



Security Council

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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 [2729 \(2024\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to 30 April 2025 and requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the Mission's mandate every 90 days. The report covers political and security developments, the humanitarian and human rights situation and progress towards the implementation of the Mission's mandate between 16 October 2024 and 15 January 2025.

II. Political and economic developments

2. The Tumaini Initiative under way in Nairobi has yet to see a breakthrough. Some progress – mainly on institutional preparations for elections and the commitment by some stakeholders to political and civic space – was observed on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan since the announcement in September 2024 of the two-year extension of the transitional period.

3. From 28 October to 4 November, a high-level delegation led by the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Martin Elia Lomuro, visited heads of State in Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda to discuss the Tumaini initiative.

4. On 6 November, the President of Kenya, William Ruto met with the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, in Juba, where they resolved to involve the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to mobilize resources and international support for the Tumaini Initiative. In a joint communiqué, they directed the mediation team to conclude talks within two weeks. On the same day, Mr. Kiir dismissed the head of the government delegation, Albino Mathom Ayuel.

5. On 15 November, the Presidency appointed a new delegation led by a senior presidential adviser, Kuol Manyang, with Mr. Lomuro replacing the Minister of Information, Michael Makuei, as rapporteur. The talks resumed on 4 December but stalled due to disagreements over the agenda. The government delegation sought to revisit the previously agreed protocols and deconflict from the Revitalized Agreement, to which the opposition did not agree. On 14 December, the Kenyan deputy chief mediator proposed a compromise position and announced that the talks would be adjourned until January 2025. In his New Year's message, the President confirmed that talks would resume on 6 January.



6. On 9 December, the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) Kitgwang faction, Simon Gatwech, expressed his readiness to participate in the negotiations on the Tumaini Initiative, stating that he had not yet been invited to do so. Meanwhile, the leader of the National Salvation Front (NAS), Thomas Cirillo, has reaffirmed his refusal to join the talks. Also on 9 January, the four opposition groups negotiating in the Tumaini Initiative – the Real SPLM, the South Sudan United Front/Army, the South Sudan United National Alliance and the National Salvation Front-Revolution Command Council – formed an umbrella group called the United People's Alliance.

7. Following the extension on 13 September of the transitional period, civil society and regional partners, such as the African Union, IGAD and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, underlined the need to harmonize timelines and implement a realistic action plan to hold national elections in December 2026.

8. From 4 to 8 November, a delegation from the Government of South Africa visited South Sudan to discuss technical support to the peace process, with a focus on electoral support. The delegation noted the need for key political decisions and demonstrable actions by the Government, including funding of the electoral and constitution-making processes. From 10 to 13 November, the African Union Panel of the Wise, led by the Chair, Effie Owour, visited Juba to discuss implementation of the Revitalized Agreement and electoral preparations, and agreed to work closely with the Government.

9. On 14 November, the President and the First Vice President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, met to discuss the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, as well as the economic challenges facing South Sudan. On 29 November, IGAD issued a statement reaffirming its support to the implementation of the peace process, emphasizing the need for coordination on the unification of forces, the constitution-making process and preparations for elections.

10. Government commitments to reconvene the joint task force – a coordination mechanism for support to the electoral and constitution-making processes that includes the African Union, IGAD, UNMISS and the Troika – have not yet been fulfilled. Progress on transitional security arrangements remains stagnant, with approximately 7,000 out of 53,000 Necessary Unified Forces graduates deployed. Training for the second batch and agreement on the middle command structure are pending.

11. On 5 December, the National Elections Commission adopted its code of conduct and regulations on observers, the media, party representatives and election campaigns. In a communiqué, commissioners pledged their commitment to determining the way forward on legal reform, voter registration, electoral timeline and operational challenges. The Commission held its first press conference on 11 December to share key electoral updates.

12. Also on 5 December, the Secretary of the National Constitutional Review Commission urged the swift release of the constitution-making budget. This echoed the warning by the Chairperson of the Commission that another extension could result from a lack of timely funding.

Other political developments

13. From 23 to 25 October, the Judicial Reform Committee held a workshop to validate its report. Key findings included public distrust in the judiciary, executive interference and a lack of judges, particularly women. The recommendations made during the workshop included establishing a constitutional court, digitalizing judicial processes and promoting gender equality. The final report, which was presented to

the President on 20 December, aims to guide the implementation of reforms within the judiciary.

14. On 11 November, the President signed into law the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing Act 2024 and the Compensation and Reparations Authority Act 2024, both crucial for the implementation of Chapter 5 of the Revitalized Agreement, on transitional justice, accountability, reconciliation and healing, along with the Public Financial Management and Accountability Act 2011 (Amendment Act 2024); and the National Bureau of Statistics Act 2018 (Amendment Act 2024).

15. From 26 November to 2 December, UNMISS and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the eighth annual Governors' Forum in Juba. At its conclusion, the forum had adopted 62 resolutions, including calls to expand civic and political space, amend the National Security Service bill, pay salaries to civil servants and remove illegal roadblocks.

16. During the reporting period, the President reshuffled several key political and security sector appointees, including the Chief Administrator in his office, the Governor of Western Bahr el-Ghazal, the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of South Sudan, the Commissioner General and Deputy Commissioner General of the South Sudan Revenue Authority, the Chief of Defence Forces and the Inspector General of Police and the Presidential Advisor on Security Affairs. The President further reconstituted the National Transitional Committee and the board of the State oil company, Nilepet. An attempt by government security forces on 21 November to relocate the former Internal Security Bureau Director General of the National Security Service, Akol Koor Kuc, to within Juba led to an exchange of fire between security forces and his bodyguards. The next day, he was relocated to a second residence further from the city centre, where he remained under military guard.

