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Situation in South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2459 \(2019\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 March 2020 and requested me to report on the implementation of the Mission's mandate every 90 days. It covers political and security developments between 29 May and 27 August 2019, the humanitarian and human rights situation and progress made in the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

II. Political and economic developments

2. During the reporting period, progress on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan remained limited, notwithstanding advances towards the fulfilment of pre-transition tasks, such as the submission of the report of the Independent Boundaries Commission, the drafting of key legislation and planning for the transitional security arrangements. The lack of political consensus and resource constraints continued to undermine the completion of critical tasks during the extended pre-transition period.

3. Following calls by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the international community, the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, and the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), Riek Machar, agreed in principle to meet. Mr. Machar indicated his willingness to travel to Juba, but noted that it would be subject to IGAD facilitation of his travel; alternatively, a determination on his status should be made by IGAD. These conditions were rejected by the Government of South Sudan, which reassured Mr. Machar of his safety, but indicated its willingness to meet only in Juba. Efforts remain under way on the part of IGAD and regional partners to bring the two leaders together.

Implementation of the Revitalized Agreement

4. The parties have focused largely on the planning and logistics related to the cantonment and training of a unified force, with the implementation bodies failing to deliver a road map for critical pre-transition tasks. Nonetheless, the extensive



engagement and joint meetings of the mechanisms established under the terms of the Revitalized Agreement signalled a positive shift.

5. Significantly, the Joint Military Ceasefire Commission trained 124 cantonment monitors, drawn from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, SPLA-IO and the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, to monitor, verify and screen uniformed personnel at cantonment sites. Security bodies further deliberated on training needs, curricula development and resource requirements.

6. The Joint Defence Board directed all forces to move to designated cantonment sites by 31 July 2019, with the registration process expected to run throughout August. The Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism has continued to monitor progress, having assessed 33 of the 35 selected sites and verified 31 as suitable. Progress towards cantonment remains slow, with delays on the aforementioned deadlines, owing to logistical challenges, a lack of funding and its highly political nature.

7. Meanwhile, the parties agreed on the terms of reference for a reconstituted Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, but the body has yet to be reconfigured. In addition, the Independent Boundaries Commission submitted its report on the issue of states and boundaries to the IGAD secretariat within the 90-day timeline, although the report was not made public.

8. On 13 June, the draft bill to incorporate the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan into the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan was referred back to the National Constitutional Amendment Committee to include the six-month extension of the pre-transition period. It has since been submitted to the Ministry of Justice for review.

9. The National Constitutional Amendment Committee completed its work on the National Security Service amendment bill, which is pending review with the Ministry of Justice. Reservations have been expressed about the bill's retention of the power of arrest without warrant. Work on the Political Parties Act and the Elections Act was completed. The National Constitutional Amendment Committee continued its consultations on the Fire Brigade Service Act and the National Civil Defence Service Act. In addition, a preliminary consultation was held on the economic and financial sector laws in chapter 4 of the Revitalized Agreement.

10. During the reporting period, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission met twice, on 18 June and 1 August, and received reports from the bodies established under the Revitalized Agreement, which highlighted resource constraints. While some funds were disbursed, including a reported \$6.5 million to the Joint Defence Board, the National Pre-Transitional Committee was requested to clarify the total sum at the next plenary. Nevertheless, the sum is far below the \$100 million pledged by the Government and the sum of \$285 million estimated by the National Pre-Transitional Committee as being needed for the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. The National Pre-Transitional Committee has continued to engage with international partners to seek financial support. In-kind bilateral pledges to support cantonment have yet to materialize. On 19 June, IGAD held its sixty-eighth Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa. In a subsequent communiqué, the Council acknowledged the positive developments towards the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and urged the Government to disburse the pledged funds.

11. Internal tensions continued within the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, undermining its attention to the peace process. The South Sudan Council of Churches mediated between the Alliance's two factions, which made no progress towards resolving their internal differences during the period.

12. On 21 August, IGAD hosted a consultative meeting of all stakeholders and parties to take stock of the implementation process. In a subsequent communiqué, the Council of Ministers recommended that the Heads of State and Government resolve the issue of Riek Machar's movement at the next ordinary summit of IGAD. It was resolved that 50 per cent of the 83,000-strong unified force be cantoned and trained by the end of September. Moreover, the Council urged the parties to continue their dialogue on the issue of the number and boundaries of states in order to find a common solution, and to report back to the ordinary summit.

13. Rapprochement activities between the Government and opposition groups continued, with 18 confidence-building meetings held across the country, 7 of which were supported by UNMISS and partners. Such efforts build on a total of 131 rapprochement initiatives undertaken since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement. Continuing in the spirit of confidence-building, both sides participated in joint Independence Day celebrations in various locations, which contributed to increased trust, freedom of movement and enhanced local trade. For example, following a civil-military dialogue supported by UNMISS in Morobo, government and opposition authorities committed themselves to allowing freedom of movement for civilians and unconditional access for humanitarian workers. UNMISS has supported similar dialogue initiatives in Torit and Yei.

Other national political developments

14. On 24 July, the National Dialogue Steering Committee swore in new members nominated by the National Dialogue Ad Hoc Committee. Six political parties (the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, the National Alliance, the National Agenda, Former Detainees and Other Political Parties) nominated seven members from each group to be part of the steering committee and the secretariat, in addition to three members expected to join the leadership. Meanwhile, SPLM/IO reserved its participation, requesting to be an observer in the national dialogue process.

15. From 9 to 12 June, Riek Machar convened the leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO) in Khartoum for a consultative forum on the Revitalized Agreement mechanisms and on progress and challenges in the peace process. The SPLM-IO leadership welcomed the decision to extend the pre-transition period.

