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Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), in which the Council decided to establish the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and requested that the Secretary-General report to the Council every 90 days on the implementation of the UNITAMS mandate. The report covers the situation in the Sudan related to political, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic developments and to the protection of civilians, human rights and the rule of law, as well as climate security and development cooperation, during the period from 16 February 2021 to 1 May 2021. It provides an update on the establishment of the Mission, and outlines benchmarks and associated indicators designed to measure progress in the delivery of the nine strategic priorities across the four pillars of the UNITAMS mandate, as per resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#).

II. Significant developments

A. Political situation

2. Despite persistent challenges, the transitional Government of the Sudan continued to advance towards broadening democratic governance and furthering peacemaking efforts. However, the reporting period was characterized by limited progress in advancing key elements of the political transition, with the establishment of the Transitional Legislative Council still pending. While the Prime Minister had announced that State governors (walis) would be appointed by 15 February, followed by the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council no later than 25 February, these appointments did not occur in accordance with the envisioned timeline. The only exception was the reported appointment of Minni Minawi, head of the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi faction (SLA/MM), as Governor of the Darfur region per a decree of 29 April. This appointment is in keeping with the provisions of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan, which granted the authority for this appointment to the Darfuri armed groups that participated in the peace process, with the deputy to be appointed by the transitional Government.



3. On 28 February, the expanded transitional Government (referred to as the “peace Government”), which now includes representatives of the armed group signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, announced its programme of work, forming the basis of its strategic vision. Notably, the programme of work identifies the following five priority areas:

- (a) Socioeconomic issues, including the empowerment of women and the improvement of basic service delivery;
- (b) Peace, which includes the implementation of the Agreement and the completion of the peace process;
- (c) Security, including the drafting of a national security strategy, the protection of civilians, disarmament, demobilization and the reintegration and reform of security agencies;
- (d) International relations, including the improvement of regional and international relations;
- (e) Democratic transition, including the establishment of transitional bodies and commissions, transitional justice, the combating of corruption, preparations for elections, a national census and the drafting of a constitution.

4. On 4 March, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, issued a constitutional decree outlining the broad parameters of a federal system of government in the Sudan. The decision remains in line with the Constitutional Document, which calls for the establishment of a federal Government in the Sudan, and with elements of the Juba Peace Agreement. However, the decree postponed the formal application of the federal system until the conference on the system of governance is convened in due course. The Ministry of Federal Governance commenced technical preparations for the holding of the governance conference, which includes three steps: a technical workshop, followed by consultations at the State level, and the convening of the governance conference itself at the national level. The technical workshop was held from 27 to 29 April. The governance conference, once it is formally convened, is expected to address a number of key issues, including the demarcation of borders and administrative divisions of the various regions, as well as aspects related to governance, such as the associated structures, powers and competencies of the various regions. To increase inclusivity and legitimacy, the process envisages broad civic participation, including through the establishment of a constitutional commission, with chapters at the regional level.

5. Efforts to engage with the non-signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement continued during the reporting period. On 28 March, Lieutenant General al-Burhan and the commander of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement – North (SPLM/N) Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction signed a declaration of principles affirming the parties’ commitment to engage in negotiations in Juba. The negotiations are scheduled to start towards the end of May under the auspices of the Government of South Sudan. Among other elements, the declaration affirms the following: the recognition of the diversity of the Sudan; the right to a federal or decentralized system of governance; the need to establish a civil, democratic, federal State that guarantees freedom of religion and belief; and the need to ensure that personal status laws do not conflict with basic rights. It also calls for an equitable distribution of resources and wealth, the ratification of human rights conventions and the integration and unification of armed forces. However, the declaration recognizes that a permanent ceasefire will follow only after broader security arrangements are agreed upon as part of a comprehensive settlement.

6. The signing of this declaration of principles was welcomed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, the National Ummah Party, the Sudanese Congress Party and armed group signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, namely SLA/MM, the Justice and Equality Movement and the SPLM/N Malik Agar faction. However, the Ansar movement, the religious movement closely affiliated with the National Ummah Party, criticized the parties' commitment to the separation of religion and State and emphasized that this concept could not be superimposed by one party and should be determined at the constitutional conference.

7. On 18 March, Abdul Wahid al-Nur, leader of the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction (SLA/AW), met with the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, in Juba to discuss their respective visions for achieving a comprehensive peace in the Sudan. Abdul Wahid Al-Nur proposed a road map for a Sudanese-Sudanese dialogue not related to the Juba Peace Agreement. On 29 April, the SLA/AW issued a statement denying engagement with the South Sudanese mediation team as part of the Agreement.

8. Meanwhile, there was limited progress in the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. On 11 March, the Sovereign Council established the National High Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement, led by the Deputy Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, and four out of the five subcommittees corresponding to the five tracks of the Agreement. The remaining committee (focusing on the eastern track) will be established following the resolution of outstanding political issues, including matters related to representation and reconciliation. In this regard, consultations between the transitional authorities and relevant eastern stakeholders continued to proceed.

9. On 25 March, the Sudan Liberation Movement faction led by Mostafa Tambour became the latest signatory to the Juba Peace Agreement. Tambour signed the Agreement in Juba in the presence of General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, Sovereign Council member El Hadi Idris, the Minister of Youth and Sports of the Sudan and the South Sudanese mediation team.

10. The transitional Government commenced the process for the identification of assembly areas for the armed groups, although the ceasefire monitoring mechanisms in Darfur as envisaged in the Juba Peace Agreement have not yet been established. Following the escalation of intercommunal violence in El Geneina, West Darfur, in early April, the Security and Defence Council of the Sudan announced that it would accelerate plans to form the joint protection force for Darfur. It is expected that the size of this force, which will have a substantial police component, will be expanded from 12,000 to 20,000 personnel.

11. The South Sudanese mediation team visited Khartoum during the reporting period to discuss with Sudanese parties to the Juba Peace Agreement and the United Nations the steps needed to accelerate the implementation of the Juba agreements. Discussions included efforts to complete the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council, government institutions, the appointment of walis, the status of the eastern track and engagement with non-signatories. UNITAMS expressed its readiness to support the upcoming rounds of negotiations through the provision of good offices, technical assistance and logistical support. As one of the guarantors of the Agreement, South Sudan issued a letter on 13 April requesting UNITAMS, participating Member States and international organizations to nominate their representatives to serve on the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the Agreement, which was to hold its first meeting after Ramadan.

12. On 30 March, the technical committee of the Security and Defence Council called for the rapid implementation of security arrangements provided for under the

Juba Peace Agreement and the removal of armed elements from the capital and major cities to reduce the potential for armed conflict. This call was made in response to growing concerns over the presence of multiple armed groups in the capital, despite being signatories to the Agreement. There was a well-founded fear that, unless addressed, the proximity of troops and underlying tensions might lead to violent confrontations and to the further militarization of the urban centre. Moreover, their continuing presence would be in contrast to the expressed objectives of the revolution, which underscored the importance of strengthened civilian rule. This followed an announcement by Lieutenant General al-Burhan on 15 March, in which he called on SLA/MM forces to vacate the premises of the Sudan Olympic Committee, which they had reportedly entered on 8 March.

13. On 4 April, SLA/MM issued a statement criticizing the lack of progress in the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement six months after its signature, noting delays in completing the transitional governance structures and appointing the *walis*, and “stagnation” in the implementation of the security arrangements. The statement added that the December revolution was “at a crossroads”.