Regional engagements and developments

17. On 15 and 20 October, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Petroleum, Chol Deng Thon, and a presidential adviser, Tut Gatluak, visited Port Sudan in the Sudan to address oil flow challenges since the outbreak of conflict in the Sudan, which had led to a declaration of force majeure by the Government of the Sudan in March 2024. In a briefing to the President on 23 October, Mr. Gatluak confirmed the partial resumption of oil production. On 4 January, the Sudan announced that the force majeure on South Sudanese oil exports had been lifted. On 7 January, the Minister for Petroleum, Puot Kang Chol, announced the resumption of oil production, noting that it would be a gradual process, with 90,000 barrels a day as an initial output target.

18. In October, South Sudan signed several memorandums of understanding with neighbouring countries to strengthen regional cooperation, including with Kenya on customs operations, with Uganda on cross-border issues, and with the Democratic Republic of the Congo on border demarcation.

19. On 30 November, the President attended the twenty-fourth East Africa Community Heads of State Summit in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, where he handed over the block's chairpersonship to the President of Kenya.

20. The President of the Transitional Sovereign Council of the Sudan, Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, visited Juba on 4 December, where he held discussions with Mr. Kiir on oil exports and the ongoing conflict in the Sudan.

Economic situation

21. On 18 November, the South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics extended the coverage of the consumer price index from 3 to 10 states. The Bureau also changed

the base period from June 2011 to August 2024, which led to a monthly consumer price index of 6.6 per cent in September, 11.1 per cent in October, 22 per cent in November and 14.9 per cent in December.

22. On 25 November, the President signed into law the budget for the fiscal year 2024/25. The approved budget of 4.2 trillion South Sudan pounds (SSP) (\$1.651 billion) had a deficit of 46 per cent, or SSP 1.9 trillion (\$758 million). The Government expects to fund the deficit through grants and external borrowing. It also increased taxes and fees to raise revenue.

23. As at 15 January, the South Sudan pound had depreciated by 23 per cent on the unofficial market, dropping from SSP 4,300 to the dollar to SSP 5,300 to the dollar. Since January 2024, the South Sudan pound had depreciated by 342 per cent. By 15 January, the official rate stood at SSP 4,169 to the dollar, resulting in a gap of 27 per cent between the official and unofficial exchange rates.

III. Security situation

24. Despite the rainy season and flooding, which reduced the mobility of the population, cattle raids, communal violence and criminal activities continued to be observed nationwide. Incidents involving government forces were reported in Upper Nile, Western Equatoria and Central Equatoria, raising concerns about the protection of civilian and prompting displacement. Ongoing security concerns had hindered efforts by UNMISS and humanitarian partners to gain access to affected communities. In Juba, political reshuffles and related dynamics led to tensions and heightened concerns of potential security deterioration in the capital.

Greater Upper Nile region

25. In Upper Nile, tensions persisted between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and Nuer youth in Nasir County, with fighting reported between 16 and 17 October, resulting in 4 civilians killed, 16 injured and the displacement of at least 20,000 civilians. Following this, the young people demanded the replacement of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces with Necessary Unified Forces in Nasir. On 21 November, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism announced that the Joint Transitional Security Committee had been preparing for the deployment of Necessary Unified Forces to Nasir. On 15 January, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in Nasir attacked, for unknown reasons, a humanitarian convoy.

26. In Jonglei, cattle raids and abductions attributed to Murle elements increased with the onset of the dry season, leading to mobilizations by Lou Nuer and Dinka Bor intending to attack the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, although an attack has not yet taken place. Between 29 October and 1 November, 9 people were killed and 13 injured in Nyirol County, and on 13 December, 15 civilians were killed, 12 injured and over 3,000 cattle were stolen in Gumuruk County, during revenge attacks between the Murle and Lou Nuer/Dinka Bor young people. In response, the Jonglei State Governor dispatched a delegation of state authorities and community elders to de-escalate tensions. On 26 December, the Chief Administrator of the Greater Pibor Administrative Area held a rally in Gumuruk payam to encourage young people to seek peace.

Greater Equatoria region

27. The presence of NAS continued to be reported in Central and Western Equatoria, intensifying South Sudan People's Defence Forces' operations in the area and exacerbating concerns regarding the protection of civilians. From October, several

violent incidents were reported involving NAS led by Mr. Cirillo, NAS-United Forces led by John Kenyi Loburon and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, as well as a government-aligned NAS faction led by a former NAS commander. The involvement of various NAS splinter groups introduced additional complexity to the conflict dynamics. In areas where government forces were present, there were reported instances of harassment and arbitrary arrests over allegations of NAS affiliation. The numbers of casualties and displaced civilians remained unclear. Access for UNMISS and humanitarian partners to affected areas remains a challenge.

28. In Tambura, Western Equatoria, the security situation remained fragile. Numerous retaliatory attacks involving the Azande and Balanda communities persisted, resulting in 21 civilians killed and 15 injured. On 28 December, former East African Community Regional Force soldiers, under the command of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, redeployed to Tambura to address insecurity to conduct a disarmament exercise, during which 16 people were injured. Despite the presence of security forces in the area and enforcement of curfews, violence continues. Rumours of cross-border movements by armed groups are fuelling tensions, prompting the further displacement of civilians towards internally displaced persons' sites, including one adjacent to the UNMISS temporary operating base currently hosting over 12,000 internally displaced persons, and along the border with the Central African Republic.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

29. In Greater Tonj, Warrap, communal violence continued. In Tonj East, despite the deployment of around 300 government forces on 24 October, retaliatory incidents between the Dinka Akook and allied Dinka Luanyjang and Dinka Thiik culminated in violent clashes on 29 October, which resulted in the killing of 18 people and the injuring of 35. These incidents continued until the intracommunal peace dialogue held on 15 to 17 November, funded by the reconciliation, stabilization and resilience trust fund. The dialogue concluded with several resolutions agreed among the concerned communities. However, isolated incidents continued, usually attributed to acts of banditry along the main route between these communities.

