



# 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 [2567 \(2021\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to 15 March 2022 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 from 1 February to 31 May 2021.

#### II. Political and economic developments

2. On 22 February, South Sudan marked the one-year anniversary of the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity. On this occasion, international partners and local stakeholders commended the progress but noted the lack of movement in some critical areas. They called upon the parties to accelerate efforts to reconstitute the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, finalize state and local government structures, implement transitional security arrangements, establish transitional justice mechanisms and comprehensively implement the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

3. Between 20 February and 2 March, the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, issued presidential decrees appointing ministers, advisers, commissioners and chairpersons of independent commissions at the state level and delegated powers to the state governors to swear them in. These appointments fell short of the stipulation in the Revitalized Agreement that women should make up 35 per cent of the appointees.

4. On 23 March, the then Minister for Presidential Affairs, Nhial Deng Nhial, announced that elections envisioned to take place in 2022 could not be conducted without a permanent constitution and a population census. He said that more time for preparation was required and that elections would be held in 2023. On 14 April, the Press Secretary of the President, Ateny Wek Ateny, reiterated that the Government planned to hold general elections in 2023.

5. In Juba on 8 April, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), other United Nations entities and the Governments of Sweden, Ireland and Kenya, the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity launched a



population estimation survey. Survey results will guide the planning for the conduct of a full population and housing census in 2022. The last population and housing census was conducted in 2008.

6. On 10 April, the President issued a series of decrees relieving and appointing senior officials. The Minister for Presidential Affairs, Nhial Deng Nhial, was replaced by Barnaba Marial Benjamin. The Chief of Defence Forces, General Johnson Juma Okot, was replaced by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces Assistant Chief of Defence Forces for Administration and Finance, General Santino Deng Wol, who is on the sanctions list pursuant to Security Council resolution 2206 (2015). The President also promoted the Director of the National Security Service, General Akol Koor Kuc, to the rank of First Lieutenant General.

7. Between 8 and 11 May, the President dissolved the Transitional National Legislative Assembly and the Council of States and reconstituted the 400-member Transitional National Legislative Assembly as a 550-member parliament. However, the gender balance of appointments fell below the 35 per cent quota for women.

8. On 26 March, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs established a task force to oversee the implementation of chapter V of the Revitalized Agreement. However, the draft statute and the memorandum of understanding, critical to the operationalization of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, are still pending signature by the Government and the African Union.

9. From 25 to 27 May, the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law facilitated a three-day workshop on the first permanent constitution-making process. The workshop concluded with a resolution on the establishment, roles and mandates of institutions involved in the constitutional process; civic education and public participation; and the convening of a national constitutional conference.

### **Implementation of the Revitalized Agreement**

10. On 15 March, the President requested the National Transitional Committee to report on the status of unifying the command, rank and file of the Necessary Unified Forces. On 18 March, the Chair of the National Transitional Committee, Tut Gatluak, tasked the Joint Defence Board to prepare a proposal for the unification of the Necessary Unified Forces command.

11. On 22 March, the European Union imposed sanctions on South Sudan People's Defence Forces Major General Moses Lokujo for the abduction and execution of three Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) officers and attacking SPLM/A-IO forces at the Moroto training site in Central Equatoria.

### **Peace process developments**

12. From 8 to 12 March, the peace talks brokered by the Community of Sant'Egidio between the South Sudan Opposition Movements Alliance (SSOMA) and the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity took place in Naivasha, Kenya. The SSOMA faction of the Real Sudan People's Liberation Movement, General Paul Malong of the South Sudan United Front/Army (SSUF/A) and the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity signed the Declaration of Principles on 10 March. The Declaration of Principles will be the guiding framework for future talks between the parties.

13. On 2 May, the SPLM/A-IO Chief of General Staff, General Simon Gatwech Dual, confirmed that Johnson Olony, leader of the Agwelek division of the SPLM/A-IO, promoted himself to the rank of First Lieutenant General. He dismissed allegations that Johnson Olony intended to defect to the Government or form a new

rebel group. The Chief of General Staff expressed frustration with the delayed implementation of the transitional security arrangements and admitted to internal administrative challenges within the SPLM/A-IO.

14. On 3 May, former South Sudan People's Defence Forces Major General Stephen Buay Rolnyang joined General Malong's SSUF/A. One of the longest-serving officers in the Defence Forces, Stephen Buay was accused of treason, dismissed and stripped of his rank. General Buay cited poor treatment of the Defence Forces' rank and file, corruption and tribalism as reasons for his defection.

### **Regional engagements and developments**

15. On 27 February, the President attended the twenty-first Ordinary Summit of Heads of States of the East African Community, held virtually, where he recommended a regional visa waiver programme, appealed for capacity support (especially with regard to facilitating the admission of the National Revenue Authority of South Sudan to the Customs Union of the East African Community) and requested a formula that would enable South Sudan to pay its existing debt in instalments.

16. In Juba, on 28 March, President Kiir witnessed the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Transitional Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North. President Kiir promised to continue efforts to include the Sudan Liberation Movement/Abdul Wahid al-Nur in the Sudan peace talks. Another round of talks resumed in Juba on 26 May.

### **Other major national developments**

17. On 19 February, a section of the Jieng Council of Elders issued a statement stating that the Revitalized Agreement had failed to address the causes of insecurity in the country owing to a failure in leadership. The Council called for the implementation of the recommendations of the report of the National Dialogue Conference, including expedited elections.

18. On 10 May, the National Dialogue Steering Committee presented to the President the final resolutions and the communiqué of the National Dialogue Conference. The President pledged to carefully consider the recommendations and implement the resolutions. Thereafter, he issued a decree dissolving the Committee.