14. Women continued to advocate for their rights. On 8 April, women protesters marched to the Ministries of Justice and Interior and to the Office of the Attorney General to present a petition calling for the rights of women to be guaranteed at all levels of governance and in legislation. Protesters demanded the adoption of international treaties and conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), aimed at ending discrimination against women, and called for political rights, including by removing obstacles to the political participation of women, notably in the peace process, and amending the electoral law to facilitate the participation of women as voters and candidates. They also called for an end to gender-based discrimination in the workplace and criminal justice reform, emphasizing the criticality of repealing laws that restrict the rights and freedoms of women, including freedom of movement, the right to adopt and equal inheritance rights, and that permit forced or early marriages. Protesters also called for the criminalization of domestic violence, for the safety and security of women and girls in the public and private spheres and for the reform of law enforcement and the judiciary, including the formation of prosecution offices and courts specialized in gender-based violence. Some demonstrators filed complaints after reportedly being assaulted at the protest. Notably, on 27 April, the Council of Ministers approved the Maputo Protocol, and approved the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with reservations to articles 2, 16 and 29 (1). Women’s groups have been vocal in their criticism of these reservations, as they relate to the core provisions of the Convention, notably those designed to eliminate discrimination and provide women with access to justice.

International relations

15. Throughout the reporting period, tensions escalated over the eastern border in the Fashaqah area between the Sudan and Ethiopia, resulting in sporadic clashes. On 28 February, the Sudanese Armed Forces clashed with Ethiopian armed groups in the Ibra and Taldi areas of Fashaqah, Gedaref state. On 3 and 7 March, similar clashes occurred in the Barakat area of Fashaqah, and thereafter on 29 March close to the Gedaref-Sennar border.

16. On 18 February, Ethiopia issued a statement criticizing the Sudan. Two days later, the Sudan responded by criticizing the Ethiopian statement and reiterating its position that the border was demarcated and internationally recognized, and that the

Sudan was extending its sovereignty over its land in accordance with international norms. Ethiopia reiterated its readiness to resolve the border dispute using existing conflict resolution mechanisms once the status quo was maintained as per the 1972 exchange of notes between the two countries. The Sudan continued to stress the need for Ethiopian recognition of the demarcated border and the sovereignty of the Sudan over the area as a basis for further discussions.

17. Tensions also persisted over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. On 24 February, the Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources of the Sudan reportedly called for the “broadening” of trilateral negotiations on the dam between the Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt, notably to include the involvement of mediators from the United Nations, the United States of America and the European Union, in addition to the African Union. Trilateral negotiations were held from 4 to 6 April in Kinshasa, but no agreement was reached. On 13 April, the Prime Minister of the Sudan, Abdalla Hamdok, proposed the activation of a dispute resolution mechanism provided for in the 2015 Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which would convene at the Heads of State and Government level. On 21 April, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, responded by proposing that the negotiations continue under the auspices of the African Union and that a meeting of the African Union Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government be requested.

18. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union conducted a three-day field mission to the Sudan from 29 March to 1 April to assess developments in support of the political transition. They were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and discussed further cooperation between the African Union and UNITAMS.

B. Security situation

19. Intercommunal clashes continued to be a major source of insecurity in the Sudan, especially in the Darfur region, while criminality affected the local population and humanitarian actors. During the period under review, no incidents of armed clashes between SLA/AW and Sudanese security forces were recorded in the Darfur region.

20. Intercommunal clashes took place in West, South and North Darfur, as well as in Southern Kordofan. In Darfur, these incidents resulted in 170 fatalities and over 230 injuries. In South Darfur, Fallata and Masalit tribesmen clashed in Dikka on 3 March, resulting in seven Masalit tribesmen being killed and 35 people from both communities being injured. One local staff member of an international non-government organization was also injured. Clashes between Tama and Fur tribesmen in Saraf Umrah, North Darfur, over land ownership left 10 people dead and 15 injured on 3 March. On 21 March, violent clashes erupted between Nuba and Arab Baggara tribesmen in Seraf Eldyi, Southern Kordofan, when a group of Arab Baggara tribesmen looted livestock. The Arab tribesmen returned with reinforcements, resulting in a heavy exchange of fire and several casualties.

21. The most significant intercommunal clashes started on 3 April in El Geneina, West Darfur, when unknown assailants shot at a group of Masalit tribesmen, killing two and injuring one. The incident triggered the mobilization of armed fighters by Masalit and Rizeigat Arab tribes and within four days violence peaked. A total of 144 people were killed and 232 injured. Heavy weapons were reportedly used. Homes, private property and civilian infrastructure were destroyed or damaged in the clashes, including a hospital building and a United Nations compound, both hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. The Abu Zar camp for internally displaced persons in downtown El Geneina was also partially burned. A power plant – the only source of electricity

in El Geneina – was damaged, resulting in a critical disruption to most of the town’s communication facilities, in addition to electricity and water supplies in some areas.

22. In a press conference on 8 April, the wali of West Darfur, Mohamed al-Douma, accused heavily armed militias from neighbouring countries, with alleged ties to the former regime, of collaborating with local militias and instigating the fighting aimed at fomenting instability. Tensions between the communities in West Darfur are linked to land, water resources, pasture rights and years of sectarian manipulation along tribal lines by the former regime. The continued displacement of the Masalit and other internally displaced persons points to a lack of accountability and entrenched impunity as major factors contributing to Darfur’s cycles of violence. This was the second such incident of violence in El Geneina this year between these groups, and the third since January 2020.

23. The clashes had a significant impact on the United Nations and the wider humanitarian community. As a result of the violence, 55 United Nations international and national personnel, as well as 24 international and national personnel from six international non-governmental organizations and 13 dependants of United Nations national personnel, were relocated from El Geneina to Zalingei, Central Darfur. Humanitarian operations were suspended until 15 April and humanitarian flights resumed on 21 April. At the request of the transitional Government, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) conducted medical evacuation of 93 persons to Khartoum for treatment.

24. During the period under review, there were several incidents of criminality targeting the United Nations, including robbery, intrusion into United Nations facilities, stone-throwing, looting and theft of United Nations property. Several former UNAMID team sites were looted or vandalized.

C. Socioeconomic situation

25. The continuing economic challenges noted in previous reports notwithstanding, the transitional Government has forged ahead on ambitious economic reform measures. The international community has welcomed the Government’s commitments and achievements. However, economic hardship remains tangible to the broader population, even as social mitigation measures are gradually being put into place.

26. On 21 February, the transitional Government unified the exchange rate, signalling its strong commitment to the reform path agreed under the staff-monitored programme of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Since the exchange rate unification, the currency has largely remained stable and, as such, has constituted a trust-building measure with investors and international partners. Another key step is the Central Bank Act being reviewed by the Board of the Central Bank of Sudan ahead of its submission to the Ministry of Justice.

27. On 26 March, the World Bank announced that the Sudan had cleared \$1.15 billion in arrears owed to the International Development Association through a bridge loan from the United States, which the World Bank repaid fully on the same day. The clearance of arrears enabled the full re-engagement of the Sudan with the World Bank Group, thus opening access to \$2 billion in grant financing from the International Development Association over the next two years, with the immediate provision of \$215 million in much-needed budgetary support to alleviate the country’s fiscal burden. On 23 April, the Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group approved a proposal for the clearance of \$413 million in arrears on loans owed by the Sudan. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland agreed to provide a bridge loan for the arrears clearance and Sweden provided grant financing of \$4.2 million to meet the burden share of the Sudan for the operation. The

transitional Government also undertook preparations for the 17 May Paris investors conference, to be hosted by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, including through outreach to the business community, the identification of key projects in priority sectors and coordination with the host.

