizations or Member States assisting the Sudanese-led processes, as was the case in the Nuba mountains from 2002 to 2005, if requested.

Linkage with the drawdown

72. In terms of the field presence to support peacebuilding and peace implementation, the new presence could capitalize on several assets, including the State liaison functions model. There is an urgent need to scale up support for recovery and peacebuilding in conflict-prone areas, including supporting the government authorities in engaging with local communities on priorities, and to coordinate international support.

73. Similarly, the military and police advisers that would be deployed to the State capitals of Darfur during the drawdown phase of UNAMID could continue to provide advisory and capacity-building support for the Sudanese police and other security providers on protection issues and arrangements. These advisers would remain

co-located with the State-level authorities, including the State Security Committees or the Sudanese police, and could be replicated in other conflict-affected zones requiring peace implementation and peacebuilding support, such as the Two Areas.

74. In addition, protection challenges are still evident in parts of Jebel Marra and some of the largest camps for internally displaced persons, such as Kalma, where anxiety over the exit of UNAMID has been raised. New displacement continues in the Golo area, owing to fighting involving the SLA-AW faction, which remains absent from the peace talks. The retention of a presence in these locations may be considered, with the option of deploying military and police advisers to provide advisory and capacity-building support for the State-level authorities on protection issues and concerns, similar to the concept mentioned above. These advisers could also work with the Sudanese police forces, community policing volunteers, the women's protection networks and other partners.

75. There are other areas of substantive expertise and assets that can build on the experiences of UNAMID in support of peace implementation and peacebuilding. For instance, on the basis of the previous peace agreements, UNAMID has supported the Ceasefire Commission and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts through national-level bodies, as well as a community-based approach. Some of these issues will also derive from the ongoing support of UNAMID for the peace talks in Juba.

V. Financial aspects

76. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/278](#) B and decision 73/355 and its resolution [74/261](#), authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for UNAMID in amounts not exceeding \$258.0 million for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2019 and \$130.2 million for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2020.

77. As at 6 February 2020, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNAMID amounted to \$278.5 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to \$2,937.0 million.

78. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 July 2019, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 March 2019, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VI. Observations

79. The Chairperson of the African Union and the Secretary-General continue to follow the unprecedented trajectory of the political transition in the Sudan with cautious optimism. Since the issuance of the previous special report in October 2019, the Sudanese transitional authorities have managed to sign agreements with one of the two factions in the Two Areas and for the northern track. Progress has been made towards concluding talks on Darfur with the participation of internally displaced persons, women and civil society groups. The interim authorities have also taken steps to reverse restrictions on the participation of women in decision-making, enhance accountability and proceed with political reforms, in accordance with the Constitutional Declaration.

80. At the same time, various security incidents in Khartoum and West Darfur in the past months have also underscored the fragility of the transition period. Economic conditions remain dire, and the people of the Sudan – in particular women and young people – are in desperate need of peace dividends, whether from international aid and foreign investment or the resolution of conflicts that have drained national budgets.

In Darfur, although large-scale clashes have subsided, confrontations between the government forces and the SLA-AW faction continue. Intercommunal tensions over land, grazing rights and other scarce resources can escalate to a significant level of violence, far beyond the capacity of the Sudanese rule of law institutions to respond. Human rights abuses, some at the hands of uniformed personnel, remain prevalent, and nearly 2 million persons are still displaced. Other conflict-affected regions, especially the Two Areas, will also face peacebuilding challenges.

81. The central question for the drawdown of UNAMID and discussions on post-UNAMID options has been about how to safeguard the simultaneous transitions occurring in the Sudan, both in terms of the overall transformation of the country's polity and economy and in support of peace consolidation, in particular in Darfur but also in other areas, depending on the outcome of the peace talks in Juba. In Darfur, persistent tensions in hotspots have highlighted the need for the responsible exit of UNAMID without negating the fundamental principle of State responsibility to protect its own citizens.

82. The critical driver to determine the precise shape of the post-UNAMID presence must be its ability to implement a potentially multifaceted mandate effectively: form should follow function. Bearing in mind lessons learned from past missions, the Chairperson of the African Union and the Secretary-General seek endorsement of the strategic objectives set out in the report and consideration to authorize the establishment and deployment of a small integrated political and peacebuilding mission to initiate political support for the ongoing transition, which began six months ago, taking into account the priorities and modalities described above, as an initial phase and pending further assessment. Meanwhile, the United Nations intends to deploy a planning team to work with the leadership of the proposed mission on an integrated planning process, to which the African Union will be invited, as was the case previously. This process would steer joint discussions with Sudanese counterparts and other key interlocutors, facilitate national ownership and outline the composition of the mission, the sequence of its tasks and implementation details, as well as arrangements relating to the drawdown of UNAMID.

83. As underscored in the communiqué issued by the Peace and Security Council at its 913th meeting held on 3 March regarding the UNAMID transition, the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union remains critical beyond UNAMID. Detailed modalities of the African Union-United Nations partnership in the new mission will be developed during the forthcoming planning process. Continued collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union, based on the comparative advantage of both organizations, could be shaped through a range of formats, including a senior-level coordination mechanism or joint operations on specific functions, as described above. Working together, the organizations stand firmly behind the Sudanese transition process.

84. In conclusion, the Chairperson of the African Union and the Secretary-General would like to express our gratitude to the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Jeremiah Mamabolo, the mission leadership and all the personnel of UNAMID, the United Nations country team and humanitarian partners, who continue to work collaboratively on our common objectives, and the Special Adviser on the Sudan and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their continued support.