



# Security Council

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*Provisional*

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*President:* Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield . . . . . (United States of America)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Ms. Dautllari
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. França Danese
China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
Ecuador . . . . .	Mr. Pérez Loose
France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon . . . . .	Mrs. Ngyema Ndong
Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Agyeman
Japan . . . . .	Mr. Ishikane
Malta . . . . .	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Afonso
Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mrs. Alhefeiti
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward

## Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Department of Peace Operations, and Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Ms. Pobee.

**Ms. Pobee:** I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in the Sudan.

More than 100 days have passed since fighting erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. Clashes between the parties have continued in various parts of the country, particularly Khartoum, Bahri, Omdurman and Darfur, with neither side achieving victory or making any significant gains. Khartoum state remains an epicentre of the conflict, with major combat concentrated around key Sudanese Armed Forces installations, including the Sudanese Armed Forces General Command Headquarters. Fighting has continued in various neighbourhoods. This week, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces both ordered residents to leave their homes in a section of Omdurman, declaring it an area of operations.

The parties have inflicted tremendous suffering on the people of the Darfur region, as the fighting there has continued to reopen old wounds of ethnic tensions created by the past conflicts in the region. The brutal violence experienced in El Geneina and Sirba is a particularly bad aspect of the situation, which is deeply

worrying and could quickly engulf the country in a prolonged ethnic conflict with regional spillover. The initiative that Chad has taken to convene a grouping of Darfurian stakeholders to address the situation in the region is therefore welcome and should be built on, while ensuring the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including armed groups, tribal leaders and members of civil society and women's groups.

The situation in the states of South and North Kordofan and the Blue Nile state of the Sudan continues to be fragile, with persistent military actions and frequent road closures. In North Kordofan, the Sudanese Armed Forces control El Obeid city, while the Rapid Support Forces control areas around the city.

Since June, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) Al-Hilu faction has continued to make military advancements in the Sudanese Armed Forces-controlled areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, which SPLM-N claims is an attempt to take back territory previously taken from it.

While the east is relatively calm, there are indications of active mobilization efforts in support of the Sudanese Armed Forces, with the emergence of mobilization committees and the establishment of military training camps. The mobilization is particularly worrisome and risks plunging the east into conflict along ethnic lines, further highlighting the fragility of the region.

The northern part of the country remains under the control of the Sudanese Armed Forces.

The conflict in the Sudan continues to have immense repercussions on the country and its people who continue to face unimaginable suffering. The humanitarian and protection needs are rising by the day with no signs of a reprieve. My humanitarian colleague, Ms. Edem Wosornu, will brief the Council in detail on the mounting humanitarian needs and response efforts.

The indiscriminate and sometimes targeted attacks on civilians and civilian objects and infrastructure continue, particularly in Khartoum, Darfur and North Kordofan, as the parties continue to disregard calls to protect civilians and uphold their international human rights and humanitarian law obligations.

Sexual violence continues to be perpetrated on a large scale, while children continue to be killed or victimized or at risk of being recruited to fight.

The systematic abductions and killings of human rights defenders in Darfur and Khartoum are on the rise. The parties to the conflict must take concrete actions to end and investigate those violations and support must be provided to strengthen human rights defenders' networks and better protect human rights defenders.

The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the wider United Nations has on several occasions denounced specific egregious violations, such as ethnically motivated attacks in West Darfur, systematic looting and rape and aerial bombardments, and has named those responsible.

Hostilities in the country must come to an end and perpetrators should be held accountable for crimes committed, including sexual violence.

We welcome the ongoing efforts by the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to end the conflict in the Sudan. UNITAMS remains committed to supporting those efforts, including through the AU-led expanded mechanism and its core group, which the United Nations is a part of. We also welcome the continued efforts of the United States and Saudi Arabia to facilitate negotiations between the conflicting parties in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, as well as the initiative of the Sudan's neighbouring countries to help resolve the conflict. The common thread among those initiatives is the call for a permanent cessation of hostilities, the facilitation of humanitarian access and engagement with civilian stakeholders in an inclusive political process.

Coordination between the existing regional and international mechanisms and forums remains essential to maximize the collective leverage of regional and international actors and enhance the effectiveness of mediation efforts. The United Nations is supporting a joined-up approach towards facilitating a comprehensive solution and will continue to work closely with our partners particularly the African Union and IGAD in that regard, in coordination with others.

We must also highlight that a broad range of civilians remains committed to ending the war and a resumption of a transition leading to a democratic State. Civilians, tribal leaders and others are coming under increasing pressure to take sides in the war, and we continue to urge against that. Such pressure will lead only to a civil war with ethnic and regional

repercussions for decades to come. In fact, UNITAMS is supporting efforts by local leaders to prevent or de-escalate conflicts, particularly in Darfur.

UNITAMS also welcomes the ongoing efforts by civilian leaders to consolidate various civilian initiatives under one umbrella to unify anti-war forces in one broad front and prepare for an inclusive political process. It is important to include civil society, women's rights groups, youth, trade professions and resistance committees whose voices and engagement are particularly significant in any effort to end the conflict in the Sudan. UNITAMS continues its outreach with those initiatives and encourages broad-based inclusivity.

Let me also highlight the important role Sudanese women are playing by leading several anti-war initiatives that call for the immediate cessation of violence; accountability for human rights violations, including sexual violence; and for women's participation in ceasefire negotiations and any future political process. Their voices must be heard.

Let me close by reiterating that there needs to be a negotiated solution to end the war as soon as possible. There is no other alternative. Calls by some to continue the war in order to achieve a military victory will contribute only to destroying the country. The longer the war continues, the greater the risk of fragmentation and foreign interference, the erosion of sovereignty and the loss of the Sudan's future, particularly its youth. Now is the time to end this senseless war and return to negotiations. UNITAMS, along with its partners, will continue to engage with both sides towards that goal, and we count on the united support of the Security Council.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Pobee for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Wosornu.

**Ms. Wosornu:** I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in the Sudan.

Since we last briefed the Council on 23 June, the Sudan's descent into a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe has only deepened. During these six weeks alone, more than 1.4 million people have fled their homes.

I visited the Sudan two weeks ago. I was deeply alarmed by the level of suffering I saw and the stories I heard.

The women and girls I spoke to shared accounts of being forced to flee far from their homes. They moved from place to place, seeking safety in a constantly shifting security environment. Many live in fear of the fighting catching up with them. They told me stories of sexual violence, harassment and physical assault; of husbands disappearing never to be seen again; of education interrupted; careers ruined and livelihoods lost. Teachers and nurses who had fled their homes have also not received the salaries that they were once used to.

Everyone had a story of parents, children, colleagues and friends who had perished in this devastating conflict, with fears of more to come as the conflicting parties push on regardless of the consequences.

Thanks to the lack of coverage of the Sudan in the global media, it is impossible to understand what is happening there. Nearly four months into the conflict, millions of people remain trapped in a humanitarian calamity that continues to grow. More than 4 million have fled their homes, with 3.2 million internally displaced and close to 900,000 who have crossed the border into Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and other countries. The alarming accounts of sexual violence that I heard from people who have fled to Port Sudan are just a fraction of what is being repeated on a sickening scale in conflict hotspots across the country. People are finding it more and more difficult to access urgent medical assistance, with 80 per cent of hospitals across the country unable to function. Half of all the children in the Sudan, 14 million, need humanitarian support. More than 40 per cent of the population, that is, more than 20 million people, are facing high levels of acute food insecurity. The conflict is disrupting livelihoods and physical access to markets and fuelling steep increases in commodity prices. The banking system has been seriously disrupted, as have public and civil institutions, leading to the severe disruption of public services and less and less money circulating within the economy. Electricity blackouts are extensive, and education services, which previously functioned very well, have been interrupted. This is the story of a country and a people being driven to the point of collapse.