30. Security in Warrap was also affected by the violence between the Dinka Pan-Kuei and the Dinka Pan-Ariik sub-clans in Tonj North, which on 15 November resulted in the killing of 18 people and the injuring of 24 in Alabek Payam. In Ajakuac Payam, Twic County, tensions between the Dinka Twic and Dinka Ngok resurfaced despite the presence of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in the contested areas. Reports of looting along the main supply routes between Abiemnhom, Ajakuac and Abyei increased, affecting trade and the movement of border communities.

IV. Humanitarian situation

31. South Sudan had experienced extensive flooding since June, caused by heavy rains and water released from Lake Victoria in Uganda into the Nile River. As at 15 January, flooding had affected over 1.4 million people in 44 counties. About 380,000 people had been displaced by floods in 22 counties, seeking food assistance, shelter and higher grounds.

32. On 16 and 17 October, hostilities between government forces and armed youth in Nasir County, Upper Nile, resulted in the killing of several civilians and displacement of 16,500 people. Humanitarian supplies for flood- and conflict-affected people in Nasir were stuck in Ulang for several days due to insecurity.

33. On 28 October, the Ministry of Health declared a cholera outbreak in Renk, Upper Nile, the main entry point for people arriving from the Sudan. As at 15 January,

cholera cases had climbed to 20,375, including 368 deaths in 31 counties across seven states and Ruweng Administrative Area. Cholera vaccination campaigns targeting over 1 million people in Renk, Malakal and Juba counties were completed. On 11 November, the Ministry of Health launched a poliovirus campaign to vaccinate 3.3 million children following 12 confirmed cases of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 in Western and Central Equatoria, Upper Nile and Jonglei. Immunization coverage has been affected by population movements and other disruptions.

34. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report released on 18 November, an estimated 6.3 million people are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity classified in IPC phase 3+ (crisis or worse), including 41,000 people in IPC phase 5 (catastrophe), between September and November. Projections for the harvest/post-harvest season from December to March 2025 indicate that 6.1 million people will likely experience IPC phase 3+, including 31,000 people classified in IPC phase 5.

35. Since the conflict in the Sudan began in April 2023, over 997,522 returnees, refugees and asylum-seekers had crossed into South Sudan from the Sudan as at 15 January. In December alone, over 100,000 people fleeing conflict arrived from the Sudan, the highest surge since the conflict began. The majority settled in communities along the border, straining already stretched humanitarian resources. Since the conflict in the Sudan began, 864,217 returnees have been supported by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to reach their destinations, although with limited assistance to integrate within returning communities due to the lack of funding. Some returnees are unable to return to their areas of origin due to flooding, insecurity and lack of basic services.

36. South Sudan remains one of the most dangerous contexts for humanitarian workers. Between October 2024 and January 2025, 111 incidents related to humanitarian access were reported, including numerous attacks on humanitarian facilities, staff and assets. On 1 November, authorities suspended humanitarian activities in Renk County after a group of young people blocked partners from gaining access to the Renk transit centres for people arriving from the Sudan. On 14 November, a United Nations-chartered flight carrying poliovirus vaccines was diverted from Pochalla to Juba by armed personnel.

37. The 2024 humanitarian needs and response plan, which sought \$1.8 billion to assist 6 million people across South Sudan, was only 64.6 per cent (\$1.15 billion) funded as at 31 December. Due to that shortfall, humanitarian partners prioritized their efforts, focusing on areas with the highest vulnerability. On 16 December, the 2025 humanitarian needs and response plan was released, seeking \$1.7 billion, with the goal of reaching 5.4 million people with humanitarian aid.

V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks

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

38. UNMISS continued to support the constitution-making process in South Sudan. On 5 November, UNMISS, in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Affairs, launched the booklet entitled "The Role of Traditional Leaders in Constitution Making and Local Governance" during an event attended by 153 participants (37 women). From 12 to 14 November, UNMISS and UNDP supported the fourth high-level forum on fiscal devolution and revenue management, organized by the Council of States and Ministries of Finance and Petroleum. The forum, attended by

144 participants (31 women), including governors, parliamentarians and ministry representatives, concluded with policy recommendations. From 19 to 22 November, UNMISS and the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law hosted a workshop on fiscal federalism for the National Constitutional Review Commission in Juba. The workshop brought together 68 participants (14 women) and facilitated discussions on fiscal devolution and a permanent constitution. UNMISS facilitated a workshop on 3 and 4 December for 42 participants (15 women) from civil society organizations in Greater Yei to discuss the constitutional review and electoral processes under the South Sudan Electoral Act 2023 and highlight the critical role of women.

39. During a planning retreat facilitated by UNMISS in Entebbe from 3 to 5 December, the National Elections Commission committed to finalizing an election-specific timeline that includes benchmarks for political decisions needed and technical feasibility for consideration and public discourse. The timeline is being considered to emphasize the need for political decision-making by the Government and stakeholders.

