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

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2636 \(2022\)](#), by which the Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) until 3 June 2023 and requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on its implementation. The report covers developments in the Sudan from 6 May to 20 August 2022 and contains an update on the implementation of the Mission's mandate, with gender considerations integrated throughout as a cross-cutting issue.

II. Significant developments

A. Political situation

2. The political crisis in the Sudan remained unresolved, although domestic, regional and international efforts aimed at facilitating a political solution to restore a credible civilian-led democratic transition following the military coup of 25 October 2021 continued. The lack of political agreement and of a fully functional Government contributed to insecurity in various parts of the country, as well as to the deterioration of the economic and humanitarian situation.

3. Resistance committees in Khartoum and across the Sudan intensified protests to denounce the coup and to demand a return to civilian rule. Women participated in significant numbers and organized and led demonstrations across the various regions. Sudanese authorities often blocked major roads and bridges prior to demonstrations, in particular in Khartoum. Although most protests were peaceful and unarmed, security forces consistently used live ammunition, tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets and stun grenades to disperse protesters in Khartoum State, resulting in 21 civilian deaths and 2,073 injuries, while 63 injuries were caused by protesters being hit by security forces vehicles.

4. The largest nationwide protests took place on 30 June, to mark the anniversary of the 1989 military coup that brought General Omar al-Bashir to power and overthrew the previous democratically elected Government. It also marked the first



“million person” march following the violent dispersal of protesters on 3 June 2019. Despite international and regional calls for restraint and public assurances by the police that they would use non-lethal means to control the crowds, the use of force by the security forces to disperse the demonstration resulted in nine protesters being killed and over 600 injured. The Sudanese Police Force stated that 96 police and 129 military personnel sustained injuries; the United Nations could not verify that information. The violence on 30 June was strongly condemned by the international community, including the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). National actors, including women’s groups, called for continued protests. Several sit-ins were organized in Khartoum in the aftermath of 30 June to denounce the violence and use of force by the security forces.

5. The trilateral mechanism, consisting of the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD, advocated the creation of conditions conducive to enabling negotiations between the military and civilians. In a public statement on 25 May as well as in private meetings, the mechanism called upon the authorities to cease all violence, release all detainees, stop all arrests and lift the state of emergency. It continued to express concern about the excessive use of force by the security forces and called for credible investigations into all incidents of violence. On 29 May, the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, issued a decree lifting the nationwide state of emergency that had been in place since October 2021. A total of 171 detainees were subsequently released across the country.

6. On 8 June, the trilateral mechanism held a technical meeting in Khartoum to discuss preparatory details for civilian-military dialogue aimed at restoring the civilian-led democratic transition. The meeting was attended by a range of political parties and movements as well as the Sudanese Revolutionary Front and representatives of the military. Some critical political actors declined to join the meeting, including the central council of the Forces for Freedom and Change, the National Umma Party, the Sudanese Communist Party, the Women’s Rights Group, the Sudanese Professionals Association and resistance committees.

7. On 9 June, a meeting was held between the central council of the Forces for Freedom and Change and military representatives at the joint invitation of the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs of the United States of America and the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the Sudan. The trilateral mechanism welcomed the meeting, at which direct talks were launched between representatives of the military and the Forces for Freedom and Change. However, following the violence on 30 June, the central council withdrew from the talks and called for continued civil disobedience and the escalation of protests.

8. On 2 July, the military component informed the trilateral mechanism of its intention to withdraw from the civilian-military dialogue facilitated by the mechanism. It requested instead that the mechanism facilitate a civilian-civilian dialogue as an immediate priority to assist in reaching consensus. On 4 July, Lieutenant General Al-Burhan announced in a televised speech that the military would not participate in the negotiations facilitated by the mechanism in order to “allow space for political and revolutionary forces to ... form a Government of national competencies”. He added that, following the formation of the Government, the Sovereign Council would be dissolved and a Supreme Council of Armed Forces, composed of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, would be formed. He noted that the Supreme Council of Armed Forces would be responsible for security and defence tasks and “related responsibilities”, in agreement with the Government.

9. Following the withdrawal of the military from the dialogue, the trilateral mechanism announced that the basis for continuing the 8 June civilian-military talks

no longer existed and that it would continue to engage separately with all components to facilitate a political solution. Meanwhile, various initiatives were proposed by civil society figures and political forces to unify the positions of civilians. On 23 July, the Deputy Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, voiced support for the withdrawal of the military from politics and urged “the revolutionary and national political forces” to “speed up reaching urgent solutions that lead to the formation of transitional governance institutions”. Subsequently, in a televised interview on 1 August, he acknowledged the “failure” of the coup of 25 October 2021, noting the deteriorating economic and security situation and stressing the importance of reforming the security sector and establishing a unified professional army.

10. On 10 July, Lieutenant General Al-Burhan appointed five retired army, intelligence and police generals as ambassadors at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The central council of the Forces for Freedom and Change immediately issued a statement condemning the appointments, noting that “such decisions reveal the real intentions [of the military] to dominate all aspects of life, and to militarize civilian functions, including foreign relations”.

11. There was little progress in the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan. However, in accordance with the Darfur track of the Agreement, the first batch of 2,000 armed movement members to be integrated into the Joint Security-Keeper Force graduated on 3 July after several months of training. The Force will be deployed to hotspots in North, West and South Darfur.