### **Economic situation**

19. The Government has stepped up economic reforms to address public financial management, improve transparency and enhance the mobilization of non-oil revenue. In March, the International Monetary Fund approved a second Rapid Credit Facility loan of \$174.2 million to alleviate the stress of the balance of payments associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In late March, the Bank of South Sudan committed to unifying the official and parallel exchange rates to alleviate the depreciation of the South Sudanese pound and reduce inflation.

20. Food insecurity contributed to household hardships, with humanitarian organization struggling to fill the gap. In April 2021, the World Food Programme announced cuts in food rations to nearly 700,000 refugees and internally displaced people, who will receive 50 per cent of a full ration, down from 70 per cent.

21. On 22 March, the Auditor General released a report on the accounts held at the Bank of South Sudan relating to the 2 and 3 per cent of net oil revenue designated for petroleum-producing states and communities, respectively. From July 2011 to 31 December 2020, \$85,735,541 was deposited in both accounts. From 2014 to 2020, \$84,062,073 was disbursed, of which payments of \$55,925,556 were made to parties

other than those stipulated under the Petroleum Revenue Management Act (2013). The audit did not examine how the money transferred to the states was used.

### III. Security situation

22. Political contestation continued to delay the implementation of the transitional security arrangements. Socioeconomic challenges, ethnic divides and lack of governance continued to define the security environment of South Sudan. These trends were evident in the outbreak of fighting in Akoka and Maban, Upper Nile, where ethnic mobilization and power disputes fed localized insecurity. Jonglei saw a surge in violence in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area. In Central Equatoria, the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the National Salvation Front (NAS) continued to clash in low intensity, intermittent incidents. Political tension, ethnic divides and livelihood pressures also led to increased cattle-related violence in the tri-state areas of Warrap, Lakes and Unity. Nearly half of the incidents recorded between February and May were in the greater Tonj area (Warrap). Overall, there was an upward trend (35 per cent) in security incidents, both year-on-year (for the period between February and May 2020) and compared with the previous four-month period (between October 2020 and January 2021), with the latter reflecting a 32 per cent increase in incidents.

#### Greater Upper Nile region

23. In Upper Nile, there were three distinct conflicts. First, tensions between the Dinka Padang and Shilluk communities simmered over the separation of Malakal town from Makal County, a move perceived to favour the Dinka Padang against the Shilluk's ancestral claims to the administrative capital. The recent appointment of a Shilluk Governor, securing state-level ethnic representation for the Shilluk community, does not itself resolve these tensions, as seen in the killing of four Shilluk in Malakal on 27 March, when suspected Dinka Padang militia shot at a group of internally displaced persons welcoming the Governor.

24. Tensions in Maban over the allocation of the county commissionership to the SPLM/A-IO continued. At least five attacks were launched against the SPLM/A-IO cantonment site at Liang by Mabanese militia, allegedly with support from the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the National Security Service. The third conflict, between the Dinka and the Nuer, flared when armed Nuer youth staged revenge attacks into eastern parts of Baliet and Akoka Counties on 3 and 4 February. Tensions flared again when two Defence Forces soldiers were killed outside of Nasir on 14 March by unknown armed Nuer. The South Sudan People's Defence Forces retaliated by attacking at least three villages and overrunning one SPLM/A-IO base.

25. Subnational violence in Jonglei saw an escalation in violence in early May, when allied Gawaar Nuer and Dinka from Ayod, Uror and Duk marched into the Greater Pibor Administrative Area to retrieve cattle raided by the Murle. Gumuruk town was destroyed, specifically markets, schools and international non-governmental organization (NGO) facilities. An estimated 68 people were killed and 27 injured. These dynamics represent a setback that may undermine ongoing inter-ethnic peace processes.

26. Several significant incidents took place in Unity. The South Sudan People's Defence Forces clashed with cattle-keeping communities around Koch County on 9 February, as the Defence Forces and the South Sudan National Police Service attempted to retrieve cattle stolen in previous raids. This led to the killing of five Defence Forces personnel and two personnel of the South Sudan National Police Service. The Defence Forces responded by attacking four villages in Koch County on 20 February. In another incident in Guit County, on 13 May, 11 Police Service personnel were killed on their way to pursue cattle raiders from Mayom. Separately,

armed Apuk from Mayen in Gogrial East County, Warrap, attacked a Bul Nuer cattle camp in Mayom on 3 April, seizing cattle and inflicting casualties. This provoked revenge attacks by Bul Nuer youth on Mangol Apuk payam, Gogrial East, on 1 and 27 May. The Mayom County Commissioner, when attempting to retrieve the stolen cattle, was ambushed by armed youth on 3 May and nine of his bodyguards were killed.

### **Greater Equatoria region**

27. In Central Equatoria, violence over land rights, cattle migration and fighting between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS took place. Disputes over land demarcation in Garbo village, Mangala, led to clashes on 4 February and 1 May between the Bari community and Dinka settlers. Similarly, on 16 February, near Kadoro, outside of Juba, Dinka Bor and Pieri inhabitants clashed. The presence of Dinka Bor cattle keepers in Kajo Kaji County, and Mundari cattle keepers in Lainya County, continued to drive local tensions.

28. Tensions between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS simmered amid stalled peace negotiations in Rome and a growing divide within the SSOMA faction led by Thomas Cirillo. Some 14 incidents occurred between South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS in Yei, Lainya, Kajo Keji, Maridi and Morobo Counties – a more than three-fold increase compared with the period between October 2020 and January 2021.

29. In Eastern Equatoria, violence between the Boya and Toposa communities remained a security concern, as the Boya attacked the SPLM/A-IO cantonment site at Lowareng on 22 March and the revenge attack by Toposa elements took place on 28 March. Armed Boya also attacked a convoy of the Toposa Governor of Eastern Equatoria on 29 March. Criminality was prevalent on roads. One national staff member of an international NGO was killed on 12 May during a roadside ambush. Tensions directed at United Nations entities and international actors over local hiring practices led to the assault of three staff members in two separate incidents in Torit on 28 April.