40. With UNMISS support, the National Elections Commission held a consultative dialogue on 17 December with political parties to discuss the electoral timeline and political considerations, to raise awareness and build trust for bottom-up advocacy for political decisions to be taken. UNMISS is supporting infrastructure projects to refurbish and construct office of the State High Election Committee across all 10 states.

41. From 20 to 21 November, UNMISS supported a workshop on the role of prosecutors and police investigators in addressing electoral offences, organized by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal, which was attended by 60 participants (8 women).

42. UNMISS continued to facilitate political forums on the theme “towards open civic and political space”. With UNMISS support, the Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State government organized a political forum from 10 to 12 December in Aweil, the seventh in the series nationwide. The event brought together 81 participants (41 women) from civil society organizations, political parties, state government, security agencies, faith leaders and traditional authorities. It contributed to confidence-building between stakeholders, identified the positive roles they can play in supporting the Revitalized Agreement and expanding civic and political space. On 18 December, with UNMISS support, the Ministry of Information organized a workshop on the role of media, civil society and political parties in enabling civic space. The 90 participants (19 women) adopted a declaration of joint commitments to safeguard and expand this space.

43. On 17 October, UNMISS convened a quarterly meeting between civil society organizations and UNMISS leadership. The event brought together 214 participants (66 women) and underlined the progress made by civil society organizations in building networks to engage broadly, enhance advocacy roles and solidify support for the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement. On a related note, on 15 November, UNMISS facilitated state-level consultations among civil society organizations on the Non-Governmental Organizations’ Act Amendment bill 2024 across the country to ensure that the regulation of civic and political space is aligned with the principles of the Revitalized Agreement and the Transitional Constitution.

44. During the period, UNMISS aired 12 Radio Miraya “Democracy in Action” programmes to inform the public of the fundamental principles of the democratic system; and five round-table discussion programmes on contemporary contested political issues.

45. In support of the National Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, UNMISS and UNDP organized consultations on the implementation of community violence reduction initiatives with relevant stakeholders and potential donors. The activities presented information on and presenting community violence reduction opportunities as effective alternatives for mitigating the underlying causes of conflict while providing incentives for ex-combatants and young people at risk of recruitment into armed groups, and at raising awareness of resource mobilization to that end. With support from the Peacebuilding Fund, UNMISS worked to advance a community violence reduction project in the White Nile and Sobat River Corridor. On 2 January, a community violence reduction project was launched in Kraal, Eastern Equatoria. The project aimed at empowering young people at risk and ex-combatants by providing livelihood skills training and start-up kits, reducing the likelihood that they will resort to crime.

46. From 5 to 7 December, UNMISS supported the Strategic Defence and Security Review Board to hold a validation workshop of its key documents mandated under the Revitalized Agreement, namely, the security policy framework, the revised defence policy and the white paper on defence and security. The three documents were also a milestone towards attaining the second benchmark, as decided by the Security Council in its resolution [2577 \(2021\)](#), to assess the arms embargo on South Sudan. The documents were then submitted to the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and Parliament for final approval.

B. Protection of civilians and mitigating intercommunal conflict

47. UNMISS continued efforts in support of the protection of civilians and facilitated the implementation of at least eight programmes that targeted 377 participants (63 women) in Upper Nile, Jonglei, Warrap, Yambio and Western Equatoria. UNMISS facilitated a peace mission by a 30-member delegation from Yambio to Tambura, Western Equatoria, to de-escalate persistent tensions and violence between the Azande and the Balanda communities. To prevent cattle-related conflicts during the dry season, UNMISS supported from 15 to 19 December a pre-migration meeting in Wau for 200 participants (25 women) including local authorities and cattle camp leaders from Warrap, Lakes and Western Bahr el-Ghazal. The meeting focused on reinforcing migration and border agreement protocols to ensure peaceful coexistence during the inter-state animal migration season. Other pre-migration conferences were conducted for South Sudan host communities and nomadic pastoralists from Blue Nile, Sennar and White Nile States of the Sudan in Manyo (13–14 December), Renk (14–15 December) and Maban (16–17 December) of Upper Nile.

48. UNMISS sensitized 552 community leaders (110 women), local authorities and representatives of community-based organizations on the protection of civilians, in Jonglei, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal, Western Bahr-el-Ghazal, Unity, Western Equatoria and Warrap. UNMISS worked with five community protection committees in Western Equatoria to strengthen community protection and early warning mechanisms. Six quick-impact projects were delivered, including one primary school in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, the National Prisons Service training academy in Central Equatoria and solar-powered boreholes in Unity. UNMISS also supported two civic education initiatives to enhance inclusive public participation in the ongoing peace processes across six counties in Central and Western Equatoria. Furthermore, 61 young people (41 young women) from the Azande, the Balanda and other ethnic groups completed an economic empowerment project, funded by UNMISS, to promote return and reintegration in Tambura County of Western Equatoria. In total, 60 young people (30 young women) completed vocational skills training in Upper Nile. In Ezo County, Western Equatoria, from 19 to 21 November, UNMISS

conducted a workshop on return and reintegration for 50 participants (14 women), including individuals from the security organs, civil society and traditional authorities, as well as refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons, women and individuals from youth groups. Participants formed a 21-member county taskforce (4 women) to propose solutions.

49. The UNMISS force conducted 15,666 patrols, including 506 integrated patrols comprising United Nations police and civilian personnel for the protection of civilians through presence in strategic areas. The force sustained the capability to respond in a crisis situation through the maintenance of a mobile and responsive force. This was achieved through 2,857 force protection patrols.

50. To increase operational reach, deter attacks against civilians and secure main supply routes, the UNMISS force maintained four extended-duration temporary operating bases in Koch, Jamjang, Abiemnom and Tambura.