16. On 1 and 2 July, President Kiir undertook a State visit to Kenya, signing bilateral agreements on border security and trade. The President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, expressed Kenya's support for the peace process and announced the appointment of the former Vice-President, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, as Kenya's Special Envoy for South Sudan.

17. Following the decree of President Kiir of 26 May 2019 appointing Rebecca Nyandeng Garang to lead a committee on the expansion of the SPLM Political Bureau, the committee submitted its report to the President on 27 June. SPLM/A-IO has maintained its objection to the SPLM reunification process, with the former Secretary-General of SPLM, Pagan Amum, criticizing the developments and resigning from the party.

18. South Sudan also offered its support to mediate in the Sudan between the Transitional Military Council and representatives from Darfur and the Two Areas, leveraging the history of the two countries. On 27 July, South Sudan facilitated a meeting in Juba between the Council and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North. Both parties expressed their readiness to find a peaceful solution to the situation in the Sudan. South Sudan also met with the leader of the Justice and

Equality Movement, Gibril Ibrahim, and the leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement, Minni Minawi, to encourage dialogue with the Council.

19. On 24 August, President Kiir undertook a two-day visit to Uganda to hold bilateral talks with the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. Discussions were held on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and the construction of the Yei-Kaia highway, a major trade route connecting the two countries and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Economic situation

20. The economic situation remains fragile, with South Sudan struggling to recover from the effects of conflict. Economic mismanagement has eroded the productive capacity of the country, so oil-related investment and production provides its immediate source of growth. The projection for expenditure in the 2019–2020 national budget, passed by parliament on 21 August, but yet to be approved by the President, is 155 per cent higher than the previous year, with total revenues up by 59 per cent, owing in part to assumed higher oil production and lower payments to the Sudan.

21. The budget also signals the Government's investment choices, with the bulk of next year's allocation dedicated to infrastructure support. However, concerns remain about the fiscal health of the programme. In addition, the allocation in the budget for the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement stands at \$64.5 million of the original \$100 million pledged. It is of concern that the practice of selling oil resources in advance of production continues, a practice whose cessation President Kiir ordered in late June. On 22 August, the Minister for Petroleum reported the finding of oil reserves in Northern Upper Nile, the first such discovery since independence.

III. Security situation

22. Across South Sudan, the ceasefire continues to hold, with an overall reduction in political violence. While intercommunal violence, cattle raiding and criminal activity affect significant parts of the country, they remain localized. Driving factors behind the violence remain complex and varied, comprising boundary disputes, intercommunal tensions and criminal interests. The complex and often interrelated nature of these conflicts has required ongoing efforts to find tailored solutions.

Greater Upper Nile region

23. The main sources of insecurity continue to be political disputes, intercommunal conflict and crime. Fighting in August between Nuer Jikany sub-clans in Maiwut, Upper Nile, underscores the difficulty of command and control within the opposition and the fragility of Riek Machar's coalition on the ground. Tensions related to the appointment of a county commissioner for Maiwut from a minority sub-clan resulted in violence, as the loyalties of SPLA-IO forces remain organized along sub-clan lines and armed civilians maintain an active role defending their communities.

24. In Unity, increasing road attacks continue to cause insecurity. The presence of large numbers of armed men and young people, the deeply divided political character of Unity and the centrality of key political leaders, such as Taban Deng and Riek Machar, who hail from these areas, are drivers of insecurity. Ailing economic conditions, the impact of the civil war and increased levels of militarization have also contributed, with regard to criminality in particular.

Greater Equatoria region

25. The primary causes of insecurity in the region emanate from ongoing conflict with the National Salvation Front (NAS), led by Thomas Cirillo, and high levels of violent crime owing to the secondary effects of the conflict.

26. The ceasefire between the Government and SPLA-IO remains intact, underscored by their efforts against NAS. The Government and SPLA-IO have been able to contain NAS on the ground, including by pushing NAS from areas where they had control over resources. Fighting in Payai, outside Lobonok, at the end of July, resulted in NAS ceding control of a gold-mining area to SPLA-IO forces.

27. Reports of alleged NAS recruitment continue, and NAS cross-border movement has been reported from Western Equatoria to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and from Eastern Equatoria to Uganda and vice versa. In Eastern Equatoria, NAS activity has been limited to cross-border areas around greater Magwe, where ethnic alliances provide a small area of allegiance.

28. Similar to events in late 2018 and early 2019, heavy-handed counter-NAS operations have been conducted by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and SPLA-IO. Detentions of suspected NAS collaborators by the National Security Service and South Sudan People's Defence Forces have spanned greater Equatoria, while government and SPLA-IO operations have induced displacement and fear and heightened mistrust of state security forces, as illustrated by the razing of some 60 *tukuls* in Torit West.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

29. While cattle raiding and intercommunal conflict continue to be the primary source of insecurity, clashes between the South Sudan United Front, led by Paul Malong, and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces disrupted parts of Northern Bahr el-Ghazal in August. The clashes emerged following the movement of South Sudan United Front soldiers south from their base in the Sudan, leading to a series of clashes with the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. The clashes followed fractures within the South Sudan United Front, as the Government managed to negotiate peace with and integrate several key leaders.

30. A renewed focus on disarmament in the region is already affecting the civilian population. On 24 July, the Governor ordered the disarmament of civilians in Western Lakes, resulting in security forces killing six civilians for resisting disarmament. Government-led civilian disarmament in Tonj South and Warrap resulted in reported movement of young people to escape disarmament, while 11 local chiefs were arrested by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces for not cooperating.