28. On 23 and 26 March, the Executive Boards of the World Bank and IMF discussed the preliminary document under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. The Boards commended the transitional Government's sustained commitment to economic and institutional reforms under challenging circumstances. They also agreed that the Sudan could be eligible for assistance under the Initiative and would qualify for debt relief subject to meeting the requirements established under the Initiative framework. On 17 February, the Sudan restarted the accession process to the World Trade Organization – a step welcomed by that organization on 17 March, affirming its full support for the reform programme.

29. Over the reporting period, the United Nations and partners launched several development initiatives. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization provided information technology equipment to the vocational training centres in Khartoum State, with support from the European Union; the World Food Programme launched a school feeding programme to cover the entire country and help achieve stability in education; and the World Bank approved \$420 million in additional financing for the Sudan Family Support Programme aimed at mitigating the social impact of the ongoing economic reforms (\$210 million in pre-arrears clearance grants and \$210 million from donor resources), bringing the total programme funding to \$820 million. In addition, the United States offered 300,000 tons of wheat through 2021 to address shortages.

30. Declarations of investments in the Sudan during the reporting period included a \$400 million investment in agricultural projects by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Trade and investment cooperation was discussed with Egypt, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan and the United States (including the entry of that country's banks into the Sudan and creation of a United States-Sudan Business Council).

31. At the same time, socioeconomic conditions continued to deteriorate. Inflation remained high, disproportionately affecting the poorest, with annual inflation increasing to 341.8 per cent in March from 330.8 per cent in February. The Sudanese Doctors Association highlighted an increase in the prices of imported medicines, ranging between 464 and 691 per cent, fuelling a medicine shortage. Living conditions remained critical, as inflation continued to be accompanied by fuel and food shortages. On 23 March, the Bakeries Union in Khartoum State reported that 40 per cent of bakeries had closed due to a lack of subsidized flour despite the United States flour grant. On 2 April, the transitional Government increased the price of petrol to 150 Sudanese pounds from 122 pounds per liter in the light of rising international prices and in an effort to bring down inflation. In response to the dire socioeconomic conditions, strike actions and protests took place on numerous occasions.

32. In a step towards initiating a reduction in the military's involvement in the economy, on 17 March one of the largest military companies, Defense Industrial Systems, agreed to a gradual handover of civilian operations to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, with the goal of eventually converting them into a publicly held company.

D. Situation with regard to the protection of civilians, human rights and the rule of law

33. In the aftermath of the outbreak of fighting between Masalit and Rizeigat Arab communities in El Geneina in early April, leaders of Darfur armed movements, local officials and Juba Peace Agreement signatories expressed concern over the transitional Government's inaction with regard to restoring order and immediately deploying protection forces in Darfur, as stipulated in the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians. During the first two days of clashes, there was no intervention by Government forces, which were in El Geneina at the time of the violence.

34. However, this latest outbreak of violence has led the transitional Government to take eight critical security enhancement measures, some derived from the Juba Peace Agreement. These include ordering the establishment and deployment of the joint security forces; operationalizing transitional security arrangements and related ceasefire committees; preventing manifestations of armed presence in cities, including through weapons and ammunition management; and addressing the urgent humanitarian situation in West Darfur. The transitional Government and the armed movement signatories are responsible for implementing these measures.

35. The transitional Government's efforts to advance institutional and legal reforms continued, albeit at a moderate pace. On 17 March, the Sudan became the fiftieth country to ratify the Protocol to the International Labour Organization Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and also ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). Laws providing the legal basis for the Transitional Justice Commission, the Peace Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission were adopted on 24 April, while the adoption of the law on the Human Rights Commission remains pending. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the transitional Government in hosting consultations on the draft laws on the establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the Transitional Justice Commission. Consultations are particularly important at a time when the Transitional Legislative Council has not yet been formed. Calls for accountability for serious conflict-related crimes continued, including demands for the handover of members of the former regime, including the former President, to the International Criminal Court for crimes committed in Darfur.

36. On 28 March, the Minister of Interior replaced the Director of the Khartoum State Police, following public criticism over his alleged remarks calling for the Public Order Law to be reinstated to combat crime. His comments came in the aftermath of the killing of a 14-year-old girl and following reports of incidents of women being hit in the streets with whips by unknown assailants. The transitional Government had repealed the Public Order Law, which disproportionately affected women, in November 2019. The Public Prosecutor stated that he would take action against anyone trying to implement the repealed law.

E. Humanitarian situation

37. The fragile economic situation, intercommunal conflict in Darfur and Ethiopian refugees in the east continued to drive humanitarian needs during the reporting period. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic also remained a challenge, affecting the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable Sudanese and refugees. High food prices persisted amidst deepening inflation, causing increasing food insecurity. In February, despite a good harvest season, the cost of a local food basket reached 149 Sudanese pounds, an increase of 21 per cent compared with the month before and 206 per cent

higher than during the same period in 2020. The recent devaluation of the currency will likely increase food prices further in the near term.

38. Close to 237,000 people have fled their homes so far in 2021 due to intercommunal conflict reported in West, North and South Darfur, according to the International Organization for Migration. This is a significant increase compared with 2020, when about 58,000 people were newly displaced in Darfur. In West Darfur, humanitarian actors assisted those affected by the conflict between Masalit and Arab communities in mid-January, which had led to the displacement of 109,000 people in and around El Geneina.

39. Renewed fighting in El Geneina in early April caused an estimated 65,000 new displacements. Some humanitarian partners temporarily paused operations due to the security situation but resumed them as of 15 April. By 29 April, about 104,000 people had received emergency food assistance, about 65,000 had accessed health-care services and 2,000 had received non-food items in El Geneina town, while 9,500 internally displaced persons had received non-food items outside El Geneina. Congestion at gathering points for internally displaced persons, as well as the need to find solutions for the voluntary relocation or return of displaced persons, remained priorities to be addressed.

40. South Darfur has witnessed increasing intercommunal conflict since the beginning of the year. The latest conflict-induced displacement occurred on 30 March, when the Government's Humanitarian Aid Commission reported that about 2,800 people had fled from Gaida, Sharg al-Jabal and Tullus localities. This followed earlier displacement caused by intercommunal conflict in East Jebel Marra in January and February. Food has been delivered to 13,000 internally displaced persons and 13,000 residents and non-food items have been distributed to 1,360 people; water, sanitation and hygiene and nutrition services have also been provided.

41. The influx of refugees from the Tigray region of Ethiopia into eastern Sudan continued, though at a slower rate. Between February and April, 2,599 Ethiopian refugees fled from Tigray to the Sudan. Since January, 20,609 Ethiopian refugees have been relocated to Tunaydibah settlement, after the camp of Umm Rakubah, which is currently hosting 20,573 people, reached its full capacity. Furthermore, since 15 February, 6,699 people have arrived in Blue Nile State from the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia due to intercommunal violence and have sought refuge in six locations – Yabacher, Menza, Manchaleng, Dem Saad, Magano and Shamfoz – increasing the total number of Ethiopian arrivals in Blue Nile State to 7,209 since November 2020. Since mid-March, the influx has almost come to a halt. About 1,000 people have received food assistance and access to health and water. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees launched an inter-agency response plan for 2021 requesting \$574 million to assist more than 1 million refugees in the Sudan.

