



Security Council

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Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic assessment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The African Union Peace and Security Council, in its communiqué of 11 June 2018 (PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXXVIII)), and the United Nations Security Council, in its resolution [2429 \(2018\)](#) of 13 July 2018, authorized the drawdown and reconfiguration of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The Councils also endorsed a whole-of-system approach with regard to Darfur and a transition concept for the United Nations country team, for a two-year time frame, within which was envisaged the exit of the mission on 30 June 2020, and its liquidation by December 2020, provided that there was no significant change in the security situation in Darfur and that key indicators were fulfilled. The Security Council requested the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide, through a strategic review, by 1 May 2019, an assessment of the following: progress made in implementing the reconfiguration; the overall impact of further reductions on the areas that UNAMID has withdrawn from; cooperation of the Government of the Sudan with UNAMID, including the removal of bureaucratic hindrances to UNAMID; whether the conditions on the ground remain conducive to further reductions; and whether the capacities of the United Nations country team and the Government of the Sudan have increased to the level necessary to absorb former UNAMID tasks.

2. The review process was initiated by a joint visit by the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, from 9 to 12 February 2019, which helped to define the priorities of the engagement of the United Nations in the Darfur transition. Subsequently, a joint African Union-United Nations assessment team visited Khartoum, Darfur and Addis Ababa, from 6 to 19 March. The team was led jointly by the African Union Commission and the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations of the United Nations Secretariat and comprised representatives of both entities, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Operational Support, the Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP and the World Food Programme, and the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Darfur. The review team held



consultations with UNAMID, the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations country team and African Union officials. They visited team sites and met with State and local authorities, the native administration, representatives of civil society and internally displaced communities in Darfur.

3. The present report covers the period from 14 July 2018 to 15 May 2019 and contains an analysis of the main political and security trends and conflict drivers in Darfur, an assessment of progress in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2429 (2018) and a new mission concept with adjusted priorities to help to guide considerations on the future of the mandate of UNAMID (see S/PRST/2018/19), as well as options for the further drawdown and eventual exit of the mission by 2020, while recommending joint African Union-United Nations engagement to address conflict drivers subsequent to the exit of UNAMID. In view of the potential impact of the political developments in the Sudan since 11 April on UNAMID, the Security Council agreed to extend the time frame for the submission of the assessment report until 1 June 2019.

II. Conflict analysis

4. Although the Darfur peace process remained stalled, developments in the Sudan created an opening for relaunching the process and implementing the outstanding provisions of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The removal of the President of the Sudan, Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir, on 11 April 2019 has offered an opportunity to address the challenges facing the Sudan in an inclusive and holistic manner, including with regard to the long-delayed talks between the Government and the non-signatory groups to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

5. Overall, the impact of the recent political developments on the security situation in Darfur has been moderate, despite a peak in violence in several camps for internally displaced persons and fractures within State security forces in the immediate aftermath of the events of 11 April. In general, the security situation remained relatively stable, with little disruption in the trends observed since 2016. Overall, Darfur has evolved into a post-conflict setting characterized by fragile public institutions, facing challenges owing to criminality, a protracted humanitarian crisis and lack of development. Important conflict drivers related to access to land and resources, climate change and environmental degradation and violations of human rights must be addressed further.

A. Political analysis

1. Darfur context: peace process and implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur

6. The Darfur peace process reached a brief breakthrough with the signing of a pre-negotiation agreement between the Government of the Sudan, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM/Gibril) and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi (SLA/MM), in Berlin on 6 December 2018, to resume peace talks in Doha on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The signing was preceded by intensive negotiations led by the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security in Addis Ababa on 22 November 2018. Subsequently, in solidarity with the protests against the Government, the signatory movements to the Berlin agreement suspended their participation in the follow-up negotiations. For its part, the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) persisted in its refusal to participate in negotiations

with the Government. On 12 April, the Transitional Military Council, which had removed the President, welcomed dialogue with the armed groups.