As Assistant Secretary-General Pobee has highlighted, the situation is particularly alarming in areas where the conflict is most intense, notably Khartoum, as well as in Darfur and the Kordofan states. The reports of ethnic-based violence in West Darfur are extremely alarming, with numerous civilians killed or

wounded. The intense fighting and difficult operating environment are limiting our ability to deliver urgently required humanitarian assistance, and that is only deepening the people's suffering.

Nevertheless, since we last briefed the Council, humanitarian and civil-society organizations, the United Nations and its partners have spared no effort to restore the flow of humanitarian supplies, particularly to the Darfur states, where access was most restricted. We have seen some progress, but it has been limited. On 3 August, following intensive negotiations with the parties, a convoy of 10 trucks was able to deliver 500 metric tons of improved seeds to 70,000 families in Ed Daein in East Darfur, the first convoy we have been able to facilitate to Darfur from the eastern part of Sudan — just in time for the planting season, which will be vital to ensuring food security in the coming months. The Darfur states also have some of the highest levels of food insecurity in the Sudan. Additional trucks are en route to North and South Darfur to respond to health, nutrition and food security needs, and we expect the parties to live up to their commitments and allow the trucks to reach their destinations. Last week also saw the first delivery of food assistance into West Darfur from Chad. Additional assistance is expected to follow in the coming weeks.

As Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths has said, ensuring cross-border access into the Darfur region represents a key milestone, as the United Nations is seeking to access all the areas in the Sudan that are hard to reach and to provide critical humanitarian assistance to people in need, wherever they are. We continue to depend on the generosity, understanding and negotiations of the Sudanese authorities, as well as those of the Sudan's neighbours, to facilitate the critical efforts to reach those most in need. Meanwhile, assistance is also being provided in Adré, in Chad, which I also visited, in support of the more than 350,000 people who have fled across its border, as well as the Chadian communities generously hosting them.

Nationwide, since the conflict started, more than 2.9 million people have received some minimum form of humanitarian assistance, including cash or in-kind food assistance, minimal health services or access to basic water services. Unfortunately, that represents only a fraction of the 18 million whom we are trying to reach, and we need unhindered and unfettered

humanitarian access to those who need us most. In Khartoum, where access to people in need remains enormously challenging, some assistance is being provided with the dwindling resources that are still available locally, but we have been unable to guarantee passage for a humanitarian convoy to the capital to replenish the supplies since late June. Humanitarian organizations are ready and willing to do everything it takes to provide the assistance that the people of the Sudan so desperately need. But they cannot do so without the regular facilitation of access by the parties and the easing of bureaucratic and administrative impediments. The international humanitarian law is clear. All the parties to the conflict must facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need.

So far, the limited deliveries of assistance we have been able to make have been possible only through intensive negotiations with the parties, much of it supported through the Jeddah process. Those negotiations are becoming increasingly complex. It is urgent that we re-establish a platform for direct and regular contact on humanitarian issues with the parties at a senior level in order to negotiate access and protect the humanitarian operations in the Sudan. We need the strong support of Member States to facilitate that.

We can provide assistance at the required speed and scale only if we have the relevant travel permits to move within the country and visas to enter it. While we have already received some visas, for which we are grateful to the authorities, we have asked them to continue to ease procedures and expedite approvals. Even with improved access, we will be unable to prevent a further slide into a humanitarian catastrophe without the required resources. It is therefore deeply concerning that the \$2.6 billion humanitarian response plan for this year is only 25 per cent funded, in the amount of approximately \$680 million, which is what we have so far received to enable us to assist the people who need us. I am grateful for the generosity of Member States and donors for their contributions so far, but we need more funding. I am appealing to all Member States and donors to come forward and help us fund the plan as soon as possible.

During my visit to the Sudan, one message that I heard very clearly is that the people of the Sudan want and need peace. In that regard, and as Assistant Secretary-General Pobeé said earlier, the ongoing political mediation efforts aimed at achieving a resolution to the

conflict are critical and must continue unabated if the people of the Sudan are to have any chance of living in enduring peace and security. Until then, we demand that all the parties respect international humanitarian law and minimize human suffering. The parties to the conflict in the Sudan must ensure the safe passage of civilians fleeing violence in Khartoum, Darfur and other areas where there are active hostilities. We also urge the international community to support the humanitarian effort on which so many people in the Sudan increasingly depend.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Wosornu for her briefing.

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): Let me start by thanking Assistant Secretary-General Pobeé and Director Wosornu of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for their very helpful updates to the Council.

I want to start by echoing the alarms that we have heard today with regard to the conflict's catastrophic impact on civilians in the Sudan, with an estimated 24.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. As we have heard, the availability of humanitarian access in the country is now some of the worst in the world. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continue to double down on their fighting, while the Sudanese people face rolling blackouts and the horrifying daily reality of decomposing bodies in the streets. The humanitarian effects are made worse by credible evidence suggesting serious violations of international humanitarian law by both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the RSF, which could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. As we have heard, that includes incidents of sexual violence and air strikes in populated areas, resulting in heavy loss of civilian life. There are also credible reports of the targeted killing of civilians and atrocities against specific ethnic groups in Darfur, with much of the bloodshed attributed to RSF units and allied militias. We welcome the decision of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to start investigations into offences committed in the current conflict and call on the Sudanese authorities to ensure full accountability.

First, we need to see the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces put the interests of their people first, immediately end hostilities and enter into

negotiations in good faith. In that context, we welcome the diplomatic efforts of regional partners, including the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the League of Arab States, to restore peace to the Sudan.

Secondly, in the 11 May Jeddah Declaration, as we have heard, both parties committed to acting in accordance with their international obligations and to enabling and facilitating unhindered humanitarian access, in line with international humanitarian law. I congratulate OCHA on its extraordinary efforts to get humanitarian aid into the Sudan, but I also echo Ms. Wosornu's calls. As we have heard, there have been attacks on humanitarian convoys in areas under RSF control. And we need to see the removal of bureaucratic obstacles, such as the restrictive customs procedures that are causing delays, and the issuance of visas and travel permits.

The people of the Sudan have suffered for far too long. Those who have the ability to stop their suffering should spare no effort to bring an end to the conflict.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobe and the Director of Operations and Advocacy in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Edem Wosornu, for their updates on the situation in the Sudan. We welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations.

We are deeply concerned about the dangerous developments in the military and political situation in the Sudan. The fighting in recent months between the regular army and the Rapid Support Forces in the capital region has seriously exacerbated a humanitarian situation that was already difficult. Thousands of people have been killed or injured, more than 3 million are now added to those internally displaced, and hundreds of thousands have fled to neighbouring countries. We are concerned about the situation in West Darfur, particularly in El Geneina. We continue to call on the Sudanese parties to demonstrate political will and take immediate steps to bring a definitive end to the armed confrontation. We believe that any differences can be resolved at the negotiating table, as part of an inclusive intra-Sudanese dialogue, and that the Sudanese have sufficient wisdom and political experience to do that.