42. There has been an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases since early March. As at 1 May, 33,648 cases had been confirmed, with 2,365 associated deaths. The World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund are supporting the Ministry of Health with a three-month plan to respond to the pandemic. On 3 March, the Sudan received over 800,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility. A week later, on 10 March, the Ministry of Health launched a COVID-19 vaccination programme with the aim of covering 20 per cent of the country's population by September 2021.

F. Climate security

43. The Sudan remains highly vulnerable to the climate crisis and in many global indices ranks among the most affected countries. Temperatures are projected to rise

above the global average and floods and droughts are expected to increase in frequency and intensity in the coming years. In 2020, the worst floods in three decades damaged or destroyed the homes of nearly 830,000 people and caused more than 120 deaths. Extreme climate patterns would have a major impact on the agricultural sector, with potentially devastating consequences for the country's livelihoods and food security.

44. Peace and security in the Sudan are also likely to be affected negatively by the effects of the climate crisis, as water scarcity and the loss of livelihoods can intensify competition for natural resources and lead to increased displacement and migration, both of which have been linked to insecurity in the country. UNITAMS is exploring ways to analyse and address climate-related security risks and build the resilience of the Sudanese States and communities to cope with, adapt to and recover from climate stressors. The empowerment of women and youth, including with regard to natural resource management and local conflict resolution, can strengthen critical coping capacities as livelihood patterns shift due to climate change.

III. Update on the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and Mission activities

45. UNITAMS has reached its initial operational capacity. The Special Representative and section chiefs for all the substantive units are on the ground. In addition, the Deputy Special Representative, who also serves as the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, Khardiata Lo N'Diaye, took up her duties during the reporting period, in mid-March. Eleven individual police officers were deployed and two experts from the Standing Police Capacity arrived as the advance team for the Police Advisory Unit. Recruitment and onboarding of priority national and international staff positions for 2021 continued. As at 1 May, 12 national staff and 62 international staff were either onboard or en route to the Sudan. UNITAMS continues to make every effort to achieve both geographical diversity and gender balance in its first year of operation.

46. Useful assets from UNAMID, such as engineering materials, communications equipment and vehicles, are being transferred to UNITAMS. The UNITAMS headquarters in Khartoum is fully operational and will absorb the former UNAMID Khartoum Liaison Office to better accommodate an increasing number of personnel. Preparations for the deployment of UNITAMS staff to the regional and satellite offices in El Fasher, Kassala, Kadugli, Zalingei and Nyala have concluded. Efforts are under way for UNITAMS staff to co-locate with the United Nations country team in Kauda, El Damazin and Port Sudan.

47. In his first mission outside of Khartoum, on 17 and 18 March, the Special Representative travelled to Kassala and the Red Sea States of eastern Sudan. There, he met with the Governors and other local authorities, tribal leaders, university officials, civil society leaders, young entrepreneurs, women's groups and other stakeholders. Interlocutors conveyed frustrations about the deep marginalization of the east over decades and highlighted the significant humanitarian and development needs and challenges. They also stressed the need for capacity-building in relation to civic engagement and political parties, as well as the importance of ensuring that inclusive peace agreements deliver tangible benefits. They further highlighted ongoing efforts led by local leaders to promote dialogue and reconciliation and prevent tribal conflicts.

48. The Special Representative also travelled to Darfur from 28 to 30 March, leading an integrated mission that included representatives from the United Nations country team to learn about needs and challenges related to the protection of civilians, the deployment of the government protection forces and the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians, and discuss how the United Nations could provide support. Interlocutors included State authorities, State security committees, State-level protection of civilian committees, tribal leaders, women's groups, youth representatives, civil society organizations and internally displaced persons in four of the five Darfur States. They emphasized the need for security, economic opportunities, accountability and justice for past atrocities, equal rights and the importance of the political and economic participation of women.

49. On 25 and 26 March, the UNITAMS mine action component visited Ullu in Blue Nile State, jointly with the Sudanese National Mine Action Centre, to assess explosive ordnance contamination and establish a joint coordination structure. The teams met with SPLM/N Malik Agar representatives on the ground and discussed possible support from UNITAMS for establishing joint coordination efforts and promoting confidence-building initiatives. In addition, the team identified the urgent tasks related to the clearance of the two major roads connecting to Ullu and assessed the types of assets required in preparation for the upcoming deployment of mine action teams.

50. UNITAMS continued to develop its plans to support the Sudanese Police Force, in line with the human rights due diligence policy. On 24 and 25 March, the Mission's Police Advisory Unit held a workshop with the Force to explore how the Unit's concept of operations could best support the Force. The workshop was attended by over 20 senior police officers and covered issues regarding the Force's responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians. The Minister of Interior has requested the deployment of additional United Nations individual police officers to assist with capacity-building on strengthening the protection of civilians.

51. In line with the electoral assistance mandate of UNITAMS, and pursuant to a request made by the national authorities for support, an electoral needs assessment mission visited the Sudan from 5 to 23 April. The mission was composed of representatives from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNDP. Meetings were held with a wide range of interlocutors, including representatives from the national authorities, political parties, the media, civil society, women's groups and members of the donors community, as well as various United Nations agencies. The needs assessment mission sought to review and discuss the overall electoral environment in the Sudan, as well as the legal and institutional framework that may govern an electoral process and the various needs of key stakeholders. The Mission will present recommendations to Sudanese partners on the parameters and modalities under which the United Nations might provide technical support to assist a nationally owned and led process, and outline preparatory steps needed to enable United Nations entities to better ready themselves to provide technical electoral support, as it becomes necessary.

IV. Development cooperation

52. Important policy planning continued to pave the way for the sustainable economic development of the Sudan. In addition to the workplan of the transitional Government, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is developing a three-year programme for stability and economic development, with the support of the United Nations country team. The transitional Government is now finalizing the

poverty reduction strategy paper, which was started in 2017 but progress on which later stalled due to the political developments in the country. The United Nations is working to align its programming with the vision of the transitional Government as set out in these planning documents, as well as to expand its work to support the transition.

53. To this end, the Mission continued to work with the United Nations country team to develop a programmatic framework which will ensure an integrated approach to the work of the United Nations in support of the UNITAMS mandate. The framework is aimed at bringing together existing and future programming to ensure that Sudan-wide targeted activities are jointly developed, at both the national and subnational levels. The Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilization Programme is structured around four strategic pillars, in keeping with the UNITAMS mandate: political transition; implementation of peace processes; peacebuilding, rule of law and the protection of civilians; and development assistance coordination. On 12 April, the draft document was discussed with the transitional Government's National Committee for Coordination with the United Nations, which includes representatives of all concerned ministries. More detailed discussions will continue in working groups. The United Nations is also undertaking consultations regarding the governance structure for the peacebuilding and stabilization window of the Sudan financing platform multi-partner trust fund, to ensure system-wide coherence between the Mission and its integrated United Nations country team partners, as well as additional lines of accountability for results at the highest level of the Mission's leadership.

54. To foster greater alignment on the planning and delivery of development and peacebuilding support, work is also currently under way on the creation of the Sudan National Development Forum, which will constitute a national mechanism for the coordination of development assistance under the leadership of the transitional Government, in line with the global principles of effective development cooperation. The envisaged mechanism will comprise three levels. The highest level will be chaired by the Prime Minister, together with partners from the international community. The strategic level, at which meetings will be chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, will provide a forum for policy dialogue on the effectiveness of development cooperation in the light of its overall support for the implementation of the national development plan. A number of thematic or sectoral working groups will be established, reflecting national priorities and providing a forum to discuss sector and cross-sector planning and prioritization in the context of strategic plans and development programmes. These working groups will also be responsible for supporting the development and implementation of sector-wide strategies.