### **Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region**

30. Localized violence in Warrap included several cycles of violence affecting the greater Tonj area. More incidents were recorded during this period compared with the same period in 2020 (125 incidents from February to May 2021 compared with 67 in 2020). In 2020, insecurity was focused on the Tonj South grazing areas, but shifted to Tonj North and Tonj East in 2021, where renewed and politicized cycles of violence accelerated in the context of political competition and perceived ethnic biases, particularly against the Luanyjang in Tonj East.

31. Intra-Dinka tensions were severe in Rualbet payam, Tonj North, where 22 civilians were killed in an incident on 9 February, and 12 civilians were killed in a revenge attack on 13 February near Warrap town. In Tonj South, armed cattle keepers on the Wunreel cattle camp on 10 February killed 14 people.

32. Most incidents in Lakes occurred along main supply routes linking to Rumbek. Violence flared in Rumbek East on 17 April when members of the Thuiyic community carried out a revenge attack on the Manyang cattle camp, killing 22 civilians. Another high-profile incident in Rumbek, on 26 April, targeted the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Rumbek, who was shot by unidentified assailants. Compared with December 2020 and January 2021, there has been a 62 per cent increase in incidents in Lakes.

## IV. Humanitarian situation

33. Conflict at the subnational level continues to have an impact on people's safety, security and access to livelihoods and basic services. The 2021 humanitarian response plan requested \$1.68 billion to reach 6.6 million people (of the total 8.3 million people in need) with urgent life-saving assistance and protection.

34. South Sudan is facing the highest levels of food insecurity and malnutrition since independence. An estimated 7.2 million people, or 60 per cent of the population, are likely to face acute food insecurity (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3) or worse during the lean season between April and July. This figure includes 108,000 people in hard-to-reach areas of six counties facing catastrophic hunger (IPC phase 5).

35. Violence continues to uproot tens of thousands of people across the country. An estimated 50,000 people have been displaced by subnational violence in the greater Tonj area. In May, subnational violence in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area displaced an estimated 20,000 people. Many have since returned to their homes. Food distributions are ongoing in Verteth and will commence in Gumuruk and Likuangole once security allows.

36. Some 3.82 million people remained displaced since 2013 – including 1.62 million internally displaced persons in South Sudan and 2.2 million in five neighbouring countries. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 14,700 refugees spontaneously returned between February and March.

37. In February and March, during unseasonal flooding, nearly 80,000 people in Jonglei and Upper Nile were displaced, and some 30,000 people in Akobo (Jonglei) were affected by the floods.

38. Humanitarian access remains challenging, with a resurgence of armed conflict in parts of Central Equatoria, an increase in looting of supplies and sustained subnational violence in the greater Tonj area and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, and threats and attacks on humanitarians by youth in several locations. In the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, some 550 tons of food were looted or destroyed while health supplies for 25,000 people were lost. Attacks on clearly marked humanitarian vehicles continued and ambushes increased. At least two aid workers were killed in May.

39. Between 1 February and 30 May, 203 humanitarian access incidents were reported, including 42 ambushes and 22 lootings; and 110 aid workers were relocated owing to insecurity. Various local authorities continued their interference in the staff recruitment processes of NGOs. Violent attacks by youth groups against humanitarian workers and assets impeded activities in Pariang, Renk and Torit.

40. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities by disrupting routine immunization services and has weakened the ability of an already fragile health system to treat people, placing an additional demand on health services, supplies and health professionals. Morbidity and mortality from epidemic diseases, including malaria, are expected to rise sharply owing to the disruption of vaccination campaigns and lack of health-care capacity. As at 26 May, 10,688 people had tested positive for COVID-19, with a total death toll of 115, according to the South Sudan Ministry of Health.

41. As at 31 March, humanitarians had reached 2.7 million people, or 40 per cent of the people targeted, with humanitarian assistance and protection services, through the 2021 humanitarian response plan. In support of the humanitarian-peace-

development nexus approach, the humanitarian community is working within the framework of the response plan with recovery, development and peacebuilding actors to address the drivers of humanitarian needs and adopt conflict-sensitive approaches. As at 31 May, \$560 million was secured against the \$1.68 billion requested in the humanitarian response plan.

## **V. Implementation of the Mission's mandated tasks**

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

42. Following the three-year planning horizon mandated by the Security Council, UNMISS is considering priorities, sequences and areas for closer collaboration to magnify the impact of its efforts. In consultation with South Sudanese interlocutors, the Mission is, inter alia, looking at ways of mitigating the rising incidents and human costs of intercommunal conflict. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution [2567 \(2021\)](#), an electoral needs assessment mission deployed to South Sudan from 6 to 24 May.

43. UNMISS supported initiatives to facilitate constructive working relationships within the newly appointed state and local coalition governments. UNMISS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission organized trust and confidence-building forums in Western Bahr el-Ghazal (17 to 19 March) and Northern Bahr el-Ghazal (10 to 12 May). The forums concluded with communiqués, a commitment to build trust and confidence among political parties, an agreement to form a women's executive caucus and commitments to create conditions conducive to the return of the displaced population. The First Vice-President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, called on UNMISS to organize similar forums in other states.

44. Further initiatives included a consultative forum in Lakes (16 and 17 April) and a strategic planning forum in Central Equatoria (20 and 21 April) for governors, deputy governors and cabinet members. The Lakes meeting concluded with an agreement to resolve disagreements peacefully, while officials of Central Equatoria considered strategies to address social, economic and sectoral issues and adopted a road map for achieving the Governor's vision of peace and development. From 28 to 30 April, UNMISS facilitated a trust- and confidence-building forum in Central Equatoria for the Governor, county commissioners and the Mayor of Juba. On 11 and 12 May, UNMISS organized a national-level forum for political parties on the electoral process.