The region is actively involved in efforts to resolve the conflict. We note the work being done by the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority

on Development and in Jeddah. We note the Sudan's Neighbouring Countries Summit, held on 13 July in Egypt, as well as the first meeting, yesterday in N'Djamena, of the working mechanism at the Foreign Minister level established at the Summit. We share the view of the countries of the region about the need to preserve the country's State institutions. The Sudanese authorities have also presented a road map for a settlement. We hope that the measures being taken will create the necessary conditions for stabilizing the situation and for an inclusive relaunch of the Sudanese political process. We firmly believe that one condition for success in any mediation initiative is impartiality, and that any attempts to create divisions in the efforts of neighbouring countries or regional initiatives would be counterproductive.

We appreciate the assistance being provided to the country and the region through OCHA and humanitarian organizations, including those that have been on the front lines since the beginning of the conflict and are working on both sides of the line of contact. We welcomed the arrival last week of the first humanitarian convoy to Darfur and call on humanitarian workers to act in strict accordance with the United Nations guiding principles for humanitarian action and to give greater attention to assistance within the country.

We believe that any external interference in the sovereign affairs of the Sudan that could add fuel to the fire of the conflict is unacceptable. We call on everyone to refrain from attempting to influence the situation through illegitimate unilateral sanctions, which serve only to further aggravate the situation and increase the suffering of the local population. Some Western countries, with the support of Mr. Volker Perthes, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who has lost the trust of the Sudanese people, have been actively interfering in the internal political process in the Sudan, irresponsibly imposing red lines on the parties, and therefore bear a significant share of responsibility for the collapsed situation in the country. Considering the situation that has arisen surrounding the United Nations presence, we understand the decision of the Sudanese authorities and call on the United Nations to act impartially and to respect the views of Khartoum and the sovereignty of the country.

We regret to note that such actions, which are designed among other things to manufacture artificial competition between the mediation efforts, continue. Without a clear strategy on how the international

community can help the Sudan emerge from the current situation, pressure and blackmail are useless. We have been seeing the arm-twisting and direct manipulation through donor support in the Sudan used in other African countries as well. We continue to believe that the Sudanese must be allowed the full right not only to make decisions about the future of their country and people but to bear full responsibility for them.

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm the Russian Federation's unwavering readiness to continue to assist the friendly nation of the Sudan in successfully overcoming its current difficulties and returning to a path of peace and sustainable development. We unflinchingly support the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of the Sudan.

**Mr. Ishikane** (Japan): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe and Ms. Wosornu for their updates. Japan highly appreciates their dedication to their work for the Sudanese people. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of the Sudan, who joins us today.

I thank the United Kingdom for requesting today's timely open briefing. It is the Security Council's responsibility to continue to express its firm position on the ongoing clashes, which have severely undermined efforts to restore the Sudan's political transition and have worsened the humanitarian situation.

I would like to mention the following three points.

First, Japan continues its strong call on the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to immediately stop fighting and return to a peaceful and inclusive political process. It is regrettable that almost four months have passed without any clear sign from the parties of a readiness to end hostilities. Japan urges both parties to seriously commit to international and regional efforts towards a long-term ceasefire, the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid and the resumption of political dialogue. The parties must also uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law and ensure the safety of civilians, including humanitarian personnel.

Secondly, Japan shares the deep concern of the United Nations about the severe impact of the fighting on civilians in the Darfur region. We are especially concerned by reports of the targeting of civilian populations and facilities. Japan also seriously takes note of the Secretary-General's concern about the increasing violence. Again, Japan strongly emphasizes

that all violence must stop immediately and that obligations under international humanitarian law must be upheld by all.

Japan is concerned that the deteriorating situation could pose a risk beyond the border. We thank the Sudan's neighbouring countries for hosting refugees, despite their own humanitarian challenges. In June, Japan decided to extend emergency grant aid in the amount of \$5 million for humanitarian assistance in the Sudan and a grant aid to be implemented through Japanese non-governmental organizations in the Sudan and Chad.

Thirdly, I would like to stress that Japan's strong support for the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan remains unchanged. In that regard, Japan is ready to actively contribute to the upcoming discussions on how best to renew the Mission's mandate to adapt to the situation on the ground.

To conclude, Japan reiterates its commitment to supporting the Sudanese people.

**Mrs. Alhefeiti** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Ms. Martha Pobe and Ms. Edem Wosornu for their comprehensive briefings, and I welcome Ambassador Mohamed to today's meeting.

This meeting comes more than 100 days after the outbreak of the fighting in the Sudan, which has claimed many innocent lives and inflicted immense suffering on the Sudanese people, as mentioned by our briefers today. There is therefore a need to intensify diplomatic efforts to end this crisis in all its dimensions. Accordingly, I would like to emphasize three points.

First, efforts must continue to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation facing millions of Sudanese because of the continued fighting and lack of commitment to previously declared truces. In that context, food and water supplies as well as health services must be provided, as almost half the population is suffering from high levels of food insecurity. Attention must also be paid to the needs of displaced persons and refugees, as their rates are rising sharply, while some neighbouring countries are already facing internal challenges. We therefore appeal to the international community to provide support to the Sudan and neighbouring countries during this difficult

period, given the level of needs on the ground and the lack of the required funding received by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners for this year.

For our part, and in the context of our humanitarian solidarity with the fraternal Sudanese people, the United Arab Emirates has provided them with urgent relief assistance and recently transported by air and sea more than 2,000 tons of medical and food supplies to Port Sudan and the Republic of Chad to support the brotherly Sudanese refugees. We have also set up a field hospital in Chad and opened a coordination office for aid from the United Arab Emirates to support and coordinate humanitarian efforts, and we will continue our support in that regard.

Secondly, we stress the importance of the parties adhering to international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and unhindered and safe access for humanitarian personnel and supplies to those in need. At the same time, we reiterate our call for the full implementation of the commitments reached in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

In that context, we condemn the killing of a number of humanitarian workers in the Sudan and express our concern at reports of attacks against them and the looting and theft of humanitarian facilities. We must recall that 10 days from today, on 19 August, we will celebrate World Humanitarian Day — an occasion to pay tribute to humanitarian and relief workers and to do everything possible to protect them and their important work.

Thirdly, the United Arab Emirates reiterates its call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, work towards a peaceful solution to the crisis and return to the political track. We stress in that regard the importance of responding to regional and international diplomatic efforts to address the crisis in the Sudan, the most recent of which was the meeting held in Chad this week by the ministerial mechanism emanating from the Cairo summit of the Sudan's neighbouring countries. We also welcome the summit's final communiqué, which stressed the importance of a political solution and dialogue for achieving security and stability.

In the context of the United Arab Emirates' keenness for regional and international cooperation to resolve pressing issues, my country also participated in the first meeting convened by the quartet of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development last month. We stress the need to intensify that momentum and coordinate all efforts closely.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes its continued solidarity with the fraternal Sudanese people during those difficult circumstances, including by supporting all efforts aimed at ending the crisis.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely Gabon, Ghana and my own country, Mozambique.

We thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Martha Pobee, and the Director of Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Edem Wosornu, for their important and insightful update on the situation in the Sudan. We welcome the participation in this meeting of His Excellency Mr. Mohamed, Permanent Representative of the Sudan.

The A3 wishes to condemn the unabated hostilities between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces over the past four months. We deeply regret the immense suffering brought upon the Sudanese people, with more than 1,000 civilian fatalities resulting from the ongoing confrontations. We note with concern the displacement of approximately 2.5 million people and the disruption of food and medical supplies, with its correlating negative impact on the vulnerable population. In addition, we follow with concern the deteriorating situation in Darfur, especially in Central and North Darfur, with reports of killings and recorded incidents of sexual violence, particularly against women and girls.