12. On 11 August, the Governor of the Darfur region signed the Native Administration Bill into law, the first law governing the native administration system in the Darfur region in line with the Juba Peace Agreement. However, concerns were raised with regard to the drafting process, its coherence with federal laws, and the jurisdiction of the regional government to pass the law.

13. Meanwhile, on 11 June, 45 representatives of the Justice and Equality Movement from North, South and West Kordofan States announced they had left the armed group, citing their discontent with the leadership’s indifference to the issues of Kordofan, in particular the non-inclusion of former combatants in the security arrangements agreed under the Juba Peace Agreement. They stated that they would form a political group to pursue the interests of Kordofan. In the Blue Nile Region, on 4 July, a number of personnel from the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) Malik Agar faction, based in the Ulu area of the Bauw locality, arrived in El Damazin to receive training in accordance with the Juba Peace Agreement.

14. The reporting period saw an escalation of tensions between the Sudan and Ethiopia in the disputed Fashaqah border area. On 26 June, the Sudanese Armed Forces accused the Ethiopian army of executing seven captive Sudanese soldiers and one civilian and publicly displaying their bodies. On the same day, the Sudan recalled its Ambassador to Ethiopia and summoned the Ambassador of Ethiopia to the Sudan. On 27 and 28 June, the Sudan and Ethiopia, respectively, sent letters to the President of the Security Council. On 5 July, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Lieutenant General Al-Burhan met on the sidelines of the IGAD summit in Kenya and agreed to defuse tensions in Fashaqah.

B. Security situation

15. Insecurity, including intercommunal clashes, armed conflict and criminality, continued to pose a significant challenge. From 6 May to 17 August, 569 security incidents were recorded, compared with 419 during the previous reporting period.

Hotspots, including areas in West, North and South Darfur, continued to witness insecurity linked to criminality, livestock rustling and land cultivation. Large-scale violence expanded to include areas that had remained relatively stable in recent years, including the Kulbus locality in West Darfur State, as well as the El Damazin and Rusayris localities in the Blue Nile Region. In addition, heightened insecurity was reported in West and South Kordofan States, as well as in Kassala State. The increased number of security incidents could be attributable in part to seasonal cultivation due to the rainy season.

16. Some of the most violent events during the reporting period occurred in the Kulbus locality of West Darfur. Between 6 and 11 June, at least 165 civilians were killed following a dispute over land tenure and the cultivation of farmland between members of the Gimir community and the Awlad Zaid subclan of the Arab Rizeigat community. The violence resulted in the displacement of approximately 50,000 people. There was an attempt by the Sudanese Armed Forces to mediate between the disputing parties, but the situation escalated. Security forces, including the Rapid Support Forces, were deployed to contain the situation. However, local communities in Kulbus have alleged the involvement of members of the Rapid Support Forces in the violence. Renewed clashes on 21 and 22 July led to further casualties.

17. In June and July, armed clashes between the non-signatory group Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid and the Sudan Liberation Army – Zanoon faction were reported in the Eastern Jebel Marra locality of South Darfur, resulting in at least three fatalities and temporary road closures. Armed clashes also occurred in the Jebel Marra area of Central Darfur when, on 3 August, unknown perpetrators ambushed security forces escorting local authorities travelling from Zalingei to Golo. At least five government personnel were reportedly killed.

18. Following these and previous incidents in Darfur, multiple local peace initiatives were put in place. Between 12 June and 6 July, community leaders in South and West Darfur signed several local peace agreements sponsored by Lieutenant General Dagalo to address large-scale violence between communities in the two states. In South Darfur, one agreement was signed between the Fallata and the Rizeigat Arabs in relation to the violence that had been perpetrated in the Graidia locality. In West Darfur, five separate agreements were signed to address recent violence in the El Geneina, Kuraynik, Sirba, Jebel Moon and Kulbus localities.

19. On 3 and 4 August, intercommunal violence broke out along the West Darfur and Chadian border, resulting in 27 people reportedly killed and 36 injured. Some 18 of those killed and 14 of the injured were Sudanese. On 4 August, Lieutenant General Dagalo met with the President of the Transitional Military Council of Chad, Mahamat Idriss Déby, in N'Djamena, where they are reported to have discussed border security, among other issues. On 5 August, Lieutenant General Al-Burhan also chaired an emergency session of the National Security and Defence Council with the State Security Committee of West Darfur in El Geneina.

20. Transitional security arrangements for Darfur were advanced through the activities of the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee. The Committee, which is chaired by UNITAMS and comprises the Juba Peace Agreement signatories, also worked to de-escalate tensions following cases of armed violence and alleged ceasefire violations. This included efforts contributing to the defusing of tensions following conflict in the Zamzam internally displaced persons site and Kolgi in North Darfur State, in close coordination with the State Security Committee.