45. On 10 March, UNMISS organized an online discussion with youth and civil society leaders with regard to disseminating information on the process of creating a permanent constitution to youth stakeholders. On 16 April, in Western Bahr el-Ghazal, UNMISS facilitated a peacebuilding round table discussion between 29 youth (20 men; 9 women) and 9 senior state government officials. On 21 May, UNMISS and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) facilitated a two-day consultative workshop for over 50 youth delegates to the constitution-making process.

46. On 18 and 19 March, UNMISS, UNDP and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) facilitated a virtual validation workshop on the outcomes of the consultation workshops involving key actors in the constitution-making process.

47. From 24 to 26 March, UNMISS provided logistical support to the visit of the African Union Peace and Security Council delegation to South Sudan. The delegation gathered first-hand information on the political, security, economic and humanitarian situation and assessed progress in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement.

48. UNMISS hosted 11 Radio Miraya discussions on political, security, peace, economic and gender topics, engaging experts, political leaders and eminent personalities, and interacting with listeners.

## **B. Protection of civilians and mitigating intercommunal conflict**

49. The Mission responded to threats against civilians in South Sudan through the mobile deployment and robust posture of peacekeepers, engagements with military and political leaders, community-level conflict-resolution activities, the provision of critical support to rule of law and justice institutions and other programmatic activities, including quick-impact projects. Civilians faced threats of physical violence, including killings and injuries, abductions, forced military recruitment and sexual violence.

50. In Warrap, several temporary operating bases were established. UNMISS facilitated community and leadership engagements at the state and local levels in Tonj East and Tonj North, including with the Governor of Warrap. UNMISS facilitated dialogues between the Tonj East and Tonj North communities and conducted a peace campaign in Gogrial East to foster social cohesion between cattle keepers. In Tonj South, the Mission conducted a capacity-building workshop from 23 to 26 February for traditional leaders, representatives of government institutions, women and youth on responding to emerging protection concerns.

51. Following cattle-related attacks in Lakes, UNMISS deployed peacekeepers to Rumbek North and conducted deterrence patrols in Rumbek East.

52. In greater Jonglei, UNMISS provided logistical support to peace actors in a dialogue between the Lou Nuer, Murle and Dinka Bor communities, funded by the Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. These communities signed a peace agreement at a conference held from 15 to 25 March in Pieri. UNMISS facilitated a forum for Gawaar Nuer leaders from 5 to 7 May. Following violence between the Gawaar Nuer and the Murle, from 7 May, UNMISS engaged local authorities, engaged political, youth and traditional leaders and coordinated with humanitarian actors. The Mission also deployed a temporary operating base in Gumuruk to protect civilians who fled to Pibor town, including the area adjacent to the UNMISS base, and to safeguard humanitarian food assistance.

53. On 17 March, the protection of civilians site in Bentiu, hosting 97,321 civilians, was redesignated as an internally displaced persons camp following a security risk assessment conducted with humanitarian partners. It followed a memorandum of understanding between the Mission and the Governor of Unity whereby the Governor committed to assuming responsibility for security and the protection of internally displaced persons and to ensure respect for their human rights. A joint UNMISS-humanitarian transition plan was developed and implemented with UNMISS components, United Nations entities and NGOs. With the drawdown of UNMISS military capacity from the Bentiu protection of civilians site, the Mission was able to set up temporary operating bases.

54. Prior to the redesignation of the site, on 16 March UNMISS facilitated a town hall meeting with the Governor at the protection of civilians site. Internally displaced persons were represented by the “Community High Committee” and by



representatives from all camp sectors and community groups, including youth, women and elders. The Governor committed to building peace, addressing crime and supporting voluntary returns. The Chairman of the Community High Committee confirmed the acceptance of the redesignation of the site and committed to working with the state authorities. To increase police capacity in the vicinity of the Bentiu protection of civilians site ahead of its redesignation, an additional 52 officers were added to the existing 36-person joint police force (consisting of the South Sudan National Police Service and former members of SPLM/A-IO), established in June 2020. This additional capacity remains in place. United Nations police continue to provide support to the joint police force in the form of co-location, training, monitoring and facilitation of engagement between the police and the internally displaced persons community.

55. The situation in the internally displaced persons camps in Bentiu, Bor, Juba and Wau remained calm. The Mission monitored developments, engaged community leaders, maintained a quick reaction capacity to respond to incidents when needed, supported the delivery of humanitarian assistance and provided critical support to authorities, particularly the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and the South Sudan National Police Service. Relations between communities of internally displaced persons and national police were visibly improved after facilitation by UNMISS. Humanitarian partners reported that funding gaps negatively affected humanitarian service delivery in the former and current protection of civilians sites.

56. The protection of civilians site in Malakal retained its status, owing to a volatile security situation. In response to the attack on 27 March, UNMISS peacekeepers secured the return of internally displaced persons from Malakal town to the protection of civilians site and engaged the Governor, the internally displaced persons community, the South Sudan National Police Service and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces to enhance security for the internally displaced persons. While redesignation of the protection of civilians site will only be pursued once conditions are deemed conducive, relevant assessments, consultations and planning were undertaken at the field level to ensure that any future adjustments to the Mission's security posture will be adequately prepared for.

57. The Mission continued efforts to support a secure environment for the safe, informed, voluntary and dignified return and resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees. UNMISS mapped potential return areas and service gaps during patrols to some 42 locations in all 10 states, highlighting the needs of approximately 320,000 returnees to inform Mission and humanitarian planning and the work of local Solutions Working Groups. UNMISS also facilitated logistical support for 219 returnees from internally displaced persons sites in Juba to Bentiu. Forty-one quick-impact projects were in the process of being implemented to improve basic service infrastructure in areas of return, including the construction of classrooms in Eastern Equatoria and the construction of primary health-care units in Northern Bahr el-Ghazal and Western Equatoria. In addition, the Mine Action Service provided explosive ordnance risk education to support returns, and, upon request from UNHCR, assessed three sites in Upper Nile to facilitate the gradual resettlement of approximately 6,000 internally displaced persons from Melut.