Mindful of the current situation, the A3 would like to emphasize the following points.

First, the A3 condemns in particular the persisting attacks against civilians, hospitals and critical national infrastructure, and the perpetration of sexual abuses against women and girls. Such acts are unacceptable and are a gross violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We also condemn the repeated violations of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961. We call on the parties to uphold their international obligations and to protect diplomatic premises.

It is deplorable to see the fratricidal struggle between the army and the Rapid Support Forces dragging on despite the mediation efforts to reach a ceasefire. So far, all attempts have remained dead letters, and the rare truces have not held. We reiterate our call on the parties to cease hostilities and embrace dialogue and

diplomacy with a view to achieving peace and prosperity for the people of the Sudan. We also reiterate our call for an immediate end to the hostilities and a renewed commitment to negotiations. The way to peace and prosperity for the Sudanese people is through dialogue and national reconciliation.

Secondly, the A3 encourages the regionally led efforts towards a sustainable solution to the current crisis, in particular those by the leadership of the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the League of Arab States. In that regard, we welcomed the communiqué issued at the Sudan's Neighbouring States Summit, held on 13 July, as well as the three-party action plan from the first meeting of the Sudan's neighbours' ministerial mechanism. We also welcomed the communiqué from the meeting of the IGAD Quartet Group held on 10 July.

We urge the warring parties to engage in the implementation of the communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council, which reaffirms the six key elements outlined in the African Union Roadmap for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Sudan. We look forward to the outcome of the joint initiative of the African Union and IGAD to hold a political dialogue in Addis Ababa of non-military stakeholders. We emphasize the importance of reinforcing coordination and maintaining complementarity between the regional and international efforts in order to address the prevailing concerns regarding a permanent cessation of hostilities.

Thirdly and lastly, we remain profoundly concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in the Sudan, with an estimated 24.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. We therefore call on donor partners to step up their financial support to help meet the target for the humanitarian response plan. Ms. Wosornu made it very clear how important that is in her briefing. We welcome the positive and constructive role that the Sudan's neighbours have been playing in the efforts to stabilize the country, especially where managing the refugee crisis is concerned. There is an urgent need to accelerate the humanitarian response in order to ensure that the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons are properly and adequately addressed. We consider it important to take a coordinated approach to the humanitarian and security responses from all actors, particularly at the borders of neighbouring countries, in close collaboration with their respective authorities.

The A3 would like to reaffirm its solidarity with the Sudanese people. We are firmly committed to respect for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of our sister African country. We want to voice our collective rejection of any external interference in the ongoing conflict that would further complicate the situation on the ground. We remain resolute in our determination to support efforts aimed at achieving peace, security and stability in the Sudan.

**Mr. França Danese** (Brazil): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobee and Director Edem Wosornu for their comprehensive briefings, and I welcome Ambassador Mohamed and the Sudanese delegation to this meeting.

The violent power struggle that erupted in the Sudan in April has plunged the country into disarray. We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing military clashes that have embroiled several urban areas in the Sudan in hostilities from the beginning. We are worried about the situation and the suffering of the millions of civilians affected by those actions in such violent and precarious surroundings. The scale of damage to essential infrastructure caused by major armed confrontations is appalling. We strongly condemn the atrocities committed by the parties to the conflict and regret that the protection of civilians has been utterly neglected in some parts of the Sudan. We are distressed by the reports of mass killings in West Darfur. The fighting has also disrupted vital humanitarian aid and access to basic nutrition and essential services such as health care, water and electricity. We are deeply worried about the lack of detailed information from the Darfur region and Blue Nile and South Kordofan states amid the widespread hostilities. Any plan to protect civilians in those areas demands thorough reporting on the ground.

Brazil strongly supports the Jeddah Declaration, commends the Saudi and American efforts to bolster it and laments the repeated violation of its tenets. We call on the parties to implement its basic pledges, which are essential to the flow of vital humanitarian assistance. We reiterate the calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and urge the parties to engage in dialogue to resolve their differences after a truce is reached. A negotiated solution to the conflict is the only path to paving the way for a peaceful political transition in the Sudan. The magnitude of losses and destruction in the conflict has made it abundantly clear that any viable solutions to the crisis are not military ones.

The Sudan can count on support from its neighbours to engage in a peaceful settlement. In the end, the violent power struggle that brought about the conflict is both a tragedy for the Sudanese people and a threat to the stability and prosperity of the region. The humanitarian effects of the crisis have been deeply felt on the Sudan's borders with Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, Libya and Eritrea. The Sudan can also rely on the United Nations, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the League of Arab States and many of its key partners for mediation and good offices.

Peaceful conflict resolution is necessary to build the bridge to the political transition that millions of Sudanese desire and deserve. That is an important message for all Sudanese political forces to heed. Brazil reaffirms its commitment to the Sudan's sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity. Brazil reiterates its support for the Sudanese people in their quest for peace, justice and dignity and appeals to the international community to increase its solidarity with the Sudan at this critical juncture. The Security Council must act together to address the challenges faced by the Sudan. Inaction will impose a heavy toll on the Sudanese people, who simply cannot afford it.

**Ms. Gatt** (Malta): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Director Wosornu for their updates.

Malta strongly condemns the cycle of violence that has engulfed the Sudan over more than 100 days and reiterates its call on both parties to cease hostilities without preconditions. We deplore the loss of life and condemn the targeting of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and places of worship, and on humanitarian and medical personnel, premises and assets. We are concerned by increasing reports of civilians being caught in the crossfire, including those killed in their own homes or in places they sought for safety. Children also remain at high risk, with over 2,000 having been killed and maimed since the start of the conflict.

We remind all parties of their obligations under international law, including redoubling efforts to end and prevent all grave violations against children. We are appalled by the extensive reports of sexual and gender-based violence in Khartoum and El Geneina, including attacks on women's human rights defenders and civil society organizations, and the abductions of women and girls. Urgent support for survivors' access to medical care and psychosocial support must be given

priority. Providing justice to victims and survivors of atrocity crimes and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable must remain central to our collective efforts. We urge for protection measures to be strengthened, especially for women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

The humanitarian crisis in the Sudan continues to escalate. As much as 42 per cent of the country's population is facing acute food insecurity, on top of increasing food and fuel prices, poor harvests and climate shocks. We call for safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access in the Sudan. We also support the World Food Programme's resumption of operations, especially the recent cross-border food delivery on 3 August to Darfur, facilitated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. As we have heard today from Director Wosornu, more needs to be done in that regard. Regrettably, at least 18 humanitarian workers have been killed since the beginning of the conflict, and over 53 attacks were carried out against health-care facilities. Such persons must never be a target.

With an estimated 3.5 million people having been displaced, the conflict in the Sudan risks setting off a crisis of regional proportions. Those seeking to flee are being deliberately targeted, and this is unacceptable. We are also concerned with the situation of internally displaced women and children, who are at high risk of sexual and gender-based violence.

Malta welcomes all efforts that seek an end to the ongoing hostilities and return the Sudan to its political transition process. Such efforts must be inclusive, with the full engagement of women, youth and civil society. At the same time, we reiterate the importance of ensuring that regional mediation efforts — including by the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and by neighbouring countries and other partners — are synchronized and supported by strong and unified messages from the Council.