7. The implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur continues, albeit at a slow pace. While its institutional framework and related mechanisms have been established, including the six commissions, they have yet to become fully operational owing to lack of funding and human resources, but mostly lack of political determination to address particular provisions. Realization of the commitments of the Government of the Sudan and external partners' funding pledges to the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund remain well behind schedule. There has been some progress, however, with respect to provisions on power-sharing, the final security arrangements and the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultations process. A review of the Darfur Development Strategy is ongoing, with a view to aligning its objectives to address the issues that remain outstanding from the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and extending it to cover the period 2020–2025.

8. During the reporting period, the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultations process was completed in all Darfur states at the locality level and followed by a two-day conference for internally displaced persons, held on 16 and 17 December 2018, in Nyala, South Darfur. Participants presented nine proposals to the then-Vice-President of the Sudan on key requirements for a durable solution and for sustaining peace in Darfur.

2. National context

9. The recent political developments at the national level led to significant changes in the 30-year-old system of governance in the Sudan, which had a direct impact on Darfur. What started as protests against the Government, in Atbara on 19 December 2018, over the removal of subsidies on essential commodities, soon spread across the country and led to the removal of the President by the Transitional Military Council on 11 April 2019. The interim Constitution of 2005 was suspended, and a three-month state of emergency took effect, followed by the lifting of the daily curfew, the release of political detainees and the declaration of a countrywide ceasefire. Meanwhile, negotiations were ongoing with the Declaration of Freedom and Change Forces, an umbrella opposition group, and other parties on a joint transitional mechanism and related arrangements, while protests continued in Khartoum and elsewhere. The African Union Peace and Security Council issued a statement on 15 April demanding the handover of power to a civilian-led transitional authority within 15 days, subsequently extended for an additional period of up to 60 days by its communiqué of 30 April 2019 (PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXLVI)).

10. Those events initially had repercussions in Darfur, where large crowds in major urban centres gathered to celebrate events in Khartoum. The demonstrators targeted National Intelligence and Security Service facilities, perceived as symbols of the previous Government. In El Fasher, Nyala, Zalingei, El Geneina and Ed Daein, security forces, mainly National Intelligence and Security Service personnel, allegedly fired shots indiscriminately to disperse demonstrators, killing at least 15 civilians and injuring hundreds. At the Kalma camp for internally displaced persons in Nyala, South Darfur, 16 people were killed and 17 others injured, after violent confrontations between rival groups among the population in the camp. Attacks against National Intelligence and Security Service personnel and premises were also reported in Nertiti and Golo, in Central Darfur, Kabkabiya, Kutum and Saraf Umra, in North Darfur, Kass, in South Darfur, and Mournei, in West Darfur. Zalingei, Golo, Nertiti, Kass and Kalma were the locations most affected by the recent surge in violence after the change of regime in Khartoum. While the Darfur armed movements welcomed the fall of the Government and supported demands for a civilian-led

transition government, they have yet to articulate a coherent position on their role in the transition.

3. Regional context

11. During the reporting period, prior to the developments since 11 April, the Sudan was actively engaged in several peace processes in the region involving its immediate neighbours, including South Sudan in June and July 2018, along with the President of Uganda, and the Central African Republic in January and February 2019. The ongoing conflict in Libya remains a major threat to stability in the region, however, in particular in the Sudan, as Darfur rebel groups have become part of that conflict.

12. Following the lifting of economic sanctions by the United States of America on 17 January 2017, a second stage of engagement between the Sudan and the United States commenced in October 2018. The negotiations focused on six tracks, including additional progress on the cessation of hostilities in Darfur and the Two Areas, improving humanitarian access, enhancing cooperation on counter-terrorism efforts and making progress on realizing human rights. However, the United States has suspended the talks pending the establishment of a civilian-led transition authority. The Sudan is an active member of the Khartoum process with the European Union, a platform for political cooperation and regional collaboration among the countries along the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe.