51. The Mine Action Service responded to 465 requests from UNMISS and local communities for the identification, removal and disposal of landmines and explosive ordnance. The activities enabled communities to gain safe access to 66 agricultural areas, three hospitals and 13 water sources. The responses resulted in the disposal of 2,272 items of explosive ordnance and the clearance of 1,020,189 square metres of land during the period. The Mine Action Service also provided explosive ordnance risk education to civilians across the country to enhance their knowledge of safe behaviour and thereby prevent accidents caused by explosive ordnance, benefiting 82,304 people in total (13,291 men, 16,336 women, 28,394 boys and 24,283 girls), including 1,889 people fleeing conflict in the Sudan.

52. The Mine Action Service coordinated closely with local authorities, UNMISS, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other humanitarian partners in supporting the emergency flood response, particularly in Upper Nile. Efforts included the assessments of safe areas, explosive ordnance clearance and the delivery of explosive ordnance risk education to affected communities and humanitarian responders.

53. As at 15 January, United Nations police had completed 5,846 patrols, including 44 integrated patrols and 3,962 patrols that included women personnel. An average of 14 quick response teams were on daily standby to respond to security incidents in support of the South Sudan National Police Service in Juba, Malakal and Bentiu. In total, 12 individual police officers were deployed to the Tambura temporary operating base and a further 83 were deployed to five company operating bases in Yei, Kodok, Renk, Akobo and Pibor to support confidence-building, key leadership engagement, capacity-building for the South Sudan National Police Service and service delivery.

54. From 19 to 21 November, United Nations police coordinated a community-oriented policing workshop for 30 participants (all men), including State Commissioners from the South Sudan National Police Service and senior officers from headquarters. The workshop focused on building capacities for community-oriented policing practices, as well as challenges and strategies for sustainable crime prevention, emphasizing collaboration and community engagement.

Climate, peace and security

55. Despite South Sudan transitioning into what is traditionally the dry season during the period, many parts of the country continued to experience peak flooding in October and November, with wetter-than-usual weather conditions linked to climate change. The effects of the flooding, including failed harvests, damaged infrastructure population displacement, poor human and animal health, and reduced

access to markets, continued to affect vulnerable communities and the fragile economic and security situation of South Sudan.

56. UNMISS continued to support the Government's flood preparedness and response plan, with ongoing analysis of the developing flooding landscape marked by a slow receding of the flood waters. Aided by its conflict sensitivity database and dashboard, UNMISS also supported the tracking of peaceful coexistence between self-relocated communities on dedicated high grounds. In addition, the Mission facilitated several community dialogues, involving Northern Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile states, to identify and address flood-related risks to intercommunal relations, peaceful coexistence and land tenure.

57. From 29 to 30 October, UNMISS organized a high-level stakeholder engagement and advocacy conference in Juba on gender, climate, peace and security, bringing together ministries, women leaders in civil society organizations and subnational representatives. A total of 105 participants (63 women) discussed the impact of climate change on civilians, their security implications and gender dimensions. Subnational participants urged the Government to increase support for building resilience in areas of frequent cattle migration.

C. Rule of law and accountability

58. Building on UNMISS support to bring access to justice through the prior deployment of three mobile courts in Unity State, which had lacked a permanent judicial presence since 2013, between 3 and 21 December, the Mission provided technical assistance and coordination for the government-sponsored mobile court in Bentiu, fostering self-reliance. The court addressed 76 cases, resulting in 25 convictions.

59. In preparation for mobile court deployments, UNMISS supported assessment missions in Malakal, Upper Nile, and Tonj, Warrap. With military authorities, the assessment team finalized 45 cases for trial at the Division Headquarters in Malakal. In Tonj, civilian authorities gathered 44 cases, which are now ready for trial.

60. From 18 November to 2 December, UNMISS trained 105 police officers, customary court officials and community representatives (25 women) to enhance the delivery of justice in compliance with the law, in Gumuruk county, Greater Pibor Administrative Area.

61. For the first time since the 2013 crisis, and in line with the recommendations issued from the Judicial Reform Committee report, UNMISS conducted specialized training for 29 court administrative staff (3 women) in Upper Nile from 9 to 11 December to address weaknesses, relating to areas such as inefficient case management, enforcement of court orders, judiciary-public relations and outdated practices.

62. UNMISS continued efforts to harmonize the legal system of South Sudan, harmonizing formal and customary law with international human rights norms and standards. From 31 October to 9 November, UNMISS and UNDP trained 60 traditional leaders (all men) in Warrap State on customary law and court roles. In addition, around 200 community representatives (41 women) participated in workshops to amend Dinka and Bongo customary laws, aligning them with human rights norms and standards, including regarding women's rights.

63. UNMISS provided support for the validation of prisons regulations and the annual report of the National Prisons Service for the period 2023–2024, boosting transparency and aligning these regulations with the National Prisons Service strategic plan and transitional priorities for the period 2025–2026.

64. UNMISS facilitated forums of the prisons development committee in multiple regions, addressing operational challenges and supporting the National Prisons Service in capacity-building and strategic prison reforms. The gaps identified were addressed through technical training focusing on records management, prison security, the management of juvenile detainees, agricultural skills and training for military personnel on detention facility management.

65. To reduce case backlogs and prison congestion, UNMISS supported the court of appeal in Western Bahr el-Ghazal in holding hearings and resolving 94 of the 120 reviewed cases. In total, 26 appellants were acquitted and two death sentences were commuted. UNMISS supported the processing of case files and the release of 380 pretrial detainees (83 women; 27 juveniles) in Rumbek, Torit, Juba and Aweil.