58. During the reporting period, UNMISS conducted 56 workshops, community dialogues and peace campaigns and disseminated local peace and pastoral migration agreements, in addition to facilitating capacity-building assistance to newly appointed state officials, traditional leaders, women and youth. A total of 6,979 participants (1,869 of them women) were reached through these activities. Continuing the Mission's efforts to promote gender-responsive peacebuilding, 46 programmatic activities undertaken by the Civil Affairs Division included at least 27 per cent women, and four dedicated discussion forums for women in Lakes, Jonglei and

Central Equatoria produced action plans for women's engagement in peace activities and addressing gender-based violence.

59. As at 31 May, the UNMISS force had conducted 95,480 patrols, including 2,167 short-duration patrols, 867 long-duration patrols, 178 dynamic air patrols and 37 riverine patrols. A total of 731 routine patrols, equivalent to 22.5 per cent, were conducted jointly by men and women members of the force. UNMISS female engagement teams conducted 61 gender-responsive operations. A total of 21,728 patrols were conducted to ensure the security of former and current protection of civilians sites.

60. Also as at 31 May, the United Nations police had completed 1,008 patrols, which included 412 confidence- and trust-building patrols, 108 short-duration patrols, 29 long-duration patrols, 39 dynamic air patrols and 420 high-visibility patrols. Of these 1,008 patrols, 507 were conducted jointly by men and women officers. In addition, the United Nations police conducted 1,155 patrols related to gender, children and the protection of vulnerable persons within recently transitioned internally displaced persons camps. The police also provided training and outreach support to the police-community relations committees.

61. The redesignations of the protection of civilians sites enabled the United Nations police to expand their activities through co-location at nine police posts. United Nations police provided on-site sensitization and training sessions for 10,242 South Sudan National Police Service officers (including 1,485 women) and conducted 54 workshops on human rights, sexual and gender-based violence and community policing for 1,604 South Sudan National Police Service officers (including 507 women). Training sessions were also conducted for communities, including members of police-community relations committees and community watch groups in internally displaced persons camps.

62. The Mine Action Service conducted 232 explosive ordnance disposal tasks, clearing 1,172 items of unexploded ordnance.

#### **Rule of law and accountability**

63. UNMISS continued to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to promote accountability at the subnational level. In April, eight government-provided Justice Advisers (including six women) were deployed to field offices in Wau, Kuacjok, Bentiu and Juba, where they joined UNMISS Corrections Advisers deployed since December 2020. These advisers are mentoring and providing technical support to national prosecutors, judges and prison service personnel to facilitate the expansion of rule of law and justice sector services.

64. UNMISS and its partners, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration, continued to implement a project funded by the South Sudan reconciliation, stabilization and resilience trust fund to mitigate cattle migration-related violence in Warrap and Western Bahr el-Ghazal. On 16 February, the Chief Justice formally established a joint special mobile court, which will deploy to two locations to adjudicate cases relating to serious crimes such as murder, sexual and gender-based violence, serious damage and looting of property, and cattle raiding. From 8 to 22 March and from 19 April to 3 May, UNMISS supported national prosecutors and investigators in deploying to hotspots to assess cases, resulting in the collection of 1,341 complaints that included 2,085 distinct crimes. Members of the joint special mobile court, including a High Court judge, traditional leaders, national prosecutors, police investigators, defence attorneys, corrections officers and psychosocial support specialists, were deployed to Kuacjok on 11 May to participate in a predeployment workshop. The joint special mobile court will hear cases until 7 July.

65. From 3 to 22 March, UNMISS supported the Military Justice Directorate of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces in deploying five military personnel to Maridi, Western Equatoria, to conduct general court martial hearings. Of the 19 cases that were heard, the general court martial convicted four individuals for criminal offences, including murder, and dismissed 3 cases. The remaining cases were referred to relevant authorities for administrative action.

66. In areas with a high prevalence of intercommunal violence and displacement, the Mission implemented 18 quick-impact projects to construct and rehabilitate rule of law facilities, including a prison in Tonj North and a safe house for victims of gender-based violence in Kapoeta.

### **C. Monitoring and investigating human rights violations**

67. UNMISS documented 206 incidents that negatively affected the human rights and protection situation, including arbitrary killings, abductions, conflict-related sexual violence, arbitrary arrests and detention (including proxy detention), torture and ill-treatment, forced military recruitment and the looting and destruction of civilian property. This resulted in at least 622 civilian casualties (444 killed and 178 injured), including at least 54 women and 41 children. Of these, 152 were attributed to civil defence groups; 13 to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces; 13 to NAS; 5 to SPLM/A-IO; 1 to the South Sudan National Police Service; 1 to a wildlife officer; 1 jointly to SPLM/A-IO and the South Sudan National Police Service; 1 jointly to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and the South Sudan National Police Service; 1 to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces protection force in a governor's convoy; 1 as a result of clashes between NAS and the South Sudan People's Defence Forces; and 1 as a result of clashes between SPLM/A-IO and armed elements (Mabanese soldiers). Attribution for eight incidents remained pending. UNMISS documented nine extrajudicial executions in Warrap, causing the deaths of 20 individuals, allegedly carried out at the instruction of a senior government official.

68. Attacks carried out by civil defence groups remained the primary source of violence affecting local populations. Warrap and Lakes were the most violent areas, accounting for 44 per cent of the victims recorded throughout the country. Incidents involving the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, SPLM/A-IO Riek Machar forces and NAS were mainly documented in Greater Equatoria, particularly Yei River County.

69. UNMISS continued to receive reports of censorship, harassment and arbitrary arrest and detention by the National Security Service of journalists, activists and other civilians expressing critical or dissenting views from those of the Government. At least four journalists and human rights defenders were threatened, arbitrarily arrested and detained in connection with their professional activities during the reporting period.