V. Benchmarks

55. The Security Council requested, in its resolution [2524 \(2020\)](#), that the Secretary-General provide a report on the implementation of the UNITAMS mandate and develop related clear and measurable benchmarks and indicators to track UNITAMS progress against its strategic objectives, to enable early planning for a future reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in the Sudan in keeping with the evolving situation.

56. After consultations with the United Nations country team and the transitional Government, a total of 20 benchmarks and 107 indicators (see annex I) have been identified to measure progress in the delivery of the nine strategic priorities across the four pillars of the UNITAMS mandate.

57. UNITAMS will work with the United Nations country team and the transitional Government to establish a baseline and targets for the benchmarks in the second quarter of 2021 to begin tracking progress. In doing so, some of the indicators may be adjusted as the Mission and the country team develop, in consultation with national partners, a fully fledged integrated strategic framework. UNITAMS will work with partners on joint fundraising, planning, resource allocation and tracking in achievement of these benchmarks. In consultation with the United Nations country team and the transitional Government, it will also seek to establish a robust monitoring and data collection mechanism to track progress against the benchmarks, drawing on existing data collection mechanisms.

58. The benchmarks reflect the initial foundation for the identification of system-wide critical priorities that United Nations entities in the Sudan will work towards collectively over the course of the transition, in keeping with their respective mandates and areas of expertise. UNITAMS will seek to focus on its political and advisory functions, while drawing upon the deep expertise of the more operationally focused capacities of the United Nations country team in their respective areas. Such an integrated, calibrated approach, utilizing the comparative advantages and strengths of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, will allow for more coordinated action to ensure the achievement of the benchmarks in alignment with the priorities of national counterparts.

VI. Observations

59. The Sudanese transition continues to face significant challenges, even as the transitional Government endeavours to move forward with key reforms. The establishment of the remaining transitional institutions is critical for advancing an inclusive political transition and addressing long-standing challenges. I urge the transitional authorities to expedite the formation of the Transitional Legislative Council, with 40 per cent representation of women, and of the relevant committees and commissions emanating from the Constitutional Document and the Juba Peace Agreement.

60. The establishment of the National High Committee and the creation of four out of five subcommittees to follow up on the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement are welcome steps. Despite these efforts, progress remains too slow. A concerted and coordinated effort to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement by the transitional Government and signatories, with the support of the international community and the guarantors of the Agreement, is urgently needed. It is urged that the transitional Government prioritize the implementation of the security arrangements provided for in the Agreement, including the operationalization of ceasefire mechanisms.

61. The recurring violence in Darfur and elsewhere is deeply concerning. The recent events in El Geneina are a tragic reminder of the toll civilians continue to pay in the absence of peace and stability. The transitional Government has to do more to effectively protect its civilians, despite the immense challenges it faces in this transitional period. In doing so, the needs and perspectives of women and girls, who are often the most vulnerable during conflict require particular attention.

62. In this regard, the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians need to be accelerated, with the objective of creating a gender-responsive and a protective environment for all Sudanese. The transitional authorities and signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement must ensure that the joint protection forces are deployed without delay. The recent announcement by the transitional authorities

of eight measures to enhance the protection of civilians is a positive step. The timely implementation of these measures will also be critical.

63. The Declaration of Principles signed by the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Commander of the SPLM/N Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction, as well as their commitment to commence negotiations, is a welcome development. These are important steps which can contribute to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Sudan. UNITAMS stands ready to support all efforts in this regard.

64. Peace in the Sudan will not be complete until all conflicts come to an end. This requires armed movements that remain outside the peace process to display leadership and commit to negotiations that will lead to a fully inclusive and sustainable peace in the Sudan. With the new prospects for peace created by the Juba Peace Agreement, it is critical to address the consequences of these conflicts. This includes finding sustainable solutions to the plight of more than 2.5 million internally displaced persons, with the support of the United Nations and the international community. As part of finding a lasting solution to the conflicts in the Sudan, the transitional Government should strengthen reconciliation and transitional justice mechanisms.

65. As efforts continue to consolidate peace in the Sudan, ensuring the meaningful participation and inclusion of women has to be priority. It is important that the transitional Government continue to heed the demands of Sudanese women and fulfil its commitments regarding representation under the Constitutional Document. I am also concerned by the level of violence against women in the private and public spheres. It serves as reminder that sufficient steps have yet to be taken to create a protective environment that respects the full and equal rights of women. The operationalization of a framework of cooperation with the United Nations to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence is critical, as is the establishment of the Women and Gender Equality Commission as part of broader legal reform efforts.

66. The clearance of the country's arrears held by the World Bank is an important development towards unlocking much-needed financial support, bringing the Sudan closer to a decision point for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. In the light of the very challenging circumstances, the transitional Government is to be commended for its sustained commitment to implementing difficult economic and institutional reforms. I welcome the support provided by the international community and international financial institutions to help the Sudan clear its arrears and provide social protection. It will remain essential that the transitional Government persevere in its reform efforts as it heads to the Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative decision point, all the while prioritizing the provision of support to the population to address its growing socioeconomic needs and address the root causes of conflict. At the same time, the international community's continued support at this critical inflection point in the country's history.

67. The ongoing response of the Sudanese authorities to the COVID-19 pandemic, which the United Nations continues to assist, is commendable. The Sudan will continue to require the support of the international community in providing continued lifesaving assistance, including to alleviate the economic impacts and to address the humanitarian consequences. The pandemic entails refocusing attention on the suffering of the most vulnerable.

68. The tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia over the Fashaqah region are deeply concerning. I urge the leadership of both countries to take concrete steps to de-escalate the situation and find a peaceful way forward to resolve this issue, in the interests of both nations. I will continue to explore opportunities to encourage a peaceful resolution, in collaboration with key partners, including at the regional level.

69. I also thank my Special Representative, Volker Perthes, the officer-in-charge for UNAMID ad interim, M'Baye Babacar Cissé, and all United Nations personnel in the Sudan for their dedication and untiring efforts, working in challenging conditions in support of the Sudan and its people.

