



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Top UN official in South Sudan urges Government to fulfil peace benchmarks during Security Council briefing**

**Juba, 5 February 2025** – Top United Nations official in South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, called on the Government to urgently fulfil outstanding peace benchmarks so that elections can be held in December 2026, during a briefing to the UN Security Council today.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) stated that the constitution-making and census timelines do not currently fit into the framework for a December 2026 election, adding that lack of government funding as well as delayed legal and political decisions are slowing down these necessary processes.

"The parties should be under no illusions that there will be resources from the international community to sponsor the implementation of the peace agreement, ending with elections, if there is no evidence of political will to accelerate implementation of the key benchmarks," said Mr Haysom.

While highlighting important achievements, including commitments to expand political and civic space, enhanced access to justice through mobile courts, progress in operationalizing the National Elections Commission, and election security training, SRSG Haysom stated that none of these are sufficient to "move the needle" on the critical decisions required for elections.

Furthermore, Mr Haysom warned that as South Sudan continues to grapple with humanitarian, economic and security challenges, the situation will remain fragile as an electoral period draws nearer.

For its part, UNMISS is continuing to robustly protect civilians, enhance human rights and the rule of law, as well as support the peace process, within its mandate and capacities.

"I affirm that UNMISS stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of South Sudan on their journey from conflict to stabilization and democratization," he stated.

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