United Nations Mission in South Sudan interventions specific to security concerns

31. In response to early warning indicators, the Mission deployed pre-emptive patrols to project presence and deter violence. Increased patrols were also deployed in response to hotspots and to establish a semi-permanent presence where conflicts are enduring. For instance, UNMISS patrols in the vicinity of Rocrodong, Wau, have been a stabilizing factor in conjunction with enhanced situational awareness, community engagement and human rights monitoring. Similarly, in response to armed conflict in Lobonok, Central Equatoria, an integrated patrol was immediately deployed and led by the UNMISS Force Commander to assess reports of fighting between armed forces and its impact on civilians. Through its good offices, the Mission has engaged with actors and partners, including to reinforce the

Government's responsibility to protect civilians and to promote dialogue and adherence to the Ceasefire Agreement.

Intercommunal conflict

32. Intercommunal violence and cattle raiding continued to affect the security environment. A significant decrease was observed during the first two months of the reporting period, mostly attributable to inter-state peace initiatives, the onset of the rainy season and the associated mobility constraints, and the availability of water for livestock.

33. Intercommunal violence was prominent in greater Bahr el-Ghazal, with more than 70 persons killed, as critical incidents occurred across state borders, in particular between Unity and Warrap and between Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal. For instance, on 16 June, suspects believed to be pastoralists from Tonj attacked Rocrocdong County, Wau, killing 11 persons and destroying houses. In the greater Tonj area, insecurity also flared on 25 June, when fighting among the Muok, Yar and Apuk-Juwiir communities and the Thorny community reportedly resulted in the killing of at least 15 persons in Manyangok. Renewed clashes on 17 July among the subsections of Dinka (Rek), Jalwau, Thiik and Luanyjang in Thiik County resulted in the reported killing of at least 23 persons.

34. In greater Lakes, unresolved cycles of violence manifested themselves in persistent intra-Dinka (Agar) violence, illustrated by fighting between the Gony and Thuyic communities in Rumbek East County on 22 July, resulting in the killing of 11 persons.

35. In Unity, the polarization of communities and unresolved cases of violence led to cattle raids, revenge killings and attacks among communities from Koch, Rubkona and Guit Counties, claiming at least 36 lives.

36. The violence in and between Northern Liech, Gogrial and Twic that led to more than 80 casualties in the period between April and May has largely been contained. To defuse tensions, UNMISS supported the tri-state conference in Mankien, with state authorities subsequently recovering the stolen cattle and arresting suspected perpetrators.

37. In continuation of its efforts to address recurring communal violence between the Dinka and Lou communities in the Kuajena area, UNMISS and partners supported a Wau, Tonj and Gogrial tri-state peace conference. The conference resulted in resolutions being agreed among local leaders, including an immediate cessation of hostilities. Violence has since subsided, with local authorities working to return stolen property. UNMISS has also maintained a semi-permanent presence in the area, including integrated patrols to enhance human rights monitoring and community engagement.

IV. Humanitarian situation

38. The humanitarian situation remains severe, with 7.2 million persons in need of assistance. Notwithstanding the overall reduction in the level of conflict, internal and external displacement continues, as does return movement. In the month of June, an estimated 30,000 persons were displaced in Eastern Equatoria, Upper Nile and Warrap as a result of intercommunal fighting and cattle raiding. Overall, the number of internally displaced persons decreased slightly, from 2.1 million in the previous period to an estimated 1.83 million. The number of refugees from South Sudan remained static, at 2.31 million.

39. An estimated 684,000 internally displaced persons have returned home since 2016. Between May and July, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees verified more than 39,000 spontaneous returns of refugees. A spike in the number of returns of refugees coincided with unrest in the Sudan, which, in turn, resulted in the return of 33,095 refugees to Unity, whose most urgent needs include food, shelter and protection. Post-return monitoring has highlighted peaceful coexistence and reintegration.

40. The number of persons facing a critical lack of food in South Sudan is the highest ever. According to a food security projection analysis, between May and July, an estimated 6.96 million persons were severely food-insecure, of whom an estimated 1.82 million were in phase 4, “emergency”, of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system and 21,000 were likely to be in phase 5, “famine”. Over the course of 2019, an estimated 860,000 children under 5 years of age are expected to be acutely malnourished, including 259,000 in need of life-saving assistance. The situation is compounded by the rising price of staple foods owing to seasonal factors, with flooding in parts of the country, coupled with road inaccessibility, having a negative impact on the delivery of food aid and supply to markets.

41. The incidence of Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo rose to 2,927 reported cases as of 20 August. Although the risk of the disease spreading to South Sudan remains very high, no cases have been reported. The Ministry of Health of South Sudan and partners continue to expand programmes for the prevention of and readiness for Ebola virus disease under the national Ebola virus disease preparedness plan. Funding remains a challenge, however, with an additional \$7.7 million urgently needed to meet preparedness targets.

42. Between June and July, a total of 88 humanitarian access incidents were reported. Incidents involving violence against humanitarian personnel or assets represented 62 per cent of the total number of incidents reported. Of those incidents, 16 were significant, including 7 ambushes resulting in injury to two humanitarian staff members. In July, fighting in Maiwut had an impact on humanitarian activities to meet the needs of displaced persons and returnees, as 10 humanitarian workers were relocated from the area. Operational and bureaucratic impediments remain a challenge, and harassment of non-governmental organization workers continues. In June, incidents of harassment at Juba International Airport increased, resulting in multiple detentions of humanitarian staff. In July, humanitarian workers reported incidents of local authorities confiscating assets in several locations. Significantly, there have been no reports of humanitarian workers losing their lives in 2019.

