

**Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, Nicholas Haysom's  
supporting brief for the AUPSC Statement by the Trilateral Taskforce on Permanent  
Constitution-Making & Electoral Processes Support to South Sudan**

**27 February 2024**

*Excellencies,*

Thank you, once again, for this opportunity to brief the African Union Peace and Security Council as part of a Trilateral format.

I want to associate myself with the remarks delivered by Ambassador Biswano on our collective behalf. I want to make a few points to underscore some of the most relevant issues in his presentation.

It is increasingly clear that the South Sudanese and their leaders want elections. There is, however, widespread ambivalence about the adequacy of preparedness of electoral institutions and processes, as well as the security environment to endure a robust political competition without a relapse into conflict.

Let me underscore three points:

On the security situation, intercommunal violence, referred to by all the other speakers, is the biggest risk to conducting an election without violence. During a meeting with senior officials of the United Nations last week, the Minister of Interior, with related comments by the Minister of Information, stated that they have now classified intercommunal violence as a national security threat. We would join Ambassador Biswano in encouraging not only the Government, but all parties to reach agreement on the Transitional Security Arrangements, and implement those provisions, including the deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces, as a cornerstone for peace before, during and after the elections.

*Excellencies,*

Secondly, I would want to underscore that the Trilateral mechanism does not seek to impose foreign standards or external milestones on the parties. We do not encourage or insist on UN or AU charters. All we are asking for is the implementation of the measures agreed upon by the parties themselves with each other—including those provisions which allow them to amend the current provisions of the peace agreement. This will allow for adequate steps be taken to ensure the country is properly prepared for elections. But, failing to implement those provisions not only undermines the prospect for credible

and peaceful elections, but will simultaneously undermine the peace agreement itself, even threatening its survival.

We are aware that this fragile region, the Horn of Africa, would be devastated if it were required to endure two wars at the same time—in Sudan and South Sudan—and we are required to take all steps to avoid this possibility.

The Government must be encouraged to increase momentum towards democratic elections as agreed and sought by South Sudanese. It must do so by simply taking the political decisions which are required of it and backing them with financial resources.

It is our view that South Sudan can implement the elections that they seek with the required political will, and if they demonstrate the capacity to act together with the spirit of constructive compromise and in recognition of their shared destiny.

Thank you.

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