66. At the Malakal protection of civilians site, the UNMISS-managed detention facility processed 34 admissions (1 woman; 12 juveniles). Following risk assessments and case review, 18 individuals (1 woman; 10 juveniles) were reintegrated into the protection of civilians site, whereas 14 male detainees were handed over to national authorities.

67. Following a request received from the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice, from 2 to 4 December UNMISS organized a legislative drafting workshop for parliamentarians aimed at enhancing the capacity of Committee members to review pending legislative bills.

D. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

68. UNMISS and humanitarian partners continued to coordinate with local authorities for flood response and awareness-raising in Central and Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Warrap, Unity, Upper Nile and Northern and Western Bahr el-Ghazal states.

69. In Unity, on 21 October, UNMISS supported the World Health Organization in delivering anti-venom in Mayom County to respond to a high number of cases of snake bites. In Lakes, on 6 November, UNMISS supported the Rumbek North County in delivering vaccines for minors in flood-affected areas using the Mission's air assets.

70. United Nations police provided security during three deliveries of humanitarian assistance and 52 security escorts of engineers and other humanitarian personnel.

71. The UNMISS force conducted 296 long-duration patrols, 1,334 short-duration patrols and 1,291 force protection tasks to help create conditions conducive for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to ensure the protection of humanitarian workers.

72. To ensure the mobility of peacekeepers and humanitarian partners free from the threat of explosive ordnance, the Mine Action Service verified and cleared 1.5 km of roads, as prioritized by UNMISS, and escorted UNMISS patrols for 2,875 km. It also continued to clear land for the establishment of resettlement sites for displaced persons in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Malakal, Upper Nile, following requests from the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission.

E. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations

73. UNMISS documented and verified 250 incidents of violence affecting 953 civilians, including 102 women and 114 children (68 boys and 46 girls). A total of 327 civilians were killed, 350 were injured, 149 were abducted, 112 were arbitrarily

arrested and detained and 5 were unlawfully detained and ill-treated. Compared with the previous reporting period, this represents a 21 per cent increase and 8 per cent decrease in the number of incidents and victims, respectively. Community-based militias and/or civil defence groups accounted for 65 per cent of the incidents, while 25 per cent were attributed to government security forces and other armed groups, and 10 per cent to unidentified armed elements.

74. Extrajudicial executions by state authorities and security personnel remained a significant human rights concern, particularly in Warrap State, where they are continually employed as a measure to address criminality and communal violence. UNMISS documented 24 extrajudicial executions during the reporting period.

75. On 16 October and 6 January, UNMISS published its second and third quarter briefs on violence affecting civilians in South Sudan, in which 317 and 206 incidents affecting 1,062 (160 women, 188 children) and 792 (88 women, 82 children) civilians were documented, respectively. Community-based militias and/or civil-defence groups accounted for 83 and 70 per cent of the victims, respectively. In both periods, Warrap State was the most affected.

76. UNMISS documented and verified eight incidents of infringements on civic and political space perpetrated by government security forces and state and county authorities, including three cases of arbitrary arrest and detention of civil society actors (all men), one case of intimidation of a media representative (one man) and one case of disruption of a youth political convention allegedly for failing to secure approval from the authorities. Media censorship, restrictions on peaceful assembly, as well as threats and intimidation of outspoken members of civil society and government critics, continued to hinder public debate on the election process and transitional justice mechanisms.

(a) Children and armed conflict

77. UNMISS verified 19 grave violations against 18 children (12 boys, 6 girls). Ten children were the victims of killing (2 boys, 1 girl) and maiming (7 boys); five children (3 girls, 2 boys) were abducted; one boy was recruited and used; and two girls were raped. One boy was a victim of multiple violations of recruitment and use by two perpetrators. UNMISS verified the military use of a school in Western Equatoria State by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces. Violations occurred in Western Equatoria (8), Central Equatoria (4), Lakes (3), Upper Nile (3), and Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal (1), and were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (9), the National Salvation Front (2), and the South Sudan National Police Service (1).

78. UNMISS delivered 56 child protection awareness-raising sessions to 2,260 participants (605 women), including 1,203 community members (496 women), 628 government security forces (85 women), 314 SPLM/A-IO officers (13 women), 62 government officials (4 women), 15 Necessary Unified Forces (all men) and 18 protection partners (7 women). In addition, UNMISS delivered 24 child protection training sessions to 1,171 participants (334 women), including 801 government security forces (193 women), 304 community members (113 women), 32 government officials (11 women), 31 SPLM/A-IO officers (17 women), 2 South Sudan Opposition Alliance (all men) and 1 protection partner (man).

(b) Conflict-related sexual violence

79. UNMISS documented and verified 27 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 31 survivors (13 women, one man and 17 girls). The survivors' ages ranged from 11 to 36 years. These incidents occurred in Western and Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Warrap, Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Lakes and were attributed to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, the National Police Service, SPLA-IO, the

National Security Service, community-based militias and unidentified armed element. In total, 21 of the survivors received urgent medical assistance, and 3 were referred to psychological care.

80. In total, 23 outreach and capacity-building activities on conflict-related sexual violence were conducted across South Sudan, targeting 1,062 beneficiaries (528 women). In the context of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, from 27 to 28 November, UNMISS organized a workshop to enhance the capacity of women and girls to address conflict-related sexual violence in Tonj County, Warrap State, due to the recurrent communal violence. It drew 50 participants (all women) representing women's associations, civil society organizations and students. On 10 December, as part of the United Nations action project focusing on the socioeconomic empowerment of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, a high-level parliamentary dialogue was organized on the model legislative framework on conflict-related sexual violence, aiming to shape policies that protect and empower survivors.