43. By the end of June, aid and protection had reached 4.1 million people, representing 72 per cent of all people targeted for assistance in 2019. This included food assistance to nearly 3.7 million persons; the provision of safe water sources to more than 1.1 million persons; access to emergency shelter for more than 459,000 persons; access to emergency nutritional assistance for more than 623,000 children and pregnant and breastfeeding women; access to education in emergencies for nearly 695,000 children; health consultations provided to more 1 million persons; and some 536,000 persons reached with protection services.

44. The total number of people in need across South Sudan was revised upwards in May, to 7.2 million. The 2019 humanitarian response plan calls for \$1.5 billion to aid 5.7 million people. As at 26 August 2019, the plan had received 45 per cent of required funding.

V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks

A. Protection of civilians

45. UNMISS continued to protect civilians both inside and outside protection of civilians sites. To further support a protective and enabling environment, the Mission continued to advocate for the primary responsibility of the Government of South Sudan being to protect civilians. The main threats to civilians included killing, sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention, ill-treatment and looting of civilian property. Attacks against civilians occurred predominantly in the context of intercommunal conflict and cattle raids, as well as through the targeting of civilians during armed conflict among security forces.

46. Within the protection of civilians framework, and in addition to UNMISS support for rapprochement activities across the country and its interventions to counter intercommunal hotspots, UNMISS conducted 27 workshops, community dialogues and peace campaigns to address local communal conflicts and reconciliation, facilitate civil-military dialogue and promote the role of women, young people and local leaders in peacebuilding. A total of 6,072 participants (including 2,027 women) were reached through such activities. For instance, in greater Jonglei, UNMISS facilitated a dialogue among religious leaders from the Dinka, Murle and Lou Nuer communities to promote peaceful coexistence. This contributed to a decrease in intercommunal tensions along the borders of Boma and Akobo. UNMISS supported three additional post-migration conferences for pastoralists from the Sudan and host communities in Aweil and Northern Upper Nile, resulting in the adoption of recommendations to strengthen existing agreements to improve security in future migration seasons. In Unity, UNMISS facilitated a peace conference led by the Northern Liech government and members of the opposition for the communities of greater Rubkona, Koch and Guit, resulting in an agreement to establish joint patrols and traditional courts to address intercommunal violence.

47. UNMISS continued to host and provide protection to internally displaced persons in the protection of civilians sites. A total of 180,366 internally displaced persons (88,736 female and 91,630 male) were residing in such sites, as follows: 29,327 in Juba (14,555 female and 14,772 male); 2,000 in Bor (1,034 female and 966 male); 103,424 in Bentiu (49,424 male and 54,000 female); 32,608 in Malakal (16,784 female and 15,824 male); and 13,007 in the area adjacent to the UNMISS base in Wau (6,939 female and 6,068 male).

48. The Mission continued to ensure the civilian character of its sites through weekly meetings with community leaders and regular cordon, search and seizure operations to halt the smuggling of weapons into the sites. From 29 May to 27 August, UNMISS holding facilities detained 94 persons suspected of being responsible for serious security incidents within protection of civilians sites in Juba, Bentiu and Malakal. UNMISS also continued to support national accountability for serious incidents committed within its protection of civilians sites, referring 21 more suspects to the national authorities. Trials in these cases, which include four cases of sexual and gender-based violence and one assault on a United Nations peacekeeper, are expected to be completed in September. UNMISS has also carried out consultations with internally displaced persons in protection of civilians sites to address abuses, in particular incidents of gender-based violence. For instance, in Juba, UNMISS organized discussions with 580 internally displaced persons (157 female and 423 male) on issues relating to gender and policing. UNMISS is working with partners to disseminate information on preventing and combating gender-based violence and on broader human rights training within the protection of civilians sites. In addition, as part of its direct support to protection of civilians sites, UNMISS allocated 1,556

force personnel to static security-related tasks on a daily basis, conducting a total of 2,054 short-duration patrols.

49. Meanwhile, UNMISS worked closely with humanitarian partners to support returns. For instance, in Juba protection of civilians sites, the Mission supported the return of 120 internally displaced persons to Akobo and Yuai, and 19 internally displaced persons from the Bor protection of civilians site to Akobo and New Fangak, following prior assessments of return locations and utilizing Mission air assets. It also supported the return of 3,324 internally displaced persons from Melut to locations in Baliet, including through the provision of secure road transport. UNMISS has also been working with partners to support the voluntary return of 3,005 internally displaced persons who have registered to return from Juba protection of civilians sites and within wider Juba.

50. To ensure that internally displaced persons are equipped to make informed decisions about whether to return, the Mission has organized engagement between internally displaced persons and State and opposition actors to examine prospects for return. For instance, in Unity, UNMISS facilitated meetings of high-profile government and opposition leaders with 2,000 internally displaced persons at a Bentiu protection of civilians site to share information on protection, security and humanitarian conditions in their areas of origin. UNMISS is also coordinating with partners on monitoring returns and, through conflict management workshops, enhancing relations between returnees and settled communities, in greater Upper Nile in particular.

51. Beyond the protection sites, UNMISS continued to focus its activities on situational awareness, with the aim of pre-empting, deterring and mitigating violence against civilians, in particular in hotspots, and building confidence in areas of return. During the reporting period, a total of 2,185 patrols were conducted (short- and long-duration patrols, dynamic air and foot) to carry out confidence-building and community engagement in return locations. On 4 July, my Special Representative conducted a visit to oversee the progress made towards the establishment of the austere operating base in Kodok, Upper Nile. The strategic location ensures that UNMISS has a permanent presence to the west of the Nile to enhance stabilization within surrounding communities.

52. The Mission also worked with partners to advocate interventions to address civilian needs, including through the establishment of a one-stop shop at the Torit Teaching Hospital. The centre is now under construction and will enable survivors of gender-based violence to obtain access to services, including psychosocial support and case management. In Warrap, UNMISS worked with local officials, women, young people and partners to establish an action plan for creating protection committee networks in order to accelerate information-sharing and an early warning mechanism at the grass-roots level.