70. Imposition of the death penalty remained a concern, including inadequate safeguards to protect due process and fair trial rights. One execution was documented.

71. In March, UNMISS and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published a joint report on armed violence by community-based militias against civilians in the greater Jonglei area occurring between January and August 2020. According to the report, these groups are well organized, use military-style tactics, and, in the span of eight months, were responsible for the killing and injuring of at least 1,058 persons from the Dinka, Nuer and Murle communities, the abduction of 686 women and children and at least 39 confirmed cases of sexual violence. The report underscored that incidents involving community-based militias had been the major source of violence affecting civilians since the signing of the

Revitalized Agreement. Following the report and subsequent peace dialogues in Jonglei, the Mission facilitated the release, family tracing and reunification of 63 abductees – an important step in rebuilding trust and fostering peacebuilding. UNMISS provided transport for the returns between Pibor, Pochala, Pieri and Juba.

72. UNMISS carried out 21 human rights due diligence policy risk assessments before travel, and material assistance was provided to non-United Nations security forces in support of the implementation of the peace process.

### **Children and armed conflict**

73. During the reporting period, 20 children (16 boys and 4 girls) were affected by grave violations. A total of 11 boys were verified as victims of recruitment and use, 4 children (2 boys and 2 girls) were killed, and 5 children (3 boys and 2 girls) were maimed. Four incidents of denial of humanitarian access were verified. Children were most affected in Central Equatoria (10 boys), Unity (5 boys and 1 girl), Northern Bahr el-Ghazal (1 boy and 2 girls) and Western Equatoria (1 girl).

74. The South Sudan National Police Service perpetrated grave violations against 11 boys. Grave violations against nine children (five boys and four girls) were unattributed, as they were injured by explosive remnants of war. Five children (three boys and two girls) were victims of crossfire between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and armed youth, and between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces and NAS (one boy and one girl). Four incidents of denial of humanitarian access remain unattributed.

75. UNMISS delivered 20 child protection awareness-raising sessions to 256 members of the security forces (201 men and 55 women). In addition, 315 community members (124 men and 191 women), 38 government officials (26 men and 12 women), and 6 protection partners (all men) benefited from awareness-raising activities. UNMISS delivered one child protection training session to 31 participants (all men), including 15 members of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, 6 members of the South Sudan Opposition Alliance and 10 government officials.

76. With the Comprehensive Action Plan to End and Prevent All Grave Violations against Children in South Sudan having expired on 7 February 2021, the country task force on monitoring and reporting engaged with the national technical committee to extend the implementation period. From 4 to 6 and 18 to 20 May, UNMISS delivered two knowledge and skills-based child protection capacity-building training sessions for 38 members of the military justice system (32 men and 4 women) to strengthen capacity to implement the accountability measures in the Comprehensive Action Plan.

### **Conflict-related sexual violence**

77. UNMISS continued to observe concerning levels of sexual violence perpetrated by the parties to the conflict, civil defence groups or other armed elements involved in localized violence. The Mission verified 14 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence involving 18 survivors, including 4 girls and 1 man. Victims, whose ages ranged from 2 to 41, were subjected to rape (12), gang rape (2), forced nudity (2) and attempted rape (2). Six incidents were attributed to civil defence groups, six to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, one to the South Sudan National Police Service and one was unattributed.

78. UNMISS documented eight additional conflict-related sexual violence incidents that took place prior to the reporting period, involving 14 survivors, including 6 men. Six incidents were attributed to civil defence groups and two to the South Sudan People's Defence Forces.

79. Accountability for conflict-related sexual violence crimes remained low. On 15 April, a mobile court deployed to Malakal convicted a South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldier for the November 2020 rape of a 14-year-old girl, sentencing him to seven years imprisonment and ordering him to pay damages of 500,000 South Sudanese pounds (\$1,100) to the survivor.

#### **D. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance**

80. As at 31 May, in coordination with humanitarian partners, UNMISS had conducted 628 long-duration patrols and 1,891 short-duration patrols to support humanitarian assistance and ensure the protection of humanitarian workers. The Mission provided force protection to 2,519 integrated patrols and conducted 1,353 force protection patrols, supporting convoys and humanitarian partners, including NGOs. As at 6 May, the United Nations police had provided support on 73 occasions to humanitarian service delivery in protection of civilians sites and internally displaced persons camps.

81. The Mine Action Service provided support for the survey, clearance and destruction of explosive ordnance, including with regard to the site assessment for identified humanitarian hubs in Jonglei and Western Bahr el-Ghazal. Road survey and clearance were conducted between Kapoeta, Central Equatoria, and Pochala, Jonglei, to facilitate the delivery of food to more than 15,000 beneficiaries by the World Food Programme. A total of 4.6 million m<sup>2</sup> of land was released by 28 teams.

#### **E. Women and peace and security**

82. In partnership with the South Sudanese Women Intellectuals Forum, on 9 and 10 March UNMISS organized a forum on women's leadership and political participation. Twenty women participated on-site and more than 8,000 viewers joined the live-streamed event. Vice-President and Chair of the Gender and Youth Cluster Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior; the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Acting Secretary-General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement; the Minister for Gender, Child and Social Welfare; the Senior Gender Adviser of the reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission; and a representative from UN-Women were keynote speakers. The forum concluded with recommendations to the Government on enacting gender-responsive policies and reforms under the Revitalized Agreement.

83. From February to May, UNMISS provided technical support to the South Sudan Women, Peace and Security Monitoring and Advocacy Group with regard to its foundational report on women's political participation. The report found that while only 3 of the 14 political parties are headed by women, all registered political parties include affirmative action benchmarks in their constitutions, ranging from 25 to 35 per cent. Women's representation in cabinet and gubernatorial appointments fell short of the 35 per cent quota (15 per cent and 19 per cent at the national and state levels, respectively).