To conclude, we remain convinced that it is only through dialogue and mediation that the conflict can be resolved. We urge both parties to act on these calls to ensure a lasting settlement which places the Sudanese people at the centre.

**Mrs. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobee and Director Edem Wosornu for their extremely comprehensive briefings, and I would like to focus on two points.

First, all parties must cease fighting immediately. Over the past three months, the security situation in the Sudan has steadily deteriorated. Civilians are the chief victims, and the continued fighting is making the prospect of a transition to a civilian Government, which the Sudanese people want, even more remote. France is concerned by the recent large-scale attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, particularly health-care facilities. The increasing communalization of clashes in Darfur represents a major risk for the populations concerned, and the opening up of new fronts in Southern Kordofan is also a cause for concern. More broadly, the risk of the break-up of the Sudan raises fears of destabilization throughout the subregion. It is imperative that hostilities cease and all parties abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law. Any outside interference that contributes to prolonging the conflict will further exacerbate the humanitarian situation and jeopardize regional stability.

France will continue to work towards the establishment of a lasting ceasefire and the resumption of an inclusive political process that involves political forces and representatives of civil society as soon as possible. To that end, we will continue to support the efforts of the United States, Saudi Arabia, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the European Union and countries neighbouring or in proximity to the Sudan. We also support the role and missions of the United Nations, through the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Volker Perthes, and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, Ms. Hanna Tetteh. We commend their vital work, despite very difficult conditions. It is imperative that the safety of United Nations personnel be ensured.

The international community must mobilize to respond to the humanitarian crisis under way in the Sudan. As the speakers reminded us, the needs of the civilian population have continued to grow increasingly rapidly. The fighting has displaced millions of people. More than 20 million people could be severely food-insecure in the Sudan by September, and several hundred thousand people have taken refuge in neighbouring countries. In that regard, France hails the efforts of the States of the region that are welcoming those refugees. It welcomes the support provided by the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations.

Despite the urgency of the situation, we know that humanitarian aid cannot reach Khartoum and Darfur because of the fighting, the lack of security guarantees, the obstacles imposed by the combatants and the recurring attacks targeting humanitarian workers. France calls on all parties to guarantee safe, complete and unhindered access to all Sudanese territory. We encourage neighbouring and transit countries to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid, uphold international humanitarian law and facilitate the reception of refugees. France is supporting those efforts by providing more than €41 million in emergency aid to meet the needs of the population. That solidarity with the Sudanese people is also being extended by the European Union. It has pledged more than €256 million in humanitarian and development aid this year, and it stands ready to consider using all means at its disposal, including restrictive measures, to help to end the conflict.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Ms. Martha Pobee, and the Director of Operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Edem Wosornu, for their moving briefings. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan.

At the outset, I would like to convey my gratitude to all United Nations staff for their tireless efforts and reaffirm Switzerland's full support for the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Volker Perthes.

The last time we met in this Chamber to discuss the situation in the Sudan (see S/PV.9375), we expressed our shared concern that the continued fighting could plunge the Sudan into a humanitarian catastrophe. Since then, the situation has deteriorated considerably, and we are witnessing a new escalation of violence, together with serious violations of international law. In that context, I would like to highlight three points.

First, it is unacceptable that the conflict is being waged with no regard for the price being paid by the population. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the continuing violence and attacks against civilians. We are receiving alarming allegations from Darfur of ethnic killings, summary executions and sexual and gender-based violence, committed primarily by the Rapid Support Forces and allied militias. Serious violations of children's rights are being committed on a

daily basis. We call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and human rights. It is essential that those responsible are held accountable for their actions to bring justice to the victims and to prevent future violations. We are grateful to those who risk their lives to document the facts on the ground. Switzerland joins the calls for thorough, impartial, independent and timely investigations into all allegations of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. In addition, the resurgence of violence in North and South Kordofan and in Blue Nile only further worsens the conflict.

Secondly, we reiterate our call on the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to facilitate safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to civilians in need and to protect medical personnel and infrastructure, in accordance with international humanitarian law and the Jeddah declaration. Nearly 4 million people, half of them children, have fled the conflict in search of protection and essential goods, and the figures keep rising. Millions of people are on the brink of starvation as a result of the conflict, as we pointed out in our intervention in the open debate last Thursday (see S/PV.9392). We are pleased that the countries in the region have welcomed people fleeing the conflict, and we echo the call made in recent months for borders to remain open. Switzerland will continue to support humanitarian efforts in the Sudan and the region.

Thirdly, we call on the parties to resume negotiations with a view to achieving a lasting ceasefire and to engage in good faith. In that respect, Switzerland welcomes the diplomatic efforts currently under way. Close coordination and the complementarity of those initiatives are essential to achieve lasting results and halt the spiral of violence and destruction. With a view to a possible return to a political process, the inclusive participation of civilian actors in the search for any solution is essential.

The suffering of the Sudanese people will end only when the fighting stops. All of us Council members must redouble our efforts to bring an end to this devastating conflict. The Council must be united on this issue in order to fully support the mediation efforts under way.

Switzerland will continue to support the Sudanese people in realizing their aspirations for peace, justice and democratic governance.

**Ms. Dautllari** (Albania): Let me start by thanking the United Kingdom for requesting this meeting and its continued dedication as the penholder on the Sudan file. Our appreciation also goes to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, Special Representative Perthes and his staff, as well as to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for work they do on the ground. We thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe and Director Wosornu for their updates.

As highlighted by the briefers, the Sudan's dire humanitarian crisis demands immediate attention and coordinated efforts, considering that civilians, including women, children and refugees, bear the brunt of the conflict's devastating toll, leaving them in extreme danger and suffering.

Also, we remain deeply concerned about the continued fighting. We urge both conflicting parties to immediately stop the fighting and call on all armed groups in the Sudan to abstain from further participating in the hostilities.

We are alarmed by figures indicating that more than 20 million Sudanese will experience acute food insecurity through September owing to this conflict and already dire macroeconomic conditions.

The continuation of violence could have irreparable consequences for the Sudan and the entire region. In that vein, we urgently call for an unimpeded and unhindered humanitarian response in the Sudan and the region, and we urge the Government of the Sudan to facilitate administrative procedures to enable humanitarian aid.

Albania remains deeply concerned about credible reports from the Sudan, and particularly from Darfur, revealing instances of sexual and physical assaults on women, along with indiscriminate shooting of women and children. More troubling reports highlight ethnically targeted violence in Darfur, including ethnically motivated killings and sexual violence.

The suffering of civilians cannot be ignored. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces have violated human rights and international humanitarian law and committed atrocities, including sexual violence, and they must be held accountable. We welcome the notification by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court of the start of investigations in that regard. Also, we urge all parties to uphold international humanitarian law and prioritize the protection of civilians, especially women and children, across the nation, including in Darfur.

The international community must remain united in pressuring conflicting parties to commit to a national ceasefire. We welcome the efforts of the United States and Saudi Arabia in that regard. In that vein, we fully support and commend all diplomatic and mediation efforts led by the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the League of Arab States, the United Nations and other regional stakeholders and call for close coordination on those efforts. Maximum pressure must be applied to force the conflicting parties to reduce violence, allow the delivery of humanitarian aid and medical supplies, ensure unhindered access to impacted areas and protect humanitarian workers, who should never be under attack.

In conclusion, it is important that the Security Council and the international community are united in helping the Sudan to bring an end to this conflict.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Director Wosornu for their briefings and welcome the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to today's meeting.