Rule of law and accountability

53. In cooperation with United Nations country teams, UNMISS continues to expand its efforts to promote the rule of law and accountability regarding serious crimes. To expand access to justice outside protection sites, UNMISS has engaged with national justice sector officials, the United Nations Development Programme and civil society to coordinate support for mobile courts in regions where access to justice remains limited. Following an assessment supported by UNMISS, a mobile court began hearing cases in Rumbek in August. It is the first of five locations with a significant backlog of cases of serious crimes, including cases of sexual and gender-based violence, all of which have been proposed as the locations for the next phase of mobile court support. In Juba, UNMISS continued to support national authorities

in addressing the backlog of serious cases at Juba Central Prison, including through support to ensure the provision of prosecutors and legal aid. Three judges were appointed to dispose of priority cases, including those involving on sexual and gender-based violence and against juveniles. UNMISS also regularly co-locates with the South Sudan National Police Service to provide technical support on investigations of sexual and gender-based violence, human rights awareness and community policing techniques.

54. To promote accountability for conflict-related crimes, UNMISS supported the review by parliament of a draft bill to transpose provisions regarding international crime into national law. This included supporting representatives of parliament, the Ministry of Justice and civil society to collaborate with Ugandan authorities and the International Centre for Transitional Justice on lessons learned and comparative experiences and to ensure that the bill reflects international standards.

55. UNMISS also partnered with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals to provide a five-day, practice-based exercise for 15 senior national prosecutors in international crimes, focusing on conflict-related sexual violence. It facilitated another session of its multipart programme for the Military Justice Directorate, which was focused on legal frameworks governing military tribunals.

56. UNMISS supported the Committee on Land and Physical Infrastructure on the draft national land policy to strengthen the land rights of communities and women, promote transparent land governance and peacefully resolve land-related disputes. The efforts of UNMISS have led to consensus with regard to key reforms and increased momentum for the policy's final adoption, as anticipated by the Revitalized Agreement.

57. UNMISS further continued to support independent commissions established as part of the Revitalized Agreement to increase oversight and transparency. In partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNMISS completed a policy and procedure benchmarking and gap analysis to measure the implementation of the South Sudan of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

B. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations

58. The human rights environment remained of serious concern. During the reporting period, UNMISS verified 115 incidents that had a negative impact on the human rights and protection situation in South Sudan, including arbitrary killings, abductions, conflict-related sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention (including proxy detention), torture and ill-treatment, forced displacement, and the looting and destruction of civilian property. The incidents resulted in the killing of 182 civilians and injury to 135 others. A total of 14 of the incidents were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces; 12 to NAS and affiliated armed elements; 7 to the pro-Machar SPLA-IO; 5 to the National Security Service; 4 to the South Sudan National Police Service and 1 each to the South Sudan Opposition Alliance and the National Prison Services of South Sudan. The remainder (75) were attributed to community-based militias and other armed elements, which continued to account for the majority (72 per cent) of civilian casualties (131 killed and 97 injured).

59. In July, UNMISS published a report on the findings of its investigation into alleged human rights violations and abuses by government forces and opposition armed groups, in particular NAS and the pro-Machar SPLA-IO, against civilians in Central Equatoria between September 2018 and April 2019. UNMISS determined that those actors were responsible for the killing of at least 104 civilians, injury to 35 others and the abduction of 187 individuals, as well as 99 cases of rape, sexual slavery

and other forms of sexual violence. UNMISS has continued to engage with government forces and opposition armed groups to urge them to conduct investigations and to hold the perpetrators accountable.

60. Undue restrictions on fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, as well as cases concerning individuals deprived of liberty, remained of concern. UNMISS continued to receive reports of censorship, harassment and the arbitrary arrest and detention of journalists and civil society activists, following the emergence of the Red Card Movement in April. This included the arbitrary arrest and detention of the editor-in-chief of a national newspaper, suspended by government officials since March following his refusal to refrain from reporting on the popular uprising in the Sudan. UNMISS also documented the arbitrary arrest and ill-treatment by police officers in Juba of 27 students gathered for a peaceful meeting.

61. On 11 June, the Juba High Court convicted Kerbino Wol, Peter Biar Ajak and four other defendants on charges connected to the 7 October 2018 stand-off at the National Security Service headquarters in Juba. Mr. Wol received 13 years' imprisonment owing to his alleged role as the leader of the stand-off, while Mr. Ajak, a prominent civil rights activist, was sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment on charges of public incitement to commit violence. While some procedural standards were respected, the trial underscored the limits within which the judiciary is able to operate to defend constitutionally protected rights in cases of a politically sensitive nature. It is concerning that neither Mr. Wol nor Mr. Ajak has been charged in connection with their initial arrests in April and July 2018, respectively.

62. The use of capital punishment remains a troubling aspect of the criminal justice system, in particular in the light of the limited ability of the justice system to fully comply with minimum due process and fair trial safeguards. During the reporting period, UNMISS confirmed that an execution was carried out in April in Wau, bringing to nine the number of confirmed executions in 2019.

63. In June, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly ratified without reservation the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the first Optional Protocol thereto and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the first Optional Protocol thereto. The Government and civil society organizations also submitted their midterm reports as part of the universal periodic review to the Human Rights Council.

64. UNMISS facilitated 111 human rights capacity-building and awareness-raising activities for 3,766 national stakeholders (1,265 female). The Mission also carried out two human rights due diligence policy task force risk assessments concerning the provision of six containers and other materials to the South Sudan National Police Service in Bor, as well as the provision of transportation for a representative of the Government to attend an official function in Juba.