84. From 10 February to 3 April, UNMISS supported the participation of the South Sudan Women, Peace and Security Monitoring and Advocacy Group in five radio talk shows and two television talk shows to elevate women's meaningful participation and voices to shape, inform and influence public decision-making in all aspects of the strategic engagement towards sustaining peace. From 26 to 28 April, UNMISS and the EVE Organization conducted a training-of-trainers session on advocacy skills to strengthen the capacity of women peacebuilders.

85. Celebrating International Women's Day on 8 March, UNMISS convened a virtual panel discussion on women's leadership in enhancing gender equality in United Nations peacekeeping. The Mission launched its gender focal points network to strengthen the implementation of the UNMISS strategy on gender and women, peace and security across all mandated tasks.

86. On 31 March, Vice-President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior launched the South Sudan Women's Leadership Forum. UNMISS provided technical, logistical and financial support for the event.

## **VI. Mission staffing, the status of deployments and conduct and discipline**

87. As at 30 April, the number of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,271, comprising 886 international staff members (254 women, 28.7 per cent), 1,385 national staff members (200 women, 14.4 per cent) and 388 United Nations Volunteers (159 women, 41.0 per cent).

88. The police strength stood at 1,691 (of an authorized 2,101 personnel), comprising 479 individual police officers (145 women, 30.3 per cent), 1,165 personnel in formed police units (294 women, 25.2 per cent) and 47 corrections officers (18 women, 38.3 per cent).

89. Of the authorized 17,000 troops, UNMISS troop strength stood at 14,878 military personnel: 217 military liaison officers (42 women, 19.4 per cent), 400 military staff officers (74 women, 18.5 per cent) and 14,261 military contingent personnel (714 women, 5.9 per cent).

90. The inter-mission deployment of two infantry companies and an aviation detachment to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic concluded on 7 May.

91. With the Government's reintroduction of a COVID-19 lockdown in February, resumption of field visits to review misconduct risk registers and action plans, especially with regard to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, was delayed. A visit to the Bentiu field office was, however, completed from 8 to 10 February.

92. UNMISS continued its virtual engagement with the Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster to deliver a system-wide coordinated response to sexual exploitation and abuse. The Mission delivered training to gatekeepers of community-based complaints mechanisms and to 67 community members (41 men and 26 women) in Aweil, Rumbek and Yambio.

93. In accordance with the applicable policy, all information regarding possible unsatisfactory conduct and misconduct was processed in a timely fashion. From 1 February to 31 May, 32 allegations were recorded in the case management tracking system.

94. One allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse was recorded. All identified survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse continued to receive support from the Mission's Senior Victims' Rights Officer in South Sudan.

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

95. As at 30 May, UNMISS recorded 135 violations of the Status of Forces Agreement compared with 54 in the previous reporting period. Of these, 115 violations involved movement restrictions by the Government, impeding the Mission's ability to implement its mandate.

96. Denials of access to UNMISS patrols continued across the country. The Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces continued to insist that all sharing of information and flight safety assurance documents for the Mission's ground and air patrols must be acknowledged by its headquarters in Juba.

97. Of the 115 movement restrictions, 92 were a result of the fact that the sharing of information and/or flight safety assurance was not acknowledged at either the headquarters or local state level. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal, the local state Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism imposed additional requirements that all sharing of information documents for UNMISS ground patrols be acknowledged in Wau, despite the acknowledgement of the same documents by the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism's headquarters in Juba. As a consequence, the local Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in Wau instructed Government security forces at various checkpoints to block UNMISS patrols that did not have locally acknowledged sharing of information documents.

98. In Central Equatoria, two separate UNMISS patrols deployed from Juba to Tindilo to assess the security and humanitarian situations and deter incidents of conflict-related sexual violence were stopped by South Sudan People's Defence Forces soldiers at the Luri Bridge checkpoint. Another two patrols deployed from Juba to Terekeka to assess the security situation and engage with the newly appointed local authorities were denied access by South Sudan People's Defence Forces/South Sudan National Police Service personnel at the Bilpam headquarters checkpoint. In Western Equatoria, 16 UNMISS reconnaissance flights were cancelled owing to the refusal at the headquarters and local levels of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism to acknowledge flight safety assurances.

99. The Government continues to impose prohibitions and restrictions on the importation of goods and equipment meant for the exclusive use of UNMISS. During the reporting period, 175 UNMISS-contracted trucks carrying UNMISS provisions and supplies, including combat ration provisions and contingent resupply cargo intended for the Mission's exclusive use, were detained at border posts in Nimule and Nesitu for not having import licences. As at 31 May, 8 of the 175 trucks were still being held at the Nimule border post. A new charge called a "fruit juice tax" was imposed on all UNMISS-contracted trucks carrying fruit juices for the exclusive consumption of UNMISS contingents. As a result, the Mission incurred truck detention and port storage charges amounting to \$1,079,500 and \$268,770 respectively, and these costs continue to accrue on daily basis.

100. UNMISS continued to reinforce with authorities that the sharing of information is only for coordination purposes and that UNMISS is not required to obtain approvals for the implementation of its mandated tasks. Nevertheless, security personnel across the country denied access to UNMISS patrols on numerous occasions.

101. The whereabouts of two national staff members arrested in 2014 remain unknown. The Government has neither granted UNMISS access to them nor provided information about their condition. UNMISS recorded three new incidents of arrest and detention of Mission personnel during the reporting period. The Government did

not formally inform UNMISS about the arrest and detention incidents as required under the Status of Forces Agreement.

102. The Government continues to delay the issuance of visas for South Sudan for newly deployed UNMISS individual uniformed personnel. The delays in processing entry clearances and visas negatively affects the release, rotation and timely deployment of UNMISS military personnel.

103. UNMISS recorded four incidents of denial of access by SPLM/A-IO and armed militia elements, impeding the Mission's ability to monitor and investigate the human rights situation in areas controlled by SPLM/A-IO, particularly in Upper Nile and in Eastern, Western and Central Equatoria.