B. Security analysis

1. Fighting between the Government of the Sudan and armed groups

13. While two of the three main rebel groups in Darfur, namely, SLA/MM and JEM/Gibril, have lost their foothold in Darfur since 2014, they remain active in Libya and South Sudan. According to the Panel of Experts on the Sudan (see [S/2019/34](#)) and the Panel of Experts on Libya (see [S/2018/812](#)), Libya is an important source of financing for those groups, which are involved in mercenary and criminal activities. SLA/MM reportedly has the largest presence there, with some 800 to 1,000 rebels fighting on the side of the Libyan National Army. JEM/Gibril now comprises some 100 to 200 fighters and, in 2018, its presence was reported in the south of Libya, working mostly for forces against the Libyan National Army. JEM/Gibril reportedly cooperates closely with the Union des forces de la résistance, a Chadian rebel group. Both Darfuri groups have repeated their unilateral declarations of ceasefire every few months since October 2015.

14. The only armed group still present in Darfur that is yet to join the political process, SLA/AW, has been gradually fragmented by internal divisions, while its territory has shrunk considerably and its operational capabilities significantly reduced, following military operations by government forces. In 2018, SLA/AW lost Boulay, in northern Jebel Marra, Golol in western Jebel Marra and Gubbo in southern Jebel Marra. Internal divisions over the engagement in negotiations with the Government of the Sudan have further fragmented SLA/AW and, on 1 May, several senior officials of the movement decided to remove Abdul Wahid from his leadership position. The group is currently reported to have between 1,000 and 2,000 fighters (see [S/2019/34](#)) who are mostly engaged in hit-and-run operations against government security forces and attacks on nomadic tribes. Moreover, SLA/AW support among internally displaced persons has eroded significantly during the reporting period (*ibid.*), in particular in Hamadiya, Central Darfur, and Kalma, South Darfur. SLA/AW continues to reject the Transitional Military Council's call to participate in negotiations or to join the transitional arrangements.

2. Security sector and rule of law issues

15. Some adjustments to the security sector have taken place, notably in addressing militia groups and weapons control (see [S/2018/530](#)). Reports indicate ongoing efforts to make the Rapid Support Forces a regular force (see [S/2019/34](#)), with recruitment expanded to non-Arab communities in Darfur and tribes outside Darfur. Nevertheless, their involvement in human rights violations, including conflict-related sexual violence, continues (see [S/2019/280](#)).

16. The security forces continued with the weapons collection campaign launched in August 2017, although at a slower pace and with low numbers of weapons collected. The campaign has reportedly contributed to improving the security environment in Darfur, in particular in towns and on main roads, whereas in rural areas, it has been reported that few weapons have been collected. The process has been criticized for targeting specific groups, while excluding tribal forces allied with the Government, which are often accused of attacks on and harassment of internally displaced persons aimed at preventing their return to their places of origin.

17. The footprint and capacity of law enforcement and rule of law institutions outside the main urban centres continue to have a negative impact on the level of security. The trends identified in the previous report ([S/2018/530](#)) continue, affecting mostly internally displaced persons, in particular women and children. The prevalence of crime and human rights violations and abuses, including conflict-related sexual violence, remain major protection challenges in areas affected by violent conflict in Darfur. Following the events of 11 April, the Transitional Military Council dissolved the national legislature and the federal Government, replaced the state governors with military commanders and, in response to the demands of protestors, replaced the Attorney General and the Chief Justice.

3. Intercommunal conflicts

18. The number of intercommunal clashes and fatalities continued to decline as a result of the extension of State authority and reconciliation efforts by the local government and the native administration. For the period from July 2018 to January 2019, the mission recorded a total of 10 intercommunal clashes and 30 fatalities, compared with 14 clashes and 136 fatalities in the period between July 2017 and January 2018. However, the conflict drivers, in particular access to land and other natural resources, are not being addressed in a systemic way, affecting internally displaced persons returning to their areas of origin and the relations between pastoralist and farming communities.

19. Several intercommunal conflicts persist. In North Darfur, the dispute between the Northern Rezeigat herders and returnee farmers, mostly Tunjur and Fur, over access to farmlands continued in Kutum, Shangil Tobaya, Tawilla, Kabkabiya and Saraf Umra. In South Darfur, tensions between the Masalit and the Fallata over land tenure and competition for natural resources in Graid remain unresolved, despite the signing of a peace agreement in July 2018. Similar tensions exist between the Salamat and the Fallata in Buram. In East Darfur, while the land-based conflict between the Southern Rezeigat and the Ma'aliyya in Abu Karinka and Adilla remains unresolved, progress was made with the signing of a Declaration for Peaceful Coexistence on 29 November 2018. In West Darfur, mediation efforts by the native administration and UNAMID have facilitated the resolution of several cases of land disputes between herders and farmers. In Central Darfur, animal theft perpetrated by SLA/AW against the Northern Rezeigat aggravated tensions between the latter and the Fur community, which is perceived to support the rebel group.