Children and armed conflict

65. During the reporting period, the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting on children in armed conflict verified 39 grave violations committed against 39 children (27 boys and 12 girls), including 25 children affected by recruitment and use (23 boys and 2 girls) in 25 violations, 7 children (4 boys and 3 girls) as casualties of killing and maiming in 7 violations and 7 girls as victims of rape in 7 violations. No verified violations of abduction, denial of humanitarian access or attacks on schools and hospitals were documented. The country task force also verified one case of the military use of schools, affecting an estimated 321 children (166 boys and 155 girls). Among those violations, 15 occurred in greater Equatoria region, 10 in greater Upper Nile region and 14 in the greater Bahr el-Ghazal region.

66. A total of 14 violations affecting 14 children (7 boys and 7 girls) were attributed to Government security forces, including the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (8), the South Sudan National Police Service (4) and the National Security Service (2). In total, 10 violations affecting 10 boys were attributed to the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, the breakaway faction of NAS under the command of Lieutenant General Khalid Butrus Bora, and the remaining 15 violations were attributed to the South Sudan United Front/Army (6), the pro-Machar SPLA-IO (4), NAS (1), crossfire between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS (2), crossfire between the pro-Machar SPLA-IO and NAS (1) and an unknown armed person (1).

67. The recruitment and use of children accounted for the majority of the violations (25), with the National Salvation Front under the command of Khalid Butrus Bora as the main perpetrator (10), and the South Sudan United Front/Army (6), the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (3), the pro-Machar SPLA-IO (3), the National Security Service (2) and the South Sudan National Police Service (1). The South Sudan People's Defence Forces was the main perpetrator of rape, with five violations, while NAS and unknown armed persons committed one violation each. With respect to violations involving the killing and maiming of children, the South Sudan National Police Service was the main perpetrator (3), with the remaining violations attributed to crossfire between South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS (2), crossfire between pro-Machar SPLA-IO and NAS (1) and pro-Machar SPLA-IO (1).

68. UNMISS and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued to support the South Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and the parties to the conflict in the assessment for children associated with armed groups in Bentiu, Malakal and Warrap. On 23 July, the pro-Machar SPLA-IO forces in Mirmir, Unity, released 32 boys in the presence of the parties' representatives.

69. The release of the 32 boys followed the joint verification exercise that was conducted in May and June across various military bases of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and of the opposition in Bentiu by the Joint Verification Committee comprising UNMISS, UNICEF, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the pro-Machar SPLA-IO, the South Sudan Opposition Alliance, the Taban Deng-allied South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the South Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, to identify children associated with armed groups and secure their release. The committee also carried out verification exercises in the South Sudan People's Defence Forces barracks in Warrap.

70. UNMISS trained 937 United Nations personnel (816 male and 121 female) through child protection mainstreaming activities. Training was also delivered to 2,540 personnel (including 115 female) of the government security forces. In addition, UNMISS engaged in awareness-raising and sensitization with 2,275 community members (including 685 female).

Conflict-related sexual violence

71. Notwithstanding an overall decrease in political violence, the reporting period was marked by the continued use of conflict-related sexual violence by the parties to the conflict. UNMISS verified 22 incidents of such violence involving 39 survivors, including 8 girls, 6 boys and 2 men. The victims were subjected to gang rape (24), rape (11), sexual mutilation (2), forced nudity (1) and attempted rape (1). The incidents were attributed to the pro-Machar SPLA-IO (10), the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (6), NAS (1) and the South Sudan National Police Service (1). One incident was attributed to community-based militia in Lakes, while the perpetrators' affiliation in three cases had not been determined conclusively at the time of writing the present report.

72. On 29 June, Riek Machar endorsed the action plan of SPLA-IO on conflict-related sexual violence, pursuant to the unilateral communiqué of 18 December 2014 on preventing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan. In the action plan, it is envisaged that concrete measures will be implemented between June 2019 and May 2020, including the systematic mandatory training of SPLA-IO forces and enhanced coordination between SPLA-IO and civilian justice systems to hold perpetrators accountable. In addition, Machar issued two orders to commanders in Western and Central Equatoria to form committees mandated to investigate alleged violations reported by UNMISS. During a meeting held with Machar in Addis Ababa on 22 July, my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and UNMISS continued to advocate that perpetrators be held to account and discussed technical support towards the implementation of the action plan. On 29 July, Machar signed a command order instructing three SPLA-IO commanders in Western Equatoria to release all girls present on their bases and all women held against their will. UNMISS and the United Nations country team are working with various interlocutors on the implementation of the order.

C. Creating the conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

73. UNMISS continued to support humanitarian partners to implement humanitarian activities in areas affected by conflict. During the reporting period, UNMISS conducted 21 long-distance and 261 short-distance patrols to Government- and SPLA-IO-controlled areas across the country to support the delivery of assistance or the protection of humanitarian workers.

74. UNMISS provided force protection to 2,185 integrated missions, enabling access to high-risk areas. It further conducted 282 force protection patrols to convoys, including short-duration patrols for non-governmental organizations.

75. The Mine Action Service provided a survey of transit sites and conducted risk education for 1,200 internally displaced families in Baliet County, Upper Nile; it also conducted a survey of an International Committee of the Red Cross water treatment centre in Juba. During the reporting period, three men were injured as a result of the detonation of a hand grenade in Bor. The service deployed 25 teams during the reporting period, which surveyed and released 1,203,169 m² of land and removed and destroyed a further 819 explosive items and 34,204 rounds of small arms ammunition.