21. In the Blue Nile Region, significant violence occurred from 10 to 17 July between members of the Hausa community and members of the Funj, Hamaj and Berta communities. Although the conflict was triggered by a livestock rustling incident in the Geisan locality, it soon spread to other parts of the region, namely the

Wad al-Mahi, Rusayris and El Damazin localities. Between 15 and 17 July, intercommunal clashes in Rusayris and El Damazin reportedly resulted in the killing of at least 117 individuals and hundreds of injuries. The underlying causes of the conflict are related to issues of political representation and land ownership. The violence was seemingly fuelled by hate speech targeting the Hausa. Security forces were deployed to control the situation. In response to the violence, Hausa communities organized protests in Khartoum, North Kordofan, Gedaref, Kassala, Red Sea and North Darfur States. In Kassala, security forces used live ammunition to disperse a sit-in by the Hausa on 18 and 19 July, killing 5 people and injuring 23. Similar protests in Gedaref on 19 July reportedly resulted in two deaths and scores of injured.

22. Following the violence in Blue Nile, the Rapid Support Forces, in collaboration with the shura commission of Rufaa and Kinana tribes, facilitated the signing of a cessation-of-hostilities agreement between members of the disputing communities. The agreement includes recommendations regarding the deployment of joint security forces to the areas affected by violence, as well as the reopening of water sources, markets and farms. Despite the agreement, minor clashes were reported in Wad al-Mahi and Rusayris on 14 and 15 August, respectively.

23. The authorities in the Blue Nile Region commenced the implementation of the security arrangements, including the integration of armed groups into regular forces and other security apparatus, pursuant to chapter 4 of the Two Areas track of the Juba Peace Agreement. Following the completion of verification of the eligibility of combatants of the SPLM-N Malik Agar faction, 2,000 combatants reportedly started to arrive in El Damazin from the Ulu area of the Bauw locality on 4 July to receive training.

24. In West Kordofan State, 23 security incidents were reported, which is a marked increase from 11 incidents in the previous reporting period. Much of the violence, which was largely intercommunal, occurred in the Lagawa, Nuhud and As Sunut localities. The increase can be attributed in part to growing competition over natural resources and disputed land ownership. Several of the incidents were also triggered by cattle rustling. In addition, a series of retaliatory attacks between Nuba and Arab communities were reported in various parts of South Kordofan, following a livestock rustling incident in the Buram locality on 15 July.

25. In Kassala State, intercommunal clashes were reported on 24 May between the Bani Amir and Sebderat owing to tensions over land, while an attempted property theft led to clashes between the Bani Amir and Nuba communities between 14 and 17 June, reportedly resulting in at least eight people killed and scores injured.

C. Human rights, rule of law and protection situation

26. The human rights situation continued to deteriorate. As protests intensified across the Sudan, security forces continued to use excessive force against peaceful protesters which, according to the Central Committee of Sudan Doctors, resulted in 21 deaths and 1,850 injured during the reporting period.

27. In the protests on 30 June, during which nine protesters died, eight of the demonstrators were killed by live ammunition, allegedly fired by security forces. While UNITAMS cannot verify culpability in every case, the high number of deaths is not in doubt and triggered an investigation by the public prosecutor. This was the second-highest number of people killed in a single day at an anti-coup protest since the demonstration of 17 November 2021 that had resulted in 16 recorded deaths. The total number of people killed in the context of demonstrations since 25 October 2021

now stands at 116, including 20 children and 1 woman. There were also many arrests, including a significant number of women and girls.

28. In addition, there were concerning reports of sexual harassment and intimidation targeting women participating in the sit-ins, primarily young women, perpetrated by other protesters and local communities. In response, women's rights groups launched a social media campaign and organized a protest on 6 July to stop the harassment and call for the right of women to safely engage in civic activism in public spaces to be respected.

29. The Mission documented a total of 183 alleged incidents of human rights violations and abuses involving 1,454 victims, including 65 children. Violations of the right to life accounted for 532 victims (504 men, 10 women and 18 children), violations of physical integrity accounted for 769 victims (725 men, 22 women and 22 children), sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, accounted for 35 victims (22 women and 13 girls), and abduction accounted for 53 victims (37 men, 15 women and 1 child). Physical assault accounted for 65 victims (46 men, 13 women and 6 children). Of the 183 documented incidents of alleged human rights violations and abuses, 30 incidents involving 88 victims were reportedly attributed to government security forces and 135 incidents involving 1,281 victims to alleged non-State actors, including armed movements and militia groups, while unknown or unidentified individuals were responsible for 18 incidents involving 24 victims.

30. From 1 to 4 June, the Expert on human rights in the Sudan, Adama Dieng, conducted a second visit to Khartoum and met with senior government officials, including Lieutenant General Al-Burhan, Lieutenant General Dagalo and acting Attorney General Khalifa Ahmed Khalifa, as well as civil society actors. In his end-of-mission statement, Mr. Dieng welcomed the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of detainees arrested under emergency legislation and stressed that more bold and concrete actions were needed to improve the human rights situation and create a conducive environment for political dialogue. A comprehensive report on the human rights situation in the Sudan since 25 October 2021 ([A/HRC/50/22](#)) was presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council on 15 June.