C. Conflict drivers

1. Access to land and resources

20. Land tenure and the management of natural resources have remained constant sources of conflict, in particular in rural areas of Darfur, where tensions continue between a mixture of customary, statutory and religious legal systems of ownership, which are further complicated by situations of displacement. Communities that have been driven from their lands find it difficult to formally prove customary ownership of those areas and are consequently unable to receive compensation. Several practical solutions have emerged at the Darfur state level, where local governments have decided to transform some of the internally displaced persons settlements into urban dwellings. On 5 November 2018, the Governor of North Darfur officially launched the transformation of the camps in Abu Shouk, El Salam and Zamzam into fully serviced residential districts. The heads of the three camps have submitted a list of requirements for the implementation of the new housing schemes, including the construction of schools and mosques and the creation of employment opportunities for young people.

2. Climate change and environmental degradation

21. Environmental degradation is among the main drivers of conflict in the Sudan, in particular in Darfur. Scientific evidence shows that the desert spread southwards by approximately 100 km over the past four decades, while the overgrazing of fragile soils accelerated as the livestock population increased fivefold. Furthermore, research indicates an ongoing long-term drying trend, with a decrease in annual median rainfall of 15 to 30 per cent, across the Sahel to the Sudan, similar to the 1970–1990 dry period, which led to drought and desertification and the famine of 1984–85, and which preceded the conflict in Darfur. Chad and the Sudan are among the countries predicted to face significant food supply gaps if the trend continues. Researchers forecast that a new dry period will result in more people losing their livelihoods and migrating to cities or across borders, which, alongside the fragile state of local governance and of traditional conflict resolution and mediation systems, could contribute to a relapse into conflict.

3. Human rights and protection

22. Human rights violations and abuses continue to occur across Darfur, with a significant increase in the number of documented cases, including killings, assault, abduction and conflict-related sexual violence, in the Jebel Marra area during the reporting period. Internally displaced persons, especially women and children, are the most vulnerable to attacks, mainly perpetrated by government and affiliated forces, including the Rapid Support Forces. There is insufficient action to address violations and abuses, in a context where State authorities are absent in several localities and judicial institutions are weak. As a result, internally displaced persons and local populations have expressed a lack of trust in law enforcement bodies. There has been an upward trend in human rights violations in the Nertiti area, where conflict-related sexual violence and sexual and gender-based violence cases are prevalent, and in the Guldo and Golo areas, where the Rapid Support Forces reportedly burned down dozens of villages in 2018, displacing hundreds of civilians to Kass and Nyala. Human rights violations and abuses also persist in some localities with no active military operations, including in areas from which UNAMID has withdrawn, such as Jebel Moon, West Darfur, where an attack by armed militia in January 2019 resulted in the killing and displacement of civilians.

23. Conflict-related sexual violence and sexual and gender-based violence continue to be underreported, owing to fear and restricted access to affected areas. Conflict-related sexual violence, with rape constituting 80 per cent of documented cases, occurred in both urban and rural settings, including around camps for internally displaced persons, water points, villages of return and other remote areas. Members of the security forces, including the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces, were identified as perpetrators in over 30 per cent of sexual violence cases. Impunity remains a serious concern.

24. Notable progress has been achieved in child protection, leading to the delisting of the government security forces from the list of parties to conflict that recruit or use children in situations of armed conflict, with the commitment by the Government to transform the national action plan pertaining to ending and preventing the recruitment and use of children into a national prevention plan. However, the rights, welfare and safety of children remained major concerns, as grave violations against children, mainly perpetrated by government security forces, continued. Killing and maiming of children accounted for the highest number of violations affecting children, which occurred in the context of reported attacks on civilians in Jebel Marra.