D. Supporting the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and the peace process

76. My Special Representative for South Sudan and his deputies exercised their good offices to support the peace process and engage with senior government and opposition officials, traditional leaders, States Members of the United Nations and representatives of the African Union, IGAD and bodies established under the Revitalized Agreement to facilitate the peace process. UNMISS, with the African Union and IGAD, continued to encourage face-to-face meetings between President Kiir and Riek Machar to promote dialogue on outstanding issues. My Special Representative also met with Riek Machar on 21 August in Addis Ababa, where he encouraged him to continue to engage in peace efforts. As a result, plans are under way, with the involvement of IGAD and regional leaders, to initiate the dialogue process. The Mission has also advocated strengthened coordination and planning and the need to maintain momentum in the implementation tasks.

77. UNMISS has remained engaged in the provision of technical assistance to the National Constitutional Amendment Committee on security reform bills and support to security bodies. For instance, UNMISS has provided support to the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board through the provision of security expertise. Similarly, UNMISS is providing technical support to the Joint Transitional Security Committee in order to develop curricula for the civilian security forces, including an inventory of knowledge-based products and substantive review of draft curriculum outlines and training documents. The Mission has also participated in consultative meetings and activities of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism, the National Pre-Transitional Committee and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, including through the provision of logistical support to pre-transition tasks.

78. Across the country, UNMISS continues to support civil military dialogue, peace conferences and rapprochement activities. On 4 July, my Special Representative travelled with representatives of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission to Maridi, Western Equatoria, to engage in a UNMISS-supported rapprochement meeting between Government and opposition leaders. The meeting was the first of its kind in the region and enabled UNMISS to raise awareness of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and encourage local leaders to work together to ensure political stability.

79. To provide a space in which to enhance trust and confidence, UNMISS and the United Nations Development Programme hosted a political parties' forum in Juba on 2 and 3 August so as to enable the parties to discuss priorities to focus support on pre-transition tasks and technical support to boost internal and inter-party democracy, including by supporting women's leadership, as set out in the peace agreement.

Women and peace and security

80. UNMISS continued to engage with women's groups and organizations to promote their participation in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. The Mission organized seven capacity-building workshops across the country, resulting in enhanced interest in, and awareness of, the 35 per cent quota for the participation of women in all government institutions under the provisions of the Revitalized Agreement.

81. From 18 to 21 June, the Mission organized two workshops on women and peace and security in Juba, which included the participation of the South Sudan National Police Service and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. Discussions were focused on preventing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence, and the role and engagement of women in security sector reform. Through its network of gender affairs officers across field offices, the Mission provided technical expertise to peacebuilding efforts at the subnational level, acting as a conduit between the national and subnational processes for women's representatives.

VI. Mission staffing, status of deployments and conduct and discipline

82. On 27 August, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,673, comprising 900 international staff members (246 women, or 27 per cent), 1,187 national staff members (196 women, or 14 per cent) and 390 United Nations Volunteers (148 women, or 38 per cent).

83. The police strength stood at 1,825 officers (of an authorized 2,101 officers), comprising 600 individual police officers (187 women, or 31 per cent), 1,147

personnel in formed police units (221 women, or 19 per cent) and 78 corrections officers (19 women, or 24 per cent).

84. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, including up to 4,000 troops for the regional protection force, UNMISS troop strength stood at 14,912 military personnel: 231 military liaison officers (38 women, or 16 per cent), 421 military staff officers (69 women, or 16 per cent) and 14,260 military contingent personnel (531 women, or 4 per cent).

85. UNMISS continued to implement the United Nations three-pronged strategy, including the roll-out of the sexual exploitation and abuse toolkit. UNMISS collaborated with the national task force on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse to enhance the community-based complaints mechanisms through the training of 1,803 partners and stakeholders, the distribution of six communication kits and sensitization and awareness-raising initiatives for the local population. In addition, a total of 2,075 UNMISS personnel received training in United Nations standards of conduct and the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

86. During the reporting period, 6 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were received, and an additional 22 allegations were assessed and processed in line with established procedures.

VII. Violations of the status-of-forces agreement

87. UNMISS recorded 53 incidents constituting violations of the status-of-forces agreement, compared with 42 in the previous reporting period.

88. UNMISS recorded 28 incidents of restrictions on movement attributed to the Government and impeding the Mission's ability to implement its mandate, in particular with regard to the protection of civilians and the monitoring and investigation of human rights. Of particular concern were repeated incidents involving the restriction of access to areas of high volatility, including Kimotong, Eastern Equatoria (two); Lobonok, Central Equatoria (two); Kuajena, Western Bahr el-Ghazal (four); and Aweil, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal (three), which had the effect of impeding the Mission's ability to gain situational awareness and address threats to civilians. UNMISS has encountered recurring denials of access to Kuajena since March 2019.

89. Violations of the obligation to facilitate the entry of UNMISS and associated personnel into South Sudan, without delay or hindrance, continued. Specifically, military officers deployed to UNMISS continue to experience lengthy delays in securing entry visas into South Sudan owing to cumbersome processes imposed by the Government, which significantly impede the Mission's ability to implement its mandate efficiently.

90. The whereabouts of two staff members arrested in 2014 remain unknown. The Government has neither granted UNMISS access to the staff members nor provided information about their condition, notwithstanding regular requests. UNMISS documented 11 new cases of the arrest and detention by the Government of UNMISS personnel, one of whom remains in detention.

91. UNMISS recorded one incident of restriction of movement by SPLA-IO, on 21 August 2019, impeding the Mission's ability to protect civilians and support the delivery of humanitarian aid between Yambio and Tambura, Western Equatoria.