31. Advancing criminal accountability to address widespread impunity for human rights violations continued to be challenging. The implementation of rule of law reforms, including the establishment of judicial oversight mechanisms, was still stalled. After the lifting of the state of emergency on 29 May, measures adopted under it, such as those expanding law enforcement powers of the joint security forces, remained in force, facilitating further crackdowns on protesters and continued impunity. However, on 3 July, in the aftermath of the protests of 30 June, the Office of the Attorney General established a committee to investigate and inquire into the circumstances of the incidents that had taken place and oversee any criminal complaints in that regard. The final member of the Committee to Dismantle the 30 June 1989 Regime and Retrieve Public Funds to still be in detention was released on bail on 8 July. Meanwhile, arrest warrants were issued against the former Minister of Justice and the previous director of Sudanese State television on defamation charges, giving rise to speculations about political motives. On 9 July, a 20-year-old woman was convicted of adultery by Kusti Criminal Court in White Nile State and sentenced to death by stoning. An appeal has been filed.

32. The country task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in armed conflict, co-chaired by UNITAMS and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), verified 14 grave violations against 38 children (24 boys and 14 girls) between 6 May and 17 August 2022. This represents an increase of at

least 36 per cent in the number of children affected by grave violations compared with the previous reporting period. Of the 38 children affected, 2 boys and 2 girls were killed, 20 boys and 8 girls were maimed, 4 girls were subjected to sexual violence and 2 boys were abducted. There was one attack on a school and one incident of denial of humanitarian access. One violation was reportedly attributed to the Sudanese military intelligence and 13 to unidentified armed perpetrators. Six violations were verified in North Darfur, two in South Darfur and six in West Darfur. Eight children were affected by unexploded ordnance, mainly in Zamzam, North Darfur, and eight children in Jebel Moon, West Darfur.

D. Socioeconomic situation

33. The economic situation remains concerning, with shortages of electricity, fuel, food and other commodities severely affecting livelihoods. The protracted political crisis and widespread insecurity are likely to continue to constrain economic activity and deter investors, while high inflation and unemployment are expected to subdue consumption. The real gross domestic product growth forecast of the International Monetary Fund for 2022 stands at 0.3 per cent. Although on a downward trajectory, year-on-year inflation in 2022 is estimated to remain high at 245.1 per cent given the potential currency depreciation, chronic food and fuel shortages, persistent conflicts, disrupted domestic supply chains and forecasted floods. While recent months have witnessed stability in the exchange rate, a chronic shortage of foreign exchange reserves, alongside a large current account deficit, poses the risk of further currency volatility in the near term.

34. The volume of rainfall from June to September is expected to be above average. Heavy rains and flash floods continue to affect thousands of people across the Sudan. By 21 August, the estimated number of people affected exceeded 146,200, according to the Government's Humanitarian Aid Commission, humanitarian organizations on the ground and local authorities. Torrential rains and floods destroyed about 9,600 houses and damaged another 22,000 in 14 states. National authorities reported that 79 people had died and 30 people had been injured since the beginning of the rainy season. In addition, the rising global wheat prices and limited access to hard currency to pay for imports are expected to keep bread prices high, limiting household purchasing power and increasing demand for sorghum and millet. The average prices of those grains are 150–250 per cent higher than in 2021 and 550–650 per cent above the five-year average.

E. Humanitarian situation

35. The humanitarian situation in the Sudan continued to worsen, with the country facing a steady increase in food insecurity levels. Almost one quarter of the population is estimated to be facing acute hunger during the lean season from June to September. North, West and Central Darfur, Khartoum, Kassala and White Nile account for the highest caseload of people affected by acute hunger.

36. The latest analysis for the Sudan using the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification shows a sharp acceleration of the country's food crisis between June and September. Up to 11.7 million people (an increase of 2 million) are expected to be vulnerable, including 3.1 million in an emergency situation. The armed conflict in Ukraine is further exacerbating food insecurity in the Sudan, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as the country has relied on imports of wheat from the Russian Federation and Ukraine over recent years. If the current agriculture season is not robustly supported with agricultural inputs and

livestock services, the number of food-insecure people may increase dramatically to unprecedented levels, which could ultimately lead to more conflict and displacement.

37. Meanwhile, as a result of ongoing insecurity and conflicts in Darfur and other parts of the Sudan, large-scale displacement continued without prospects for immediate solutions. There are over 3.7 million internally displaced persons across the country, mainly in Darfur and the Two Areas. New internal displacements were recorded from May to July owing to localized conflicts, including 83,649 people displaced in West Darfur, 17,014 people in South Darfur and 3,765 people in South Kordofan, according to the Displacement Tracking Matrix. About 139,400 people were newly displaced across the Sudan, of whom 54 per cent were women. Intercommunal violence that started on 15 July in Ganis town and other parts of Rusayris locality in the Blue Nile Region reportedly displaced more than 31,000 people. Humanitarian organizations are responding to the needs of those displaced.

38. The Sudan also continued to receive new refugees from neighbouring countries, mainly South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. Since the start of 2022, 20,000 refugees from South Sudan arrived in the Sudan, mainly in White Nile State, East Darfur, West Kordofan and South Kordofan. Ethiopian refugees also continued to arrive in eastern Sudan and the Blue Nile Region, although in lower numbers. As at 31 July, about 59,800 people had crossed into the Sudan since the start of the crisis in northern Ethiopia in November 2020.

39. Owing to severe funding shortfalls, the World Food Programme (WFP) in the Sudan was forced to cut rations for refugees across the country. WFP regularly assists over 550,000 refugees in the Sudan. Starting in July, refugees received only half a standard food basket, on an in-kind or cash basis.