104. UNMISS continued to notify the Government of the violations through notes verbales and regular engagements. A monthly matrix of the incidents prepared for the Security Council is shared with the Government.

105. On 31 May, at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Mission participated in high-level discussions with the Government on movement restrictions, concluding with an understanding to meet on a regular basis to discuss how to better coordinate United Nations activities and remove any impediments.

## **VIII. Performance of uniformed components**

106. The evaluations of eight UNMISS force contingents (five infantry battalions, one infantry company, one marine contingent and one aviation unit) and one sector headquarters were conducted. Two infantry contingents were assessed as above average; three were assessed as excellent. The aviation and marine units were rated above average. The evaluation of the infantry company has yet to be finalized. In addition, the sector headquarters was assessed as above average. Force headquarters, supported by the Office of Military Affairs, evaluated one infantry battalion using the new operational performance report format. The unit was evaluated as having performed satisfactorily (i.e., standards met). To ensure continuous improvement, all of the evaluated units are provided with a full report from which performance improvement plans are developed. Remedial actions are verified by force and sector headquarters through follow-up visits, both planned and impromptu.

107. From 16 to 18 February, three United Nations police units were evaluated by internal inspection teams. On the basis of several criteria, including mandate, command and control, protection of civilians mandated tasks, training, welfare and health, among others, two units were assessed as satisfactory and the third as outstanding. In response to the recommendations of these evaluations, the United Nations police provides in-mission training and the facilitation of contingent-owned equipment serviceability, where necessary. In terms of performance related to gender parity, it is worth noting that one of the Formed Police Units has more than 50 per cent women.

### **Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System**

108. The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System allows UNMISS to produce a results framework containing cross-component, whole-of-mission goals for coordination and mandate delivery and assess its performance based on the Mission's mandate.



## IX. Observations and recommendations

109. The progress made with regard to state and local government appointments and the efforts of the President to build consensus among the appointed authorities are positive developments. However, the parties continue to fall short of the quota for women in their appointments and urge them to adhere to the 35 per cent quota in all institutions of government, as stipulated in the Revitalized Agreement.

110. Delays in implementing key outstanding provisions of the Revitalized Agreement need to be urgently addressed. The reconstitution of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly is a positive development and I call for its expeditious operationalization. I also call for the early establishment of a unified command structure for the military and the graduation of the Necessary Unified Forces.

111. I call upon the parties to urgently reach agreement on the duration of the transition period and the date for elections at its conclusion. The holding of free, fair and peaceful elections in accordance with the Revitalized Agreement is essential for sustaining peace and building support for development.

112. I am encouraged that the ceasefire continues to hold. However, I am concerned about increasing localized violence in numerous parts of South Sudan. I am shocked at the targeting of internally displaced persons in Malakal, which resulted in the deaths of three civilians at the swearing-in ceremony of the newly appointed Governor. I urge the Government to hold the perpetrators accountable. I also remain concerned about the situation in Upper Nile, where the Maban militias and SPLM/A-IO forces continue to clash over the appointment of the new County Commissioner. I call upon the Government to facilitate dialogue between the relevant communities towards durable solutions and to ensure that UNMISS is able to maintain a deterrent presence to protect civilians and humanitarian personnel and assets.

113. I commend the role of the Community of Sant'Egidio and welcome commitments made by SSOMA and the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity in Naivasha, Kenya. However, I urge the parties to strictly comply with their commitment to a ceasefire and condemn the recent attack on a South Sudan People's Defence Forces barracks in Central Equatoria. I urge the parties to comply with their commitments and encourage the full incorporation of SSOMA into the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism.

114. Humanitarian needs remain high as a result of conflict, displacement, weather shocks, COVID-19 and a weakened economy, and limited basic services. Approximately 7.2 million people, or 60 per cent of the total population, are estimated to face high levels of food insecurity between April and July, with 108,000 people facing catastrophic levels. These challenges exacerbate the root causes and fragilities facing South Sudan, and generate additional barriers towards reaching the country's commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Therefore, I urge the international community to bridge the humanitarian funding gap, thus enabling the delivery of assistance to more than half of the country's population.

115. I remain deeply troubled by reports of threats and violence against humanitarian workers and assets and call for unhindered and safe access to all United Nations operations. I call upon the Government to exercise its responsibility to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance through the provision of adequate security and enabling conditions. I also note the monthly reports of violations of the Status of Forces Agreement against UNMISS, which have a negative impact on the Mission's ability to implement its mandate, but hope that the establishment of a new high-level committee comprising senior representatives of UNMISS and the Revitalized

Transitional Government of National Unity will improve collaboration with UNMISS on this issue.

116. I welcome the continuing cooperation between the Government of South Sudan and UNMISS in providing protection to internally displaced persons in their camps, which are now under the sovereign control of the Government. UNMISS will continue to move forward with the transition of the Malakal protection of civilians site as conditions permit and in line with its mandate.

117. I am encouraged by the efforts of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity to advance the implementation of chapter V of the Revitalized Agreement. In this regard, I call upon the Government and the African Union to conclude the signature of the draft statute and the memorandum of understanding in order to operationalize the Hybrid Court.

118. On 11 July, South Sudan will reach the tenth anniversary of its independence. With regard to this important milestone, I call upon the leaders of South Sudan to reinvigorate all efforts to achieve peace and stability within South Sudan as well as the resolution of all outstanding issues with its neighbours.

119. Finally, I convey my appreciation to the uniformed and civilian personnel of UNMISS and the United Nations country team, who continued to work towards peace and improve lives amid the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank my Special Representative, Nicholas Haysom, and the troop- and police-contributing countries, and acknowledge the vital efforts to achieve peace of IGAD Heads of State and Government; the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat; the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Workneh Gebeyehu; the IGAD Special Envoy, Ismail Wais; and the Community of Sant'Egidio.

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