VIII. Performance evaluation of the military component

92. Currently, 33 units are under the command of the Force Commander. Since October 2018, UNMISS has maintained the Force Commander evaluation mechanism for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the performance of military units and has submitted 51 evaluation summaries for 12 troop-contributing countries. The evaluations cover mandate comprehension and support, command and control, training and discipline and sustainment and health. They also assess the willingness and ability of the units to implement assigned tasks related to the protection of civilians. All of the evaluation summaries indicated that, overall, the units are performing at a satisfactory level. In nine evaluation summaries, units received a rating of excellent in every category of the evaluation.

93. The Force headquarters is focusing on improving the Force's effectiveness in the key areas of the protection of civilians, rules of engagement, civil-military cooperation, interoperability review and execution of the concept of operations plan. Moreover, 9 courses and 12 exercises involving the command and staff above the sector level were conducted on Ebola virus disease, casualty evacuation, crowd management, rules of engagement and incident management so as to further improve the interoperability among contingents. To be well prepared for Ebola virus disease, which is active in the adjacent Democratic Republic of the Congo, and possible ensuing casualties, refresher training in Ebola and casualty evacuation has been made mandatory for all military members. Ebola scenario-based exercises were also conducted in order to rehearse effective, clear and coordinated responses.

IX. Financial aspects

94. The General Assembly, by its resolution [73/323](#), appropriated the amount of \$1,183,447,300 for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

95. As at 26 August 2019, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNMISS special account amounted to \$1,032.5 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to \$5,101.6 million.

96. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 December 2018, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has also been made for the period up to 31 December 2018, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

X. Observations and recommendations

97. With little more than two months remaining until the end of the extended pre-transition period, the parties must forge ahead in a spirit of compromise and collaboration that will pave the way for the transparent and credible formation of the transitional Government.

98. While there has been movement on transitional security arrangements, the parties must seek to continue to resolve the outstanding tasks through dialogue and political solutions. Benchmarks not met during the pre-transition period can be met during the transition period through an inclusive and transparent Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity. Collective and accountable decisions by the Revitalized Transitional Government will not only facilitate the resolution of outstanding issues but also enable the parties to maintain focus on the transitional period and the conditions required to achieve free and fair elections.

99. I note with concern that, despite calls by IGAD, the United Nations and the international community, the leadership of the parties has yet to engage in face-to-face meetings. Such personal dialogue is pivotal to building trust and confidence, addressing political obstacles and establishing the foundation for a successful transitional Government. I urge the parties to throw their full weight behind the peace agreement, as it remains the only solution to the situation in South Sudan. The United Nations stands ready to support all such efforts.

100. Countrywide peace initiatives at the subnational level have maintained momentum, resulting in tangible and positive change. The political leaders need to consider this strong desire for peace and ensure that the national process is informed by subnational peacebuilding efforts. The United Nations and partners are working at all levels to support the parties in achieving this goal.

101. It is encouraging that the permanent ceasefire continues to hold and that political violence has abated in most parts of the country. However, sporadic clashes between the parties and the non-signatory groups, in particular in Central Equatoria, continue, resulting in forced displacement and targeted attacks on civilians, including women and children, as well as those perceived to be associated with opposition groups. Such clashes severely undermine advances made since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement. I urge the Government to undertake a thorough investigation into all allegations of human rights violations and abuses, as well as all violations of humanitarian law, and to hold perpetrators accountable.

102. I remain deeply concerned about the lives lost owing to intercommunal violence, as well as the high levels of criminality and sexual violence across the country. I urge all parties to take action to protect civilians and ensure that perpetrators are held to account. In that regard, I am encouraged by the efforts of SPLA-IO to endorse an action plan on conflict-related sexual violence and note the engagement of UNMISS with the South Sudan National Police Service to develop a similar plan following the Government's launch of a plan on preventing and combating conflict-related sexual violence for the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in March 2019.

103. Meaningful progress on the transitional security arrangements is vital to the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. In areas where there is a concentration of forces, all parties must ensure that there is no detrimental impact on nearby civilians. Moreover, measures must be identified and implemented to mitigate potential protection risks, such as forced recruitment, sexual and gender-based violence and the illegal occupation of civilian houses, among others. To mitigate these threats, it is equally vital that reintegration and alternative livelihood programmes be planned and implemented together with cantonment efforts to ensure the reintegration of former forces.

104. The humanitarian situation in South Sudan continues to result in the suffering of millions, including 1.83 million internally displaced persons and 2.31 million refugees from South Sudan. As more displaced persons return to their areas of origin, it is vital that the United Nations work closely with the Government and partners to ensure their peaceful reintegration and access to services. The parties must ensure that displaced persons have the right of freedom of movement and to voluntarily choose their area of return and relocation. Moreover, humanitarian access without obstruction must be allowed. It is imperative that the dividends of peace flow to communities as they rebuild their lives and look to the leaders of South Sudan to usher in an era of peace, development, economic progress and political stability.

105. I commend faith leaders, the African Union, IGAD and the United Nations for tirelessly taking measures in support of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. I also commend IGAD for its consistent engagement with the parties and

encourage efforts that continue to facilitate constructive political dialogue. While acknowledging the efforts of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, I also continue to encourage IGAD to appoint a permanent Chair.

106. In conclusion, I convey my deep appreciation to the uniformed and civilian personnel of UNMISS and to my Special Representative, David Shearer, for their tireless efforts in protecting civilians, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, upholding human rights and supporting the peace process in South Sudan. I thank the troop- and police-contributing countries for their contributions. I am also grateful to the United Nations country team and humanitarian partners for providing vital and life-saving assistance across the country, often in insecure environments. Lastly, I acknowledge the indispensable efforts of the Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Special Envoy to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Ismail Wais, and the Chair of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, towards ensuring peace in South Sudan.