40. Non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes faced obstacles in their operations. On 16 May, the United Nations requested the federal Humanitarian Aid Commission to grant permission for road access to Kauda in South Kordofan. Despite senior government officials agreeing to the mission, the request has not yet been approved. Senior United Nations officials raised the issue in a meeting with the Sovereign Council member, General Shamseddine Kabbashi. On 26 May, during her visit to El Geneina, West Darfur, to assess the humanitarian situation, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator) advocated unhindered access for the United Nations and partners to deliver humanitarian services.

41. During the reporting period, 123 security incidents affecting the United Nations and non-governmental organizations were reported in the Sudan.

III. Role of the United Nations in the Sudan and implementation of resolution 2636 (2022)

Objective 1: assist the political transition, progress towards democratic governance, in the protection and promotion of human rights, and sustainable peace

42. The Special Representative intensified his engagement to support Sudanese-led and -owned solutions to restore a credible civilian-led democratic transition in the Sudan following the military coup of 25 October 2021. The partnership between the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations was central to those efforts and was further operationalized under a joint trilateral mechanism. Within that framework, the Special Representative engaged extensively with a broad range of key Sudanese stakeholders, including women's groups, academics, youth groups and political parties, as well as with the military. He also engaged with regional and international partners.

43. The envoys of the three organizations of the trilateral mechanism endeavoured to support Sudanese stakeholders in creating conducive conditions for direct talks between the civilians and the military, which culminated in a meeting of some parties on 8 June. While certain key stakeholders declined to join the talks, the participants engaged in serious discussions around the process. With the withdrawal of leading civilian opposition groups and the military from the talks, the trilateral mechanism continued to engage with the parties separately to identify a viable format in future.

44. UNITAMS field offices in Darfur, South Kordofan and Red Sea States engaged with local stakeholders, in particular women, internally displaced persons and young people, on the political process to enable the inclusion of their views. In addition, the United Nations continued to provide expert advice to relevant stakeholders on electoral issues. However, other areas of cooperation with regard to transition issues remained stalled because of the political deadlock.

45. With a view to strengthening the effective participation of women in the political process, UNITAMS, in partnership with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and with the support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, conducted a three-day mediation and negotiation workshop from 5 to 7 June for women political leaders, members of the armed movements, civil society, resistance committees and the Women's Rights Group. This provided the opportunity for the Group to prepare and engage meaningfully in the trilateral mechanism-facilitated political process.

46. UNITAMS continued to consult with a varied spectrum of women's rights actors from the regions to learn about their perspectives and the priorities of women from diverse communities. On 5 and 6 July, from 21 to 23 July and from 25 to 27 July, UNITAMS, together with UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), facilitated a series of dialogues with women's groups from West and South Kordofan; Red Sea; Kassala; Blue Nile; North, Central, East and South Darfur; Jazirah; Northern; River Nile; and Khartoum to discuss women's organizing and alliance-building in political crisis, drawing on regional lessons learned using United Nations, IGAD and Sudanese expertise. Specific dialogues for women from political entities and young women were also organized on 4 August and from 17 to 19 August in response to the high demand for support and to avail of an opportunity to hear their specific concerns about the current situation and the way forward.

Objective 2: support peace processes and implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and future peace agreements

47. While the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement remained limited pending a solution to the political crisis in Khartoum, UNITAMS continued its efforts to strengthen the Darfur Permanent Ceasefire Committee. The Mission supported the expansion of the Committee's structures through the establishment of sectoral committees in Zalingei (Central Darfur) and Ed Daein (East Darfur) and the deployment of personnel. It also supported the development of several key standard operating procedures to guide the Committee's work.

48. The Permanent Ceasefire Committee continued to address violations of the ceasefire. Between 6 May and 6 August, the Committee received nine formal complaints and launched one investigation into possible ceasefire violations. However, in all cases, the sectoral committee was able to defuse tensions and prevent any escalation of conflict through dialogue and mediation. None of the complaints warranted physical investigation.

49. For example, on 15 July, the Permanent Ceasefire Committee received a complaint from the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces against the Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces for operating an illegal check point in

Jarabona, near Al-Malihah in North Darfur, close to the Libyan border, in violation of the Juba Peace Agreement. The Committee intervened immediately by holding a mediation meeting between the parties on 17 July. Following negotiations, the Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces agreed to remove the checkpoint, which it did on 18 July.

50. A first training course on ceasefire monitoring, verification and investigation was held from 5 to 9 June. Developed by UNITAMS, the course was attended by personnel from the Permanent Ceasefire Committee headquarters and the North Darfur sectoral committee. It was aimed at familiarizing participants with the mandate of the Committee and establishing a shared understanding of standard operating procedures. It also served to highlight experiences from similar mechanisms established elsewhere while raising awareness of important cross-cutting issues, including gender, human rights and the protection of civilians.

51. On 26 July, the Permanent Ceasefire Committee conducted a consultative meeting in El Fasher, North Darfur, that was attended by representatives of civil society, internally displaced persons, local administration, women's groups and other stakeholders. This provided the Committee with an opportunity to discuss its mandate with the participants and establish ways for them to support the Committee in its monitoring and verification activities. Similar events are being planned in other Darfur states.