Annex I

Benchmarks and indicators

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Strategic priority 1: support political stability	Sudanese transitional institutions are inclusive and engaged in national efforts towards democratic governance, sustainable peace and the realization of the objectives of the political transition, as outlined in the Constitutional Document, including the constitutional process, the population census, elections and the Juba Peace Agreement	• Number of meetings, dialogues and sessions held with political and civil society actors to support the constitutional process • Constitution drafted through an inclusive process • Election time frame agreed • Population census carried out according to international best practice standards
	Women meaningfully participate in and inform decision-making processes in realizing the objectives of the Constitutional Document	• Number of women in key decision-making bodies, transitional institutions and processes
	National stakeholders, including youth and civil society, are engaged in realizing the objectives of the Constitutional Document, resulting in good governance and responsive transitional institutions	• Number of meetings with youth participation • Number of meetings with civil society participation
Strategic priority 2: support the constitution- drafting, electoral and census processes	A constitution that meets internationally recognized standards and promotes good governance, the fundamental rights of all Sudanese, gender equality and the rule of law is drafted and adopted, following an inclusive process, with the meaningful participation of women and in line with the Constitutional Document and the international human rights treaty obligations of the Sudan	• Percentage of women in the constitution-drafting body • Constitution-drafting body meets with representatives of all regions of the Sudan • Constitution lists human rights, including women's rights • Constitution has explicit provisions on the separation of powers, including judicial independence in line with international standards
	A population census that enumerates all residents in the country, including in areas of displacement, and provides high quality information, disaggregated by sex and age, is conducted	• Number of international best practices put in place during the census-planning process • Number of laws enacted to enable the census to be undertaken • Number of public information campaigns undertaken on the census • Census completed

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
	Free, fair and credible elections are held in a peaceful manner at the end of the transitional period, with the meaningful participation of women as candidates and voters	• Electoral calendar defined • Electoral management body formed according to international best practice standards • Number of election awareness campaigns undertaken • Percentage of female candidates • Percentage of registered female voters • Number of voting stations for internally displaced persons • Number of measures enacted to address nomadic voters • Balanced geographical distribution of polling stations • Number of technical assistance training sessions and workshops delivered • Number of capacity-building and training sessions given to the Sudanese Police Force on electoral security • Number of gender-based violence mitigation clauses in the Sudanese Police Force's election security framework
Strategic priority 3: support institutional reforms and the promotion and protection of human rights	Justice, governance and human rights institutions are set up based on the Constitutional Document and discharge their mandate in line with international standards and norms	• Number of consultation meetings with civil society on justice reforms • Number of populated websites of rule of law institutions • Number of reasoned human resource decisions of rule of law institutions published • Number of emblematic cases on serious human rights violations, past abuses and corruption tried in accordance with international standards and norms • Number of policies/reform frameworks created and/or edited for the empowerment of women • Percentage of women represented in ministries and institutions as provided for in the future constitution • Number of capacity-mapping exercises undertaken with the national human rights commission

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Strategic priority 4: support the conclusion of an inclusive peace process	Peace negotiations and processes between the Government of Sudan and non-signatories are inclusive, with United Nations support, as requested, to reach a comprehensive and sustainable peace across the Sudan Progress is achieved between the transitional Government and the remaining non-signatories to the peace agreements, bringing them closer to reaching peace agreements	• Number of technical capacity-building sessions delivered • Number of women's groups consulted as parties to negotiations • Number of civil society organizations engaged in the consultative process • Number of youth groups engaged in consultative groups • Number of small conferences held in the Two Areas and Darfur to prepare and draft the constitution within the framework of preparations for the national constitutional conference • Number of armed groups with which a negotiated settlement signed • Number of meetings and consultations held between the transitional Government and the remaining non-signatories • Percentage of non-signatory representatives who agree with recommendations resulting from consultations • A national durable solutions strategy developed • Number of parties agreeing to guarantees in pre-negotiations and committing to extending such agreements into actual settlements
Strategic priority 5: support the implementation of the peace agreement	Peace agreements are implemented with the continued commitment of the parties and diverse stakeholders, and scalable United Nations support, in an equitable manner to effectively address regional disparities	• A national peace commission established and functional • A gender commission established and functional • A land commission established and functional • Balanced regional representation at governance conference to define powers and responsibilities in the new regional system and to review administrative borders of the regions • Percentage of national civil service and justice institutions staff that are drawn from the Two Areas and Darfur

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
	An inclusive and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism regarding implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement is operational and enabled to function	• Percentage of priority areas previously contaminated with explosives ordnance that the local population and the United Nations can safely use • Parties remain committed to the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and all its protocols • Monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the Juba Peace Agreement is established and operational • Integrated national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy developed and operationalized, including the establishment of coordination mechanisms • Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration capacity developed across national and regional institutions • Number of demobilized armed groups • National framework and institutional capacities on transitional weapons and ammunition management developed and operationalized • Number of legal and legitimate security governance mechanisms finalized • Number of women represented in security governance arrangements, including at senior decision-making levels • Number of gender-responsive and youth-sensitive ceasefire mechanisms established and functioning to monitor and report on violations • Number of civil society initiatives to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement
Strategic priority 6: support the strengthening of the protective environment, in particular in conflict and post-conflict areas	National capacity, in particular of the Sudanese Police Force, for conflict prevention and physical protection of civilians, including displaced populations, is enhanced through the support of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) for the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians	• A commission on refugees and internally displaced persons is established and functional • Number of returnees overseen by the commission on refugees and internally displaced persons • Number of returnees reintegrated

<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
	• Number of capacity-building and training sessions on the protection of civilians based on domestic legal provisions, international human rights law, refugee and criminal law and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement • Number of participants that agree with the recommendations of the capacity-building and training sessions • Number of early warning analysis mechanisms established and functioning • Amount of early warning data provided • Number of civilian protection patrols, for protection through presence and visibility • Percentage of women participating in security forces and community-based mechanisms for the protection of civilians • Legal framework to prevent, respond to and hold accountable perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence developed and operationalized • Percentage of human rights actors who acknowledge progress by authorities in the fight against conflict-related violence • Number of community violence reduction projects developed across regions to prevent recruitment, build community resilience and increase capacity to absorb former combatants • Number of former combatants absorbed • Number of cases of serious violations and sexual and gender-based violence that are reported, investigated and tried in a manner compliant with the rule of law increases after training in cases involving such violence • Number of female police investigators trained for the investigation of cases of sexual and gender-based violence and child abuse

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
	Community-level protection capacity, including civil society actors and local protection networks, is increased and supported to promote and protect human rights, particularly the rights of civilians in need of protection, including children	• Number of early warning civilian protection mechanisms and networks for Darfur and the Two Areas established • Number of women-led protection and early warning initiatives, such as the women's protection networks, strengthened and expanded • An inclusive and gender-responsive community-oriented policing policy and protocol is put in place to also support early warning • Number of standardized tools developed for documenting early warning incidents of attacks against civilians and civilian objects and human rights violations and abuses in Darfur and the Two Areas
	Comprehensive accountability measures, transitional justice processes and mechanisms that are survivor-centered and gender-responsive, and that contribute to addressing the root causes of instability and insecurity, are established and effectively promoted in line with the Constitutional Document and the Juba Peace Agreement	• Key commissions and institutions envisioned under the Constitutional Document are operationalized • Number of special accountability mechanisms for Darfur crimes established and functioning in accordance with the Constitutional Document and international norms and standards • Truth and Reconciliation Commission established and functioning in Darfur • Number of victims groups established and supported • Number of witness protection mechanisms established
Strategic priority 7: support the achievement of peaceful coexistence and reconciliation between communities	The Juba Peace Agreement is implemented at the community level in a coordinated and inclusive manner	• Number of national and local policies, strategies and plans related to peacebuilding and durable solutions developed • Number of community violence reduction initiatives drafted with a particular focus on intercommunal violence • Number of women engaged in the design and implementation of peacebuilding initiatives