81. On 12 November, UNMISS organized its quarterly meeting with the Oversight Committee on the implementation of the National Police Service action plan on conflict-related sexual violence to discuss conflict-related sexual violence cases, relevant activities, and achievements and gaps in addressing conflict-related sexual violence with focal points in different states and administrative areas. The meeting provided capacity building for National Police Service personnel with a view to strengthening accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. On 20 November, UNMISS organized its quarterly meeting with the joint consultation forum, composed of civil society organizations, combining a data-driven analysis on sexual violence in conflict, interactive tools and a capacity-building session on security training tailored to human rights defenders, to support participants' work in addressing conflict-related sexual violence. On 21 November, participants in the quarterly meeting of the monitoring, analysis and reporting mechanism technical working group, chaired by UNMISS, discussed incidents, trends and patterns related to sexual violence in conflict.

F. Women and peace and security

82. From 15 to 24 October, UNMISS conducted a specialized sexual and gender-based violence investigation training session for 19 investigators and one prosecutor (all men) in Unity State to strengthen and expand access to justice. For an extended period, the state had only one investigator, but the training resulted in the deployment of an additional 18 investigators, including in sexual and gender-based violence hotspots.

83. During the 16 Days of Activism, on 29 November, in support of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, UNMISS launched a national task force on sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence. This multisectoral mechanism aims to strengthen coordination between government, civil society and community actors in addressing sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence and increase national ownership in stakeholder coordination and resource allocation for prevention and the prosecution of perpetrators and enhance support for survivors. A five-point agenda was recommended, starting from the fast-tracked Anti-Gender-Based Violence Law in Parliament.

84. Between 18 and 20 November, an UNMISS subject-matter expert took part in the IGAD Leadership Academy's training course entitled "Mentoring young women for leadership and resilient peace" as one of the co-training facilitators. In total, 20 participants from IGAD member States attended the course, including three South Sudanese young professional women.

85. On 10 December, UNMISS conducted a forum in Juba for 54 civil society representatives from women-led, youth-led and faith-based organizations (22 women) to discuss positive masculinity and its role in advancing gender equality and in addressing gender-based violence.

86. During the UNMISS-supported mobile court deployment to Bentiu from 3 to 21 December, six cases of sexual and gender-based violence-related offenses were tried, all resulting in convictions. In December, the Mission supported a High Court circuit in Raja County to address four cases of conflict-related sexual violence in remote areas.

87. With UNMISS support, the assessment missions to collect cases for trial in Malakal and Warrap finalized 16 cases resulting in charges related to sexual and gender-based violence. Of those, two cases were allegedly perpetrated by elements of the security and defence forces.

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

88. As at 15 January, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,670: 870 international staff members, including 267 women (31 per cent); 1,400 national staff members, including 234 women (17 per cent); and 400 United Nations Volunteers, including 156 women (39 per cent).

89. UNMISS police strength stood at 1,592 (of an authorized 2,101 personnel): 695 individual police officers, including 217 women (31 per cent); 850 personnel in formed police units, including 216 women (25 per cent); and 47 government-provided personnel (of an authorized 88 personnel), including 20 women (43 per cent).

90. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, UNMISS troop strength stood at 13,930 military personnel: 239 military liaison officers, including 74 women (31 per cent); 439 military staff officers, including 94 women (21 per cent); and 13,252 military contingent personnel, including 1,014 women (8 per cent).

91. In accordance with the applicable policy, information on possible unsatisfactory conduct and/or misconduct was processed in a timely fashion. Between 1 October and 30 November, 15 allegations of misconduct were recorded in the case management tracking system. One allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse was recorded during this period. All identified victims of previously reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse continued to receive support from the Senior Victims' Rights Officer in South Sudan.

VII. Violations of the status-of-forces agreement, international humanitarian law and security of United Nations personnel

92. From 16 October to 31 December, UNMISS recorded 57 incidents related to the status-of-forces agreement. Of these, 51 incidents involved movement restrictions imposed by government authorities, affecting UNMISS patrols in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Warrap, Lakes, Unity, Central, Eastern and Western Equatoria, and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States. In total, 46 UNMISS dynamic air patrols and ground patrols to various locations were cancelled due to non-acknowledgement by the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism headquarters in Juba of the Mission's sharing of information and flight safety assurance. In October and November, six UNMISS patrol teams from Juba to Wonduruba, Lobonok and Kapoeta, from Wau to Tonj and Ghana, and from Juba to Mogiri and Mangalla, were denied access by the South Sudan

People's Defence Forces at the Logwari, Points 6 and 7, Western Barn, Cherka Ayat and Mogiri checkpoints, although the UNMISS teams possessed the required documentation.

93. On 11 November, all UNMISS ground patrols were suspended by the UNMISS Wau Field Office due to the refusal of State Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism officers to sign a waiver form, which must be signed by all non-United Nations personnel before using United Nations transport. The officers also withheld their cooperation with the UNMISS Wau Field Office. Following engagements by UNMISS, the officers agreed on 2 December to sign the waivers and UNMISS resumed its ground patrols in Western Bahr el-Ghazal.