52. On 2 July, the Special Representative, along with several heads of United Nations agencies, visited El Geneina, West Darfur, and met with government, native administration, internally displaced persons and community leaders. For durable solutions, he advocated, inter alia, the establishment of the commissions on land and on internally displaced persons and refugees as provided for in the Juba Peace Agreement.

Objective 3: assist peacebuilding, civilian protection and rule of law, in particular in Darfur and the Two Areas

53. Together with the United Nations country team, UNITAMS continued efforts to support and promote the protection of civilians and identify ways to support and accelerate the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians. The Mission provided technical assistance to strengthen protection mechanisms, including the National Mechanism for the Protection of Civilians, State-level protection of civilians committees and the Joint Security-Keeping Force. For example, from 26 to 30 May, in coordination with the United Nations country team and the Permanent Ceasefire Committee, the Mission conducted a training workshop on key human rights concepts, international humanitarian law and protection principles for 56 officers of the Force. In June, UNITAMS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also organized three workshops in North (6–8 June), East (20–22 June) and South Darfur (28–30 June) in conjunction with the state-level protection of civilians committees. The aim was to better prepare the committees and civil society groups working on the rule of law, women protection networks, the native administration, community-based protection networks and paralegals to support the protection of civilians.

54. The Mission continued its advocacy with key stakeholders to support the protection of civilians. A Mission delegation visited West Darfur from 8 to 13 June and engaged with the State Secretary-General and the State Police Commissioner on measures to resolve the Gimir and Rizeigat conflict and address the security and protection-of-civilians situation across the State, following the violence in Kuraynik from 22 to 24 April. On 13 June, UNITAMS met with officials at the Directorate of Peace, Security and Humanitarian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to

commend the establishment of part of the Joint Security-Keeping Force and discuss outstanding challenges, including protection concerns in Darfur and the Two Areas. On the same day, UNITAMS, in collaboration with the United Nations country team, convened a discussion on how to accelerate the implementation of the Call to Action for Human Rights of the Secretary-General.

55. The Police Advisory Unit of UNITAMS continued to engage with the Sudanese Police Force to enhance the capacities of its officers in Khartoum and Darfur to operate in accordance with internationally acceptable standards of democratic policing, including by raising awareness among the Force and local community leaders of requirements for the protection of civilians. The Unit supported the Force and community members through the provision of 5 training courses, 3 workshops, 19 advisory sessions and 5 community awareness-raising programmes. Some 427 Force personnel (133 women and 294 men), 1,061 community members (201 women and 860 men) and 2 prosecutors (1 woman and 1 man) benefited from these capacity-building activities. Of the total of 1,490 beneficiaries, 1,155 were men and 335 were women. The operationalization of two gender desks in Central Darfur was valuable in strengthening the capabilities of the Force to respond to sexual and gender-based violence and promote gender mainstreaming. A training course on the prevention and investigation of sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, organized jointly with UNDP, was held from 26 to 30 June for the Force and prosecutors, with participants from Khartoum, Darfur and the Two Areas. However, the provision of substantive capacity-building support to the Force remained challenging owing to the suspension of donor funding following the coup of 25 October 2021.

56. UNITAMS, jointly with the United Nations country team, conducted integrated peacebuilding assessment field trips to Blue Nile (10–17 May) and North Darfur (19–23 June). These were part of an extensive effort, in conjunction with regional universities, to complete six peacebuilding assessments – in South Darfur, North Darfur, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, Kassala and Red Sea States. The assessments will support the delivery of the UNITAMS mandate while identifying peacebuilding opportunities with local communities as well as ways to implement the Juba Peace Agreement and ensure that programmes and development financing are conflict-sensitive and comply with the principle of “doing no harm”.

57. The United Nations, through the Peacebuilding Fund, continued to respond in a targeted and strategic way to ensure that essential support still reached those who needed it most, in particular at the community level. The aim was to develop effective programming to achieve the priorities of the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas. On 11 and 12 May, the Integrated Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator) organized a workshop attended by United Nations agencies and civil society organizations to inform proposals for a \$3 million project on gender-transformative peacebuilding in Darfur under the Fund. The workshop involved discussions on key priorities of the women and peace and security and the youth, peace and security agendas in the Sudan and highlighted the need for programming priorities that span the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus, including providing protection from sexual and gender-based violence and investing in education and economic empowerment for women.

58. On 4 and 5 June, UNHCR, in partnership with FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources and the Commission for Shepherds, Travelers and Farmers, conducted a capacity-building workshop to plan a multifaceted response to issues related to the agricultural season in El Fasher while ensuring protection of civilians.

59. UNITAMS and the United Nations country team made progress on the finalization of a joint rule of law programme to support the implementation of rule of law priorities in the Sudan. The programme is based on the agreed common approach of the United Nations in the Sudan and the Sudan peacemaking, peacebuilding and stabilization programme and is built around ensuring a community-oriented response to human security and justice needs, advancing key rule of law and human rights institutions and creating an environment conducive to the peaceful resolution of conflict, the protection of civilians and accountability.