	Benchmarks	Indicators
		• Number of conflicts addressed through reconciliation measures (symbolic acts, judicial acts, normative statements and strategic policy statements) implemented at the national and local levels
	Mechanisms for monitoring, prevention, management and resolution of intercommunal conflicts, including those related to land and access to resources, and the prevention of crop destruction are in place, building on and strengthening existing local women-led initiatives	• Number of established mechanisms for monitoring, preventing, managing and resolving conflict (i.e. State conflict resolution committees) • Number of inter-community or land disputes mediated by courts, rural courts and State conflict resolution committees • Number of women-led initiatives • Number of youth-led initiatives • Number of initiatives to de-escalate violence and promote confidence established • Number of civil society organizations involved in reporting
Strategic priority 8: support international resource mobilization and national socioeconomic reforms	Continued international political consensus and engagement, including sufficient mobilization of economic and financial resources, in support of the political transition and economic reforms and recovery of the Sudan	• Amount, in Sudanese pounds and United States dollars, of support for the Sudan provided by international financial institutions for the period 2021–2024 • Number of partners providing sustained multi-year financial support to the economic recovery of Sudan during the period 2021–2024
	The Sudan demonstrates continued commitment to achieving a functioning and sustainable national economic framework through collaboration with donor States, international financial institutions and United Nations support	• Technical support provided to the Sudan to complete the poverty reduction strategy paper, and as a prerequisite for reaching the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative decision point • Number of consultations to inform completion of the poverty reduction strategy • Amount of expenditure in the national budget dedicated to health and education is increased over the period 2021–2024 • Gender budgeting mechanism introduced across the transitional Government of the Sudan

	<i>Benchmarks</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Strategic priority 9: support the establishment of a national architecture for development planning and aid effectiveness	An improved aid coordination and effectiveness architecture is established under the leadership of the transitional Government of the Sudan	• A national Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework is adopted under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework • Percentage of funding channeled through the multi-partner trust fund peacebuilding and stabilization window in support of programming towards the UNITAMS mandate • The Friends of Sudan group and the Khartoum-based coordination mechanisms continue to support resource mobilization for the period 2021–2024 • Mechanisms to ensure accountability to affected populations, including in relation to the policy on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, are established and functioning • Percentage of outreach initiatives to affected populations in the development planning stage
	International and national stakeholders adopt an evidence-based approach to development and peacebuilding needs	• Number of early warning systems established by both the crisis risk dashboard and the common data information management board • Number of consultations with women's rights leaders and with experts on macroeconomic policies • Number of gender-specific macroeconomic policies enacted

Annex II

Report on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 2559 (2020)

I. Introduction

1. The present annex is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2559 (2020), by which the Council requested regular updates on the drawdown and withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) as an annex to the regular report on the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). The present annex provides an update on the context and the progress made in the drawdown for the period from 1 February to 6 May 2021.

II. Update on the drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

A. Closure of team sites and facilities

2. UNAMID remains on schedule for the closure of its 14 team sites in five phases, and has accelerated the process to allow for contingencies. Phase I (Saraf Umrah and Kutum) and phase II (Khor Abeche, Menawashei, Nyala II and Kalma) closures were completed as scheduled, with a minor adjustment for Kalma, which was handed over a week later than the originally envisaged date. Phase III has also been accomplished, with the completed handover of Sortony (8 April), Golo (11 April) and Nertiti (22 April). This was followed by the phase IV closures of Tawilah (4 May), Kass (5 May) and Zalingei (6 May). Phase V team site closures include Kabkabiyah (20 May) and Shangil Tobaya (25 May), leaving the El Fasher logistics hub for the conduct of liquidation activities.

3. The handover of the Kalma team site was delayed from 11 to 18 March 2021, and Sortoni from 28 March to 8 April 2021, at the request of the transitional Government to allow time for efforts to create more conducive conditions for the handovers, including engagement with local communities. The Operation was informed that the Kalma facility, established to address protection concerns for internally displaced persons in the Kalma camp, was now being managed by the internally displaced persons as a medical centre, while the Nertiti team site was to be converted for use as an agriculture and forestry college of the University of Zalingei. For the former operational headquarters of UNAMID in Zalingei, early transition to the University of Zalingei, one of the key beneficiaries, is under way, with partial occupancy by the university having already taken place. The handover dates for some of the team sites have been brought forward in order to allow for potential delays due to the rainy season and other contingencies. Accordingly, Tawilah was handed over on 4 May instead of 11 May as previously planned, and Zalingei on 6 May instead of 27 May. Kabkabiyah is now scheduled for handover on 20 May instead of 16 June and Shangil Tobaya on 25 May instead of 5 June.

4. After reported looting at the former UNAMID Saraf Umrah team site on 17 February 2021, there were smaller-scale looting incidents in Kutum and Menawashei, where the timely actions of State authorities limited the damage and restored security. These include an incident on 12 March 2021 when some 200 local residents broke into the former team site in Menawashei, with joint Government

forces firing shots to prevent further looting, resulting in the death of 2 civilians and injuries to 17 others. UNAMID is following up on unverified reports of similar looting in Sortony, which it understands are under investigation by the authorities.

Personnel separation

5. The Operation is on schedule to separate staff and repatriate contingent personnel and contingent-owned equipment in accordance with its drawdown plan and timeline. As of the end of April, most remaining staff were those engaged in technical and logistical support of the drawdown, and it was expected that in early May repatriation of uniformed personnel would accelerate in line with the closure of team sites. As at 21 April 2021, 688 military contingent members (18 per cent of troop strength) and 66 individual military personnel (55 per cent of the total) had been separated. With regard to the drawdown of police personnel, 962 former police unit members had been repatriated by 3 May 2021 (59 per cent of the those present as at 1 January 2021), along with 590 individual police officers (95 per cent of those present on 1 January 2021). A total of 477 staff members (181 international staff and 296 national staff) had been separated by 30 April 2021, while 654 (176 international staff and 478 national staff) were to be separated in May and June 2021, leaving 299 staff members (129 international staff, 155 national staff and 15 United Nations Volunteers) for the liquidation phase.

Coordination with the Government and local communities

6. Engagement and coordination with the Government at the federal and at the Darfur State levels, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), has improved. The Operation has observed greater willingness on the part of federal authorities to intervene on its behalf, with the Government's joint task force for drawdown playing an increased role. On 4 March 2021, a framework agreement was signed between the transitional Government and the Secretariat on the handover of team sites and assets exclusively for civilian use.

7. The Operation faced challenges due to some misunderstanding among local communities and State officials regarding the ownership of UNAMID assets, including contingent- and United Nations-owned equipment, and their related expectation that such assets would be donated to the State and local communities when UNAMID exited. This has resulted in some attempts to prevent the movement of assets from team sites. In extreme cases, obstructions have delayed the movement of UNAMID equipment for several days, often at significant cost. Robust engagement by UNAMID with federal and State authorities, as well as with concerned communities, led to the positive resolution of these situations.

Civilian end-use of sites

8. The conclusion of the framework agreement on the civilian end-use of team sites and assets is a significant step in realizing the intention stipulated by the Security Council in resolutions [2525 \(2020\)](#) and [2559 \(2020\)](#). In most cases, the Government has committed to ensuring that facilities and assets will be used for social and community services, including health and education. Decisions regarding their use have been taken after consultation between the federal and State governments, and outreach to the local communities.

B. Post-drawdown activities: liquidation

9. On 1 July 2021, the Operation will enter its liquidation phase, which is expected to be completed within a 12-month period. Liquidation activities will be conducted

from the El Fasher logistics hub, but the Operation will maintain a presence in Khartoum within the UNITAMS complex, to liaise with Government officials on operational matters, and in Port Sudan for export logistical operations. Liquidation activities will include the transition of the El Fasher camp to designated civilian end-users, the disposal of property holdings of about \$116 million in residual value, the completion of the environmental clean-up and restoration, the disposal of hazardous materials (including expired ammunition), the transfer of archives and the disposal of archival paper records, and the completion of administrative activities, including claims, contracts, financial records, and legal and administrative cases.