The armed conflict in the Sudan has been going on for nearly four months, with increasing civilian casualties and a worsening humanitarian situation. As a good friend and partner of the Sudan, China deeply deplores those developments. At the same time, diplomatic efforts to reach a political solution to the conflict in the Sudan have continued. China hopes that the parties concerned will, in the interest of the country and its people, establish a ceasefire and put an end to the fighting as soon as possible, promote de-escalation and resolve their disputes through dialogue, so as to create the conditions for peace and reconciliation.

China welcomes the considerable efforts by the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the League of Arab States and the countries of the region to resolve the issue of the Sudan.

Last month, Egypt hosted a summit of the neighbouring States of the Sudan, and Chad just held a follow-up ministerial meeting this week. China expects regional countries and organizations to strengthen their coordination with the parties in the Sudan and to play a key role in facilitating peace talks. The international community and partners outside the region should provide the necessary support and cooperation.

The Sudan is currently facing enormous humanitarian needs, with spillover effects on neighbouring countries. China appreciates the efforts of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations in delivering many batches of humanitarian supplies to Darfur and other regions, despite the difficult circumstances. China calls on the international community to help the Sudan and neighbouring countries to improve their humanitarian response capacity, expand the scale of relief and support regional humanitarian initiatives. At the same time, humanitarian support to the Sudan should respect the sovereignty and ownership of the Sudan and follow the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance. The Sudanese parties should also comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and facilitate the provision of humanitarian relief.

The situation in Darfur has been seriously affected by the conflict in the Sudan. The international community should provide constructive support to ease the situation and avoid aggravating conflicts.

The Sudan is an important country in the Horn of Africa. An early ceasefire and a return to normalcy and order is in the fundamental interests of the Sudan and the countries in the region. Recently, the need to safeguard the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Sudan and oppose external interference in its internal affairs it has been repeatedly stressed in the African Union and IGAD and at the summit of the neighbouring States of the Sudan. The international community should heed the calls of the countries of the region, support the good offices of regional countries and organizations, and avoid externally imposed programmes, sanctions and pressure. The Council should encourage the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan to play an active role in the issue of the Sudan. China believes that the Sudanese people have the ability and wisdom to overcome their current difficulties and challenges and end the fighting as soon as possible. China stands ready to work with the international community to support the efforts of the Sudanese people.

**Mr. Pérez Loose** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Ms. Martha Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, and Ms. Edem Wosornu, of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings.

Ecuador condemns the armed violence of the past 116 days and the adverse effects it has had for the civilian population. We cannot remain silent in the face of the violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law committed against the Sudanese people, who among other things have endured crimes of conflict-related sexual violence, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, terror campaigns, attacks on schools and hospitals, attacks on camps for internally displaced persons, ethnically motivated killings, the intentional burning of villages, a lack of basic services and arms trafficking. The increase in cases of sexual violence is particularly worrying. Mechanisms must be set up without delay to stop such heinous offences, and the perpetrators of such acts, including crimes against humanity, must be investigated and brought to justice. The only way to ensure that such atrocities are not repeated is to ensure that there is no impunity.

We are concerned about the humanitarian situation in the country, with more than 3 million people internally displaced, more than 800,000 Sudanese refugees and a lack of access to services, all of which paints a bleak picture of the deepening conflict. It is therefore imperative that the international community continue contributing to the humanitarian assistance, which can go some way to alleviating the suffering of millions of Sudanese. In that regard, we call on all the parties to ensure rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access throughout the Sudan, and we condemn the killing of humanitarian personnel and volunteers. We hope for the continued support of the countries in the region that have kept their borders open despite the difficult situation that they are dealing with. We also acknowledge the international, regional and multilateral initiatives to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. It is time to join our efforts in a single, inclusive and consolidated peace process that will enable a respite from a conflict that has claimed so many lives and continues to worsen the country's already deteriorating humanitarian, economic and social situation. We call for providing the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established under resolution 1591 (2005) with the means and access they need to fulfil their mandate. It is time for the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to immediately cease their hostilities and acts of violence and comply with their obligations under international law.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

I would like to thank Ms. Wosornu for her leadership and Assistant Secretary-General Pobe for her sobering briefing. And while we were grateful for the Assistant Secretary-General's participation, we had expected Special Representative of the Secretary-General Perthes to brief the Security Council. We now understand that the Sudanese Government warned that it would close the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan if the Special Representative of the Secretary-General participated in this briefing, and that is unacceptable. I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan, and I look forward to hearing his statement on the situation in the country and particularly on the efforts to end the senseless war. I also want to thank the United Kingdom for requesting this important meeting. Ms. Wosornu noted in her statement the lack of international coverage of the situation in the Sudan, which highlights the importance of having an open briefing such as this one.

It has been more than 100 days since fighting broke out between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. In that time, senseless violence has wrought unthinkable suffering. In the words of a doctor from Khartoum, the situation has become a living hell. Millions of people have been displaced. We heard the numbers today. Civilians have been shot dead in the street. Children have often been forcibly recruited and subjected to violence. Women have been brutally raped. The fighting has blocked humanitarian assistance, food, water, medicine and other essentials from reaching people in dire need. There are credible reports that the Rapid Support Forces and allied militias have carried out continued atrocities and other abuses in West Darfur. There have been killings based on ethnicity, widespread sexual violence and the burning and looting of homes and villages, and tens of thousands of people have been forced to flee to neighbouring Chad and other countries. History is repeating itself in the most tragic way possible.

The United States condemns in the strongest terms the reported atrocities, which are an ominous reminder of the horrific events in 2004 that led us to determine that genocide had been committed in Darfur. And we are gravely concerned about the risk of further conflict in North and Central Darfur, specifically through the reported build-up of the Rapid Support Forces and

affiliated forces near El Fasher, which poses a threat to non-Arab populations in the area. We are deeply concerned about unconfirmed reports of armed actors in the Sudan preventing people from leaving the area of Darfur in search of safety, including across the border into Chad.

As we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we have a responsibility to live up to the promise of that foundational document — not just to extol human rights but to defend them. We must all therefore demand that the parties comply with their obligations under the international humanitarian law on the protection of civilians. Of course, the best way to do that would be for the parties to end the brutal conflict once and for all. The United States and regional and international partners are united in calling on the parties to immediately put down their weapons, and we echo the calls of countries in the region, including the 10 July communiqué of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), for preventing any external interference or military support. That would only intensify and prolong the conflict at the expense of the people of the Sudan. We also support coordinated international diplomatic efforts by the African Union, IGAD, the League of Arab States, the United Nations and other parties from the Horn of Africa and the Middle East.

But until the guns are silenced, and as long as the humanitarian crisis continues, we must support the people of the Sudan, who have endured so much needless suffering. The United States remains the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance to the people of the Sudan. We are working to support the millions of internally displaced people and the nearly 1 million people who have crossed into neighbouring countries to seek refuge. We must also work together to ensure that humanitarian assistance can reach people in dire need, including those who cannot leave their homes because of fighting, fuel shortages or simply fear.

Bureaucratic hurdles and other barriers have hindered relief efforts. That, too, is unacceptable. Humanitarian workers must be free to do what they do best. They save lives. They need to be able to do that without roadblocks or delays. We call on the Sudanese authorities to expedite visa approvals for humanitarian workers, enable the movement of humanitarian goods and personnel throughout the Sudan and facilitate the importation of humanitarian goods and equipment.