60. The Mission cleared 271,704 m² of land contaminated with explosive hazards in Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur. The areas were then released for use by local communities. In the process, UNITAMS destroyed 1,363 items of explosive hazards, including 18 anti-personnel mines, 4 anti-tank mines, 901 rounds of small arms ammunition and 440 items of unexploded ordnance. Through these efforts, UNITAMS has provided safe access for the humanitarian community, increased the amount of land available for productive use and restored the security of individuals and communities, enabling them to access basic services, including health care, education, water supply and markets. Moreover, as these activities have been provided in close coordination with national authorities, they have improved the perception of the Government and its relationship with the communities, contributing to peacebuilding in the Sudan. In addition, explosive ordnance risk education teams provided risk education and awareness to 92,034 people (24,192 men, 21,095 women, 25,047 boys and 21,700 girls) in areas where the community is at high risk of explosive hazard incidents. The UNITAMS teams provided the education through community liaison, direct information sessions with local communities and schools, and media campaigns.

Objective 4: support the mobilization of economic and development assistance and the coordination of humanitarian and peacebuilding assistance

61. Despite the pausing of international development assistance after the military coup on 25 October 2021, UNITAMS and the United Nations country team made significant efforts to mobilize resources and provide support to life-saving and -sustaining activities while strengthening resilience services across the country where possible. The country team was able to move ahead with life-saving humanitarian assistance, albeit with more donor restrictions on Government engagement.

62. To date in 2022, the Central Emergency Response Fund, through the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, has contributed \$40 million in the Sudan. The latest allocation of \$20 million in May was instrumental, as it enabled farmers to access seeds and provided for livelihoods, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene, with 65 per cent of the resources supporting farmers during the current agricultural season. While real needs will not be met owing to funding constraints, over 3 million Sudanese can now rely on their own food production in 2022 and 2023, at a time when the global food supply faces major challenges and humanitarian funding for food support is limited. As of June, the Common Humanitarian Fund for Sudan had received \$23.23 million of the \$66 million in funding expected for 2022. The contribution in 2022 has been focused on displacement and on nomadic communities in West Darfur State, as well as on the response to dry spells in five states. On 21 July, WFP signed a \$100 million allocation with the World Bank to scale up the food security response and provide direct support to the most vulnerable through cash transfers. Two million people will be reached, with women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities receiving priority.

63. The work of the integrated programme management team, led by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator), continued to ensure a joint approach to programming across the

deliverables of UNITAMS and the United Nations country team. For example, a strategic task force on Darfur was set up under the auspices of the Deputy Special Representative to arrange and coordinate resilience-building, security and protection measures, including to bolster the humanitarian food security response.

64. Progress was also made on adjusting the funding architecture to support the delivery of the United Nations common approach, including through a joint strategic results framework of the Sudan financing platform and the Peacebuilding Fund. The adjustment is to bolster the impact of development funding to support key mandated interventions beyond life-saving activities through better coherence and efficiency across funding platforms. Work will now start on a two-year interim United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (to come into effect in 2024), the first task of which will be to update the common country analysis on the basis of ongoing peacebuilding assessments and other data.

Mission operational and planning issues

65. The Mission continued to be scaled up, including in its seven field offices, for more effective mandate delivery. Some existing UNITAMS locations are being expanded to accommodate the approved increase in personnel. As at 16 August, Mission staffing stood at 201 civilian staff, 18 police personnel and 17 military observers. Consistent with the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity, over half of senior civilian appointments (Chief of Service and above) are held by women.

66. UNITAMS continued to deepen its collaboration with the United Nations country team through integrated coordination mechanisms and structures. In early June, the country team decided that the United Nations common approach would serve as the interim planning document for the United Nations in the Sudan, complementing the extension of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework until the end of 2023.

67. The Mission continued to strengthen its internal architecture to support results-based management, oversight, accountability and the reporting of projects under the Sudan multi-partner trust fund. This included the introduction of internal planning and coordination mechanisms for project design, implementation and evaluation under a newly revised results framework and workplan for 2022, which reflects adjustments to priorities in line with the changing political context following the coup.

IV. Observations

68. More than 10 months after the military coup of 25 October 2021, and in the absence of a political solution, the opportunity for a genuine democratic transition in the Sudan is in danger of slipping away. The country has been without a fully functional and civilian-led Government for months, and various attempts to facilitate a new consensus among political forces and the military have been unsuccessful. Many achievements of the transitional Government have been undone, risking a reversal of important gains. Meanwhile, the Sudanese economy continues to deteriorate, and the humanitarian needs, including acute food insecurity for a large portion of the Sudanese population, are on the rise. Intercommunal clashes and other violence in areas outside Khartoum continue to take a heavy toll on the Sudanese people, especially vulnerable civilians, and could plunge the country into further instability.

69. The recent statements by the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council, Lieutenant General Al-Burhan and his Deputy, Lieutenant General Dagalo, indicating the commitment of the military and security forces to withdraw from the political scene, are positive steps. I commend these stated commitments and urge the authorities to translate them into reality. I am encouraged by various political initiatives that have been put forward by Sudanese actors, and I urge all leaders, political or otherwise, to put national interests first and find a way out of the current political impasse.