10. Subject to budgetary approval, the liquidation team will be composed of 215 civilian operational personnel (111 international staff, 89 national staff and 15 United Nations Volunteers), a United Nations guard unit of two formed police units with a total strength of 363 uniformed personnel and 84 civilian security personnel (18 international staff and 66 national staff). A security element of 50 police and 206 military personnel provided by the Government of the Sudan is expected to complement the security arrangements.

C. Security context

Current developments

11. Starting on 31 March 2021, local community groups clashed in Sereif, North Darfur, resulting in 10 fatalities and 20 people injured. Government security forces deployed in the area, and UNAMID and the United Nations country team suspended movement in the area until the situation was fully contained.

12. As reported in the UNITAMS report above, many critical United Nations activities were affected as a result of the resurgence of intercommunal violence starting on 3 April 2021 in El Geneina, West Darfur. On 7 April 2021, UNAMID, which retains overall leadership for the security of United Nations personnel in Darfur under the United Nations security management system, activated its crisis management team. The Operation supported the temporary relocation of non-essential United Nations country team staff and the personnel of international non-governmental organizations from El Geneina to its facility in Zalingei, and organized flights, from 9 to 12 April 2021, to evacuate 93 injured people from El Geneina to Khartoum for medical treatment at the request of UNITAMS and the Sudanese authorities. While these activities were carried out without much disruption to the drawdown, the fighting forced UNAMID to revise its troop repatriation plans for one contingent, which will now be airlifted from El Fasher, instead of being repatriated from El Geneina as previously planned.

13. On 29 March 2021, approximately 50 El Fasher University students staged a peaceful march towards the UNAMID El Fasher logistics hub, demanding that the facility be handed over to the University. On 6 April 2021, approximately 1,000 El Fasher University students and internally displaced persons from the neighbouring camps demonstrated again in front of the El Fasher logistics hub, with the same demands.

Incidents involving United Nations personnel and installations

14. On 2 March 2021, the Sudanese Armed Forces fired at a local vehicle for not stopping at the checkpoint in Thabit, North Darfur. As a result, a UNAMID bus transporting formed police unit personnel was struck by a bullet, resulting in minor injuries to a unit member, who was hit by glass fragments.

15. Crime continued to have an impact on United Nations personnel and assets, with incidents of armed robbery, intrusion into facilities, stone-throwing and theft. On

24 February 2021, United Nations-owned equipment was stolen when two sea containers at the Zalingei super camp were broken into. On 22 March, vehicle spare parts were stolen from the El Fasher logistics hub. On 27 March, the residence of a UNAMID national staff member in Zalingei was burglarized. On 29 March, a UNAMID national staff member was threatened by an unknown caller for alleged involvement in the intercommunal conflict in El Geneina.

Guard unit

16. As authorized by the Security Council in its resolution [2559 \(2020\)](#), the Mission, in coordination with the Secretariat, is in the process of finalizing the establishment of a guard unit consisting of 363 formed police unit personnel (360 guard unit personnel and 3 command and control headquarters officers). Guard unit tasks will include protecting UNAMID personnel, facilities and assets, mainly inside the El Fasher logistics hub perimeter, and providing limited escorts. Sudanese security forces will protect the external perimeter, consistent with their primary responsibility to protect UNAMID personnel, premises and assets. Two formed police units from the Mission's existing footprint have been retained as the guard unit and have already relocated to El Fasher after the handover of their respective team sites. They have started sharing the responsibilities for protecting the El Fasher logistics base with the military and the United Nations civilian security team. They will have full responsibility for security inside the perimeter of the logistics base, as all other troops and police will be withdrawn by 30 June 2021. The Mission and United Nations Headquarters have developed a Statement of Unit Requirements for the guard unit based upon memorandums of understanding to be signed with the relevant contributing countries.

D. Transition of tasks to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan

17. During the reporting period, UNAMID completed or handed over to other partners residual activities that it had initiated in 2020 but could not complete prior to the end of its mandate. These residual activities included core programmatic activities in the areas of rule of law, community policing, gender-based violence and community stabilization, as well as the activities of the State liaison functions which were established jointly with the United Nations country team. To date, 7 of the 28 core programmatic residual activities have been completed, with the remaining 21 expected to be finalized by 31 May 2021. Of the original 103 State liaison function residual activities, United Nations country team entities have completed 81, with the remaining 22 to be completed by 31 May 2021. UNAMID has also handed over to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) some uncompleted activities that it started in 2020 in partnership with UNDP and the World Health Organization in support of the transitional Government's response efforts related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). An integrated team comprising representatives of UNAMID, UNITAMS and the United Nations country team is overseeing the conclusion, by 31 May 2021, of a major project implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to prevent and mitigate recurrent conflicts between farmers and herders.

18. UNAMID continues to coordinate knowledge transfer to UNITAMS and the United Nations country team, particularly on common strategic objectives and priorities in Darfur. In partnership with UNITAMS, the Operation has organized 13 online brown bag lunch seminars examining best practices, lessons learned and potential challenges. Moreover, UNAMID has facilitated the direct access of UNITAMS staff to existing UNAMID Joint Mission Analysis Cell data sets.

III. Financial aspects

19. The General Assembly, in its resolutions [74/261](#) C of 30 June 2020 and decision 74/571 of 3 September 2020, as well as in its resolution [75/251](#) of 31 December 2020, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the Operation in amounts not exceeding \$240.2 million for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2020 and \$198.8 million for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2021, respectively.

20. As at 20 April 2021, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMID amounted to \$175.5 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to approximately \$2,668,100,000.

21. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 30 September 2020, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 March 2020, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IV. Observations

22. Despite some challenges, the drawdown of UNAMID is continuing apace, with the closure of team sites even being accelerated to allow for unforeseen contingencies and ensure that the deadline is met for the completion of the drawdown. I commend our partners in the transitional Government and the Darfur State capitals for the role they are playing.

23. I welcome the signature of the framework agreement between the transitional Government and the Secretariat on the handover of team sites and assets exclusively for civilian use. Among other measures, this will help to cement the positive legacy of UNAMID of providing direct benefit to Darfuri civilians. I encourage the Sudanese authorities to sustain their vigilance to minimize the threat of looting at former UNAMID team sites.

24. Nevertheless, significant challenges await us, both in completing the drawdown and in the liquidation phase that will continue after 30 June. In this regard, the continued support and partnership of the Sudanese authorities will be critical. In particular, I look forward to the transitional Government's swift cooperation to enable the full and effective deployment of the guard unit for the El Fasher logistics hub, noting the need to ensure that appropriate measures are in place as the last few uniformed units depart from Darfur.

25. While the intercommunal violence in West Darfur in April is a major concern, UNAMID was able to lend support, including by helping to facilitate the temporary relocation of United Nations country team and non-governmental organization personnel, and by conducting medical evacuations of injured civilians. However, it is apparent that with the uniformed personnel repatriations and closure of team sites scheduled in the near term, the Operation will very soon no longer be in a position to offer such support.

26. I want to express my sincere appreciation to M'Baye Babacar Cissé, who has stepped in as officer-in-charge for the Operation ad interim, for his valuable leadership. I also extend my sincere gratitude to UNAMID civilian and uniformed personnel, both those who have already departed and those who are still in Darfur, the troop- and police-contributing countries, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community, as well as UNITAMS, for their invaluable support for peace in Darfur.