94. On 7 October, an UNMISS team was harassed and physically assaulted by South Sudan People's Defence Forces personnel at a roundabout in Masia for not stopping at an unauthorized checkpoint. On 14 October, in Western Equatoria, an UNMISS military personnel member was harassed by a South Sudan People's Defence Forces officer, forced to disembark from a United Nations vehicle and had glasses removed. On 20 October, in Western Bahr el-Ghazal, an UNMISS team was verbally harassed by National Security Service personnel and prohibited from completing confidence- and trust-building activities and community policing in the Hai Falata area in Wau. On 28 October, in Unity, an UNMISS team on a routine patrol to Panakuach was verbally harassed by a South Sudan People's Defence Forces officer in Pariang County, Ruweng Administrative Area, who confiscated a military personnel member's telephone and a language assistant's United Nations identity card, barring them from visiting the area.

95. There were 185 incidents of crime and harassment of United Nations and international non-governmental organizations personnel. Most incidents were minor, in which the South Sudan National Police Service or South Sudan People's Defence Forces demanded money for alleged driving violations or incorrect documentation upon entry into South Sudan at Juba International Airport. The United Nations crisis management team raised the security alert for United Nations security management system personnel on three separate occasions. Several notable incidents of armed robbery and shootings were recorded, particularly in Juba. A United Nations security management system chartered aircraft was commandeered by South Sudan People's Defence Forces elements and flown to Juba from Pochalla, Greater Pibor Administrative Area, on 14 November. Access constraints for the United Nations security management system personnel and operations further resulted from demonstrations over the lack of salary payment of government security forces in Wau, Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Renk, Upper Nile.

VIII. Performance optimization

96. From October, United Nations police evaluated all four formed police units in UNMISS. While the overall assessment was good, the units had a shortfall of contingent-owned equipment related to expired riot control ammunition.

97. The UNMISS force carried out 15 evaluations in six sectors (East, North, South, West, Juba and Unity) among the infantry, medical, sector headquarters and engineering units. The units were found to be well trained and operationally ready according to United Nations standards. All units are currently working on the performance implementation plan to ensure continued monitoring and improvement of their performance.

IX. Observations and recommendations

98. Following the extension of the transitional period in September 2024 by the parties to the Revitalized Agreement, I am concerned about the absence of a clear plan, financial support and sense of urgency to implement the critical outstanding tasks of the Revitalized Agreement. I encourage the parties to develop an actionable and financially backed workplan for the next two years. This is essential to restore confidence among the citizens and the international community that the political leadership is committed to overcoming the obstacles that necessitated yet another extension of the transition period.

99. With the extension, there is sufficient time to refocus on the sequencing of the Revitalized Agreement and implementing the “critical mass” of outstanding provisions highlighted by the African Union, IGAD and UNMISS in early 2024, and identified in my assessment of April 2024 (S/2024/297), which are deemed necessary prior to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in South Sudan. In that regard, achieving progress on the transitional security arrangements, particularly the Necessary Unified Forces and agreement on the middle command structure, is imperative to achieve consequential progress.

100. I call on the Government to invest in the constitution-making process, which should be completed before the conduct of elections. The United Nations stands ready to assist the parties and extend all possible assistance for a consultative and timely conclusion of the process.

101. The continued restrictions to political and civic space in the country are of concern. I therefore encourage the initiation of civic education, voter registration and expansion of civic and political space by engaging political parties, civil society and the media, which are crucial to creating conditions conducive to the eventual organization of elections. In that regard, I welcome the state-level political forums and the 19 December joint declaration by South Sudanese media, political parties and civil society organizations as they commit and contribute to trust- and confidence-building, as well as the promotion and expansion of civic and political space. In particular, I acknowledge the resolution of all the South Sudanese governors in support of the recall of the National Security Act and the repeal of the measures contained therein as an unnecessary attack on political and civic liberties.

102. I call on the Government to work with local and international partners to find innovative solutions to address intercommunal conflicts and promote peaceful coexistence. The alarming reports of extrajudicial executions by state authorities and security personnel must stop, and concerns in this regard should be urgently addressed. I also urge the Government to hold accountable the perpetrators of human rights violations and breaches of humanitarian law, in accordance with both national and international legal frameworks.

103. I note the resumption of the Kenyan-supported Tumaini Initiative and renewed efforts to ensure it complements the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, by maintaining focus on common goals. I call on all parties, including non-signatories, to engage in good faith and to bring on board those whose actions on the ground negatively affect stability in South Sudan.

104. I commend regional partners, particularly the African Union and IGAD, and the broader international community, for their support to South Sudan. I urge continued assistance for the ongoing political initiatives, as well as a timely implementation of all outstanding provisions of the peace agreement.

105. The conflict in the Sudan continues to have a serious detrimental effect on South Sudan. Recent fighting close to the South Sudan border has led to a growing number of incoming refugees, further aggravating the already fragile situation. The ramifications of the arrival of almost 1 million people in the country since April 2023 is concerning. Compounded by the persistent economic situation and the outbreak of cholera, this calls for urgent measures and support to the humanitarian response in South Sudan.

106. The extensive flooding has affected approximately 1.4 million people across South Sudan and displaced over 380,000 people. In addition, the deteriorating food insecurity has left an estimated 6.3 million of the population experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity. I appeal to the international community to continue its support to the ongoing humanitarian efforts in the country.

107. In conclusion, I wish to extend my gratitude to the Mission's military, police and civilian personnel who continue to protect civilians, promote an inclusive and conducive space for the political process, promote human rights and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid. I also commend the work of the United Nations country team in South Sudan. I thank my Special Representative for South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, for his leadership and dedication, as well as the troop- and police-contributing countries that have provided uniformed personnel and assets to the Mission. I further commend the local and international humanitarian partners for their dedication to providing essential humanitarian assistance to the people of South Sudan, despite operational challenges and a dangerous context in which humanitarian workers render their support.

Map