70. Reaching a solution to the impasse is more urgent than ever. It can be achieved only through Sudanese-owned and -led political dialogue that offers a credible path to a legitimate civilian-led democratic transition. I urge the civilian and military stakeholders to urgently engage in meaningful talks on their respective roles and functions for the transitional period; subsequently, the civilian side needs to be ready to form a Government. The trilateral mechanism stands ready to facilitate a dialogue leading to political agreement among the stakeholders.

71. Sudanese women continue to play a leading role in mobilization for a credible democratic transition. I commend the initiative led by Sudanese women to form a women's rights body to participate on an equal footing in the political process and to be actively engaged in deciding any future agreement. I call upon all stakeholders to ensure women's representation and meaningful participation in the process. In addition, I commend women's efforts to come together from across the Sudan to devise ways to counter hate speech, which is fuelling violence in parts of the country.

72. It is critical that the authorities create a credible and conducive environment for the political process by immediately halting the use of excessive force and the arrests and detention of protesters and ensuring freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. In this regard, I condemn the excessive use of force by security forces against protesters and urge the authorities to investigate effectively, impartially and in a timely manner any allegation or reasonable suspicion of unlawful use of force or other violations by members of the security forces, including sexual and gender-based violence, in the context of assemblies, and to hold those responsible accountable. In addition, the authorities should expedite the work of previous committees set up to investigate allegations of human rights violations and provide them with resources to ensure that investigations are carried out effectively and that the results are made public. Furthermore, the need for legislative reform to abolish the death penalty and punishments that amount to torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment remains paramount.

73. The rise of intercommunal violence and increasing threats to populations in various states is alarming. I am deeply concerned by the recent horrific violence in the Blue Nile Region and Darfur that has resulted in a growing number of fatalities and new waves of forced displacement. I urge the authorities to accelerate the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians, with the support of UNITAMS and the United Nations country team.

74. The authorities and signatory armed movements must fulfil their commitments under the Juba Peace Agreement and expedite the implementation of the transitional security arrangements. In this regard, I welcome the graduation of the first elements of the Joint Security-Keeping Force. It is imperative for the Government to deploy the Force immediately and thereafter ensure oversight with a view to effectively protecting civilians and helping to restore stability in the region. I encourage the Government to expedite the formation of the remainder of the Force so that it can reach its full strength of 12,000 elements and deploy them across Darfur hotspots.

75. The implementation of other aspects of the Juba Peace Agreement, on which less progress has been made, must be implemented urgently. The gains made with regard to security arrangements in Darfur will not be sustainable unless the root

causes of the conflict, namely land rights and justice issues, are effectively addressed. To that end, the establishment of a land commission under the Darfur track of the Agreement is critical to resolving land ownership disputes. In addition, the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms to end impunity for crimes and human rights violations committed in Darfur and the Two Areas is long overdue. The participation of the communities, civil society groups, internally displaced persons and women is essential for implementing the Agreement in a manner that improves the lives of conflict-affected populations.

76. The authorities must ensure that all measures are in place to prevent intercommunal violence and end hostilities among the communities, including for addressing political and security causes and working with all segments of society to promote reconciliation while ensuring that those responsible for violence are held accountable. The signing of local peace agreements in West and South Darfur is a welcome development and should be supported with resources and a sustained commitment to peace by all involved. In addition, it is essential for authorities to guarantee unhindered humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas. Moreover, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which are the defining tools of armed violence, needs to be addressed. I further call upon all actors to take a firm stance against hate speech and incitement to violence.

77. Humanitarian needs have grown exponentially in the Sudan because of conflict, the political and economic crisis, increased insecurity and localized violence, and protracted internal displacement still lacking durable solutions, coupled with dry spells, floods and disease outbreaks. Some 14.3 million Sudanese are currently in need. Humanitarian partners have appealed for more than \$1.9 billion to provide assistance and protection in the Sudan in 2022. Currently, the appeal is only 21 per cent funded. Humanitarian partners appreciate the support received from donors so far but are appealing for more, to reach the most vulnerable populations with much needed life-saving assistance. I call upon donors both to continue funding life-saving humanitarian operations and to invest in resilience-building. While urgent action is required for vulnerable people and affected communities to access life-saving humanitarian assistance, investments need to be extended beyond such urgent measures, to ensure that we are not responding to humanitarian crises year after year.

78. The effective implementation of the UNITAMS mandate depends on the complementary roles of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Programming for peace dividends, development gains and enhancing resilience cannot be implemented without voluntary donor contributions for programmatic support across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. It is only through such integrated, coordinated action that the underlying drivers of insecurity can be addressed. Although the political environment for donors is challenging, there are ways in which support can be provided to the priority programmes of the United Nations common approach, ensuring that the United Nations is able to make a meaningful difference in the lives and livelihoods of the Sudanese people. Such programmes include investments in local peacebuilding, community stabilization, critical infrastructure, and basic services and livelihoods, which help to mitigate against further conflict. It remains imperative to create resilience to future shocks and improve livelihoods while advancing sustainable and durable solutions for the 3.7 million internally displaced persons in the Sudan. I urge the international partners of the Sudan to support such efforts.

79. I thank my Special Representative, Volker Perthes, and all United Nations personnel in the Sudan, as well as our partners in the African Union and IGAD, for their continued dedication and efforts in support of the country and its people. The United Nations remains fully committed to supporting the Sudanese people during these turbulent times.