As the situation in the Sudan has spiralled, neighbouring countries have stepped up to welcome refugees. We are deeply grateful for those acts of humanity. We must encourage those countries to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers have access to needed protections.

We must work towards a future in which the Sudan is back on the path of democracy. The Sudan's political future belongs to the Sudanese people. We support members of civil society, professional and labour unions, resistance committees, women and youth organizations, as they heroically work to meet emergency needs, push for peace and resume the stalled democratic transition so that freedom, peace and justice in the Sudan can be realized.

At this perilous moment, this body must speak out unequivocally with one voice in the name of peace. We should never give in to forces that want to stop the Council from addressing matters of international peace and security. In the words of the late Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and human rights activist, "silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented". We must all urge the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to end the bloodshed and the suffering of the Sudanese people. There is no acceptable military solution to the conflict, and peace cannot wait another day.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

**Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. I would also like to thank Ms. Martha Pobe and Ms. Edem Wosornu for their informative briefings.

I thank the delegations that showed sympathy and support to the people of the Sudan, given their suffering and the current situation. In that regard, the Government of the Sudan has spared no effort to put an end to a war imposed on it. I would like to recall that depicting the war as a war between two parties will lead nowhere. It is not a strategic and realistic reading of the current events in the Sudan.

There is a regional Power that supported the aggression and wanted the Sudan to become *terra nullius*, according to the definition under international

law. Some delegations noted voluntary self-defence by the citizens under international law as well as under national criminal law, which supports self-defence. The Sudanese Armed Forces welcomed the Jeddah process supported by the United States of America and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They are not fighting for power but to defend the territories and people of the Sudan against the indiscriminate ethnic war confirmed by human rights organizations and condemned by several countries, including the troika — Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States — and other organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

I would also like to note that we have an amicable relationship and mutual respect with Mrs. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Permanent Representative of the United States. I learn from her diplomatic skills. However, the Permanent Mission of the Sudan sent no official correspondence to the President of the Security Council threatening to boycott the meeting if attended by certain individuals. The Mission also did not communicate with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to that end. However, after we requested that our name be added to the list of speakers, we received a letter that was unclear. We were informed that, in accordance with rule 37, our country is not allowed to speak without the approval of the Security Council. That is why I wrote a letter to Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield about that. She assured me that I have the right to participate.

In that context, we sent complete information to all delegations and to the presidency of the Security Council on the sexual and gender-based violence that was mentioned by several delegations. We also sent them a report by the independent unit to combat violence against women and children, in which it condemns the perpetrators, just as they were condemned by most of the international community. The Sudanese Armed Forces are not involved in any sexual or gender-based violence, and the party involved in that atrocity is very well known. Many delegations identified the party without naming it.

Current indiscriminate shelling is not perpetrated by the Sudanese Armed Forces. In fact, the Armed Forces defend citizens who are forcibly displaced with a view to changing the current demography and replacing them with foreign people who carry fake identities. Accordingly, the Armed Forces need to address that situation — if such a situation occurred in any of the

countries represented on the Council, what would the reaction be? Would they stand helplessly by, watching members of aggressive militia forces enter people's homes, destroy their property and rape their women, or would they order armed and security forces to defend those people?

Regarding the humanitarian aspect, the Sudan stresses that it is fully committed to cooperating with the United Nations, in particular the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need and affected by war. The Government of the Sudan is keen to address the humanitarian situation that was triggered by the war and the resultant security challenges with responsibility, flexibility and realism. The Government is keen to realistically address the situation through the following mechanisms.

A supreme committee for crisis management was established to address the humanitarian situation and is chaired by the Minister of Social Welfare. Its members include the High Commissioner for Humanitarian Assistance, who is participating in the Jeddah consultations, as well as a number of ambassadors and diplomats dispatched by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to join the Committee's work in Port Sudan.

Here in New York, the Permanent Mission of the Sudan deems the mechanism of regular coordination and consultation with OCHA to be effective. That continuous cooperation has contributed to visa approvals in record time for several officials of the United Nations and OCHA for visits to the Sudan despite the current situation in the country. The Mission has also expedited the delivery of humanitarian aid through Port Sudan, in collaboration with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and officials in Port Sudan.

The Government of the Sudan has also provided cross-border aid through Chad despite security concerns. The first shipment of food aid arrived through the World Food Programme in West Darfur state last week. Authorities in Port Sudan have completed all measures necessary for more than 580 United Nations trucks to deliver thousands of metric tons of humanitarian aid, and we can provide the Council with proof of that. The United Nations, represented by OCHA, should address the humanitarian situation by cooperating and coordinating with the countries affected according to the countries' own assessments of their priorities and needs, and should include every issue related

to the assessment of those priorities, including the geographical scope of aid distribution and protection, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 46/182.

Cooperation is an ongoing process that should be subject to improvement and mutual understanding. It is not just about meeting short-term requests. We should therefore consider the whole picture and stress the importance of cooperation between the Sudan and the United Nations, something that we have made clear to the Secretary-General. In that context, we feel it is important to clarify some issues. Any delayed visas or measures undertaken by the Government to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian workers or aid in the midst of a war should not be considered as bureaucratic impediments to access. Other issues have contributed to a slowdown in the provision of services and humanitarian aid, including diminishing funding and a financial gap of more than 70 per cent in the \$1.5 billion total of pledges made in Geneva. In our view, the fulfilment of those pledges has been delayed due to the complexity of response operations and to other complications hindering the timely delivery of humanitarian aid.

In order to improve performance in the delivery of humanitarian aid, the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations must take into consideration flexibility, realism and their ongoing partnership in their cooperative efforts. The Government is in a better position to assess needs, set priorities and oversee the distribution of aid to its people. And flexibility is required where some other issues are concerned because they concern the Government, in such areas as escorting and securing humanitarian convoys and ensuring the safety of humanitarian and medical personnel against attacks, considering that 18 humanitarian workers have now been killed during the hostilities. The Government therefore insists on escorting humanitarian convoys until they reach their intended destinations and the people in need. That does not infringe on the work of voluntary humanitarian organizations. The Government provides all humanitarian and medical teams, and that takes time and should not be a controversial issue. In addition, it is the Government and local authorities that define priorities and the geographical distribution of aid in considering the host communities in Gezira, White Nile, Northern, River Nile and Blue Nile states, without politicizing humanitarian action.

As for our position on the political track and the relevant initiatives, the Sudan welcomed the African Union's initiative, which resulted in a road map whose

elements include the coordination of efforts among all regional and international partners through an expanded mechanism, an immediate and permanent cessation of hostilities, the delivery of humanitarian aid, respect for international humanitarian law and a resumption of an inclusive peace process leading to a democratic Government.

The multiple and broad initiatives that are in play are causing confusion, while an expanded mechanism is not necessarily more successful or better than an initiative that enjoys the consent of the Sudanese Government. The meeting held by the African Union Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa in May had a positive outcome, resulting in a number of short-term truces. Moreover, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) reaffirmed its commitment to promoting peace in the Sudan and welcomed the Jeddah talks as facilitating talks between the two parties to the conflict seeking a unified and comprehensive peace process under the auspices of the African Union, IGAD, the League of Arab States and the United Nations. The path forward will be chosen by the people of the Sudan following a cessation of hostilities and a ceasefire, which we hope will materialize soon.

It is well known that the Jeddah talks are limited to addressing the humanitarian situation, managing the provision of relief and putting an end to military operations. They are not aimed at holding political discussions. The current war has changed the Sudan's political dynamics and future prospects. That said, the most viable option is the emergence of new national civilian leaders to form an independent technocratic Government that can oversee the holding of general elections without any delay, leading to the completion of the political transition. The Sudan welcomes the support and supervision of the United Nations for the elections. The return of the army to its barracks must be ensured so that it plays its normal and constitutional role in defending the unity and territorial integrity of its homeland, supporting the new national Government through a new national coalition that has never called for war, supported the general aggression and demographic change of the Sudanese people by force, stolen their money or assaulted their women.

We need the launch of a new, inclusive national political dialogue, unlike its byzantine predecessors, in order to define a democratic pathway forward and an agenda for peace, reconstruction and development. The Sudan's current crisis cannot be resolved by

expanded mechanisms that cause confusion at various regional and international levels. Like the *Titanic*, they are doomed to sink. All of us who want to contribute to finding a solution to the Sudanese crisis must ensure the Sudan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. The Sudan is its own master in peace and war, and is once again seeking the help of its African and Arab brothers who are most familiar with its traditions, customs, ideals and values. If the neighbouring countries want to make progress in finding a solution to the Sudanese crisis, they must listen to the voice of the Sudan as it fights its fiercest battle for survival in its history. As the Sudan rejected all foreign interference in its internal affairs in April, it has the necessary flexibility to achieve peace via a resumption of the political track in line with a new vision and a broad national alliance, with the participation of civilians, including women and young people, in a national Government after the war. In that context, the Sudan is committed to working for peace, adhering to the Jeddah Declaration, signed on 11 May, and facilitating the safe passage of humanitarian aid throughout the country while upholding its sovereignty and respecting the country's laws. The indirect negotiations with rebel forces via the Jeddah platform under the auspices of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America have stalled due to the rebel militias' intransigence. They refuse to comply with the decisions that have been agreed to, including sparing civilian homes and health, education and sports centres in various areas. The Sudanese Armed Forces will abide by the agreements reached within the Jeddah process as soon as the rebel forces commit to leaving those facilities.

While many Sudanese have been dispersed and displaced to neighbouring countries, most have stayed in the country, destitute and suffering under attacks from the rebel militias. The people should be sovereign. The Government of the Sudan has been responding to the indiscriminate shelling by the uncontrolled militias in Omdurman and other cities and areas in the Sudan, who are trying to evict citizens from their homes through criminal settlement schemes involving identity theft, forgery and looting and plundering banks, including by stealing gold and deposits, which are causing problems far beyond the Sudan, in the Nile Valley, the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa and parts of East Africa and the Sahel.

The rebel Rapid Support Forces have been dealt with in accordance with the laws of the Sudanese Armed Forces. Their continued violations, as recorded by human rights and civil-society organizations, have

been condemned by States. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has promised to investigate those actions, which are tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Government of the Sudan is therefore currently discussing cooperation with the ICC Prosecutor in their investigation, since it is the uncontrolled militia's refusal to commit to a ceasefire that constitutes the main impediment to ending the war. Instead, the militia is increasing its recruitment across the border and adopting a mobile war approach. A committee has also been established to address the war crimes and violations committed by the rebel militia.

Members may not be aware that one country in the region has sent 6,000 combatants to fight the Sudanese Armed Forces and to support the uncontrolled militia. In a previous Council meeting, I told Council members that one day they would be privy to all of the information available. The Sudanese Government reiterates its readiness to accept any serious initiative put forward and continues its cooperation with the United Nations, regional Powers and organizations and neighbouring countries with the aim of stopping the war, especially since the majority of the people of the Sudan call for and support an end to the rebellion, after suffering tremendously from hostilities in which 20,000 prisoners collaborated with drug dealers and uncontrolled militia to eliminate their well-being and alienate them from their homeland. The horrific events that took place — with the help of foreign mercenaries — in West Darfur state, the city of El Geneina, East and Central Darfur regions, Sirba and Zalingei are good proof of the objectives of those rogue groups.

We affirm that the United Nations and bilateral humanitarian operations are flowing smoothly — we have evidence of that — and reaching the needy in all regions of the Sudan. In that regard, the Sudan refuses and rejects any encroachment on its sovereignty for any motives whatsoever — especially through unilateral positions calling for measures that the Sudan has not agreed to. I want to recall that in the mid-1980s, the Sudan was a partner in Operation Lifeline Sudan, one of the largest United Nations operations, and therefore does not need lessons on how to deal with regional and international entities. We condemn those positions because they do not help to make peace or stop the war imposed on the Sudan.

The Sudan commends the League of Arab States and the sisterly country of Egypt for their efforts to discuss effective ways to stop the war and preserve the capabilities and territorial integrity of the Sudanese

people. We call on the international community, the United Nations and major Powers to support the Sudanese State in facing this externally backed invasion, to demonstrate full solidarity with the Sudanese people in their ordeal and to support the Jeddah process in reaching an immediate and permanent ceasefire, to support the choice of the Sudanese people regarding the new political process and to support the national Government's efforts, which will eventually culminate in achieving a national consensus, addressing the economic situation, achieving political reforms and realizing democracy through fair elections while supporting the efforts to ensure food security in the Sudan.

The Government of the Sudan welcomed the Sudan's neighbouring States summit, held in Cairo on 13 July, and its balanced communiqué. We will deal with the ministerial mechanism that was created thereby, in line with the Jeddah process. The first meeting of that mechanism was held in N'Djamena and produced a final statement with the participation of the foreign ministers. In that regard, the Sudan will work with all the parties that seek to end the war, restore security and the rule of law. The Sudanese Armed Forces stand ready to hold their defensive military operations as soon as the rebel militias stop attacking homes, neighbourhoods, civilian objects and government facilities, blocking roads and looting — all of which has been documented.

The Rapid Support Forces and their allied militias have launched a campaign of violence to control some of the major cities and cut off the trade roads in Darfur, using heavy artillery indiscriminately in urban areas and coordinating their ground attacks with allied militias. They have been forcibly displacing the rural population and burning people's homes as part of a strategy to expand their acquisition of land and have blocked some of the main roads between Darfur, Chad and the Central African Republic, as well as into many major cities such

as Zalingei and El Fasher. Those forces, supported by their allied militias, have also carried out coordinated attacks using heavy artillery, mainly targeting civilians in Masalit neighbourhoods, including through mass killings, sexual violence and the systematic targeting of places hosting internally displaced persons, which has led to more forced displacement.

After the stalling of the indirect negotiations due to the intransigence of the Rapid Support Forces, who insisted on staying in health facilities, military confrontations have continued in the capital, Khartoum, and some areas in Western Sudan state. However, the Sudanese Government is in control of the military and security initiatives while communicating with all national and international parties with a view to putting an end to the war and the suffering of the people. We stand ready to accept any initiative that leads to ending the rebellion and stopping the war. We reiterate our support for all the Sudanese communities, who reject the continuation of the old political partnership in any political or security equation.

While the Sudanese Armed Forces control all military areas in the states, there are still some skirmishes by the rebel militias in some cities such as El Fasher, El Obeid and El Geneina. The People's Movement, led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu, initiated an attack in South Darfur state and other areas in White Nile state, but the Sudanese Armed Forces were able to repel the attacks.

I thank the Council for its cooperation. The Sudan is ready to talk to any of the delegations here with regard to any plans they have for putting an end to the war in the Sudan. We assure the Council that the Sudanese Armed Forces will respond to any positive initiative that includes what I have mentioned to members.

*The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.*