D. Advances at risk in the context of the economic crisis

25. The current economic crisis could jeopardize some of the gains in Darfur, with far reaching consequences for the whole of the Sudan, in particular in the aftermath of the events of 11 April. The economic policy adjustments undertaken by the Government to stabilize the economy prior to 11 April led to a sharp drop in the population's purchasing power and were insufficient to establish broad-based growth. The Sudan remains heavily indebted, and its international reserves are limited, while the lifting of the sanctions regime brought little relief to the country. The recent pledge of \$3 billion by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is expected to alleviate the immediate crisis, but the economy is in need of structural adjustments in order to keep up with the demand for livelihood opportunities.

26. This situation is having a particular impact on those who are already living in poverty, with one in four people already living below the extreme poverty line and one in three (36 per cent of the population) living in poverty. The crisis has had a major impact on the humanitarian situation. According to the latest food security analysis, nearly 5.7 million people were estimated to be in crisis or at emergency levels of food insecurity in the period between October and December 2018, up from 3.8 million for the same period the previous year, due to food prices having more than doubled in 2018. Unemployment is estimated at around 22 per cent, with a much higher rate among young people, who constitute about 60 per cent of the total population, significantly affecting the educated and women, who played a leading role in the recent political developments.

III. Progress on implementing the African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué of 11 June 2018 and United Nations Security Council resolution 2429 (2018) and presidential statement of 11 December 2018

A. Strategic issues

1. Political process and impact on the mission mandate

27. The pre-negotiation agreement reached in Berlin on 6 December 2018 was a noteworthy development in the political process and an achievement in the mandate of UNAMID. However, while the effective impact on the Darfur talks has yet to be assessed, the new national political dynamics would likely require a renewed commitment by the Sudanese authorities and armed movements, as well as a coordinated strategy between the African Union, the United Nations and other key stakeholders involved in the mediation, to help to advance the prospects of a lasting peace in Darfur.

2. Two-pronged approach to reconfiguration

28. During the reporting period, the reconfiguration and drawdown of UNAMID took place in line with the recommendations and timelines of set out in the previous report (S/2018/530), African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué of 11 June 2018 (PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXXVIII)) and United Nations Security Council resolution 2429 (2018). The mission has consolidated the two-pronged approach by focusing on peacekeeping in the Jebel Marra area and on peacebuilding and stabilization across Darfur. During the period from March to June 2019, UNAMID will undertake the following: (a) reduce the military strength to 4,050 troops; (b) handover the three sector headquarters of Ed Daein, El Geneina and Nyala; and (c) abolish 799 civilian posts and positions (94 international, 668 national and 37 United Nations volunteer).

3. Assessment of the drawdown and the impact of the closure of team sites and sector headquarters

29. Based on the assessments conducted during the joint visit by UNDP and the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations and the missions of the review team, as well as the one conducted by UNAMID and the United Nations country team, a limited adverse impact has been reported from the drawdown of the mission and the closure of team sites. The local population and internally displaced persons reported that the reduction of UNAMID patrols did not significantly affect their freedom of movement or access to livelihood services. In some areas of East and West Darfur, internally displaced persons reported cases of physical and verbal harassment by nomads. In Labado, in East Darfur, and Greida and Al Salam, in South Darfur, there were reports of villagers being prevented from gaining access their farms by armed nomads. In Mornei, in West Darfur, and Korma and Um Baru, in North Darfur, the local population reported a negative impact on the socioeconomic situation, owing to the mission's withdrawal, in the context of the high levels of poverty in the area.

30. Overall, community leaders reported that the security situation inside the camps for internally displaced persons remained generally stable, however, cases of human rights violations and abuses and minor incidents of threats, theft and looting were still reported. Police posts are established in most of the camps, but the low number of police officers and logistical challenges remain concerns. In some camps, community policing volunteers who were trained by UNAMID discontinued their service owing

to a lack of incentives. Mornei, in West Darfur, and Labado, in East Darfur, are reportedly being used as recruitment and training centres. In Korma, North Darfur, community leaders requested that UNAMID hand over its assets to the local community and expressed their grievances over the lack of services, such as schools and hospitals, in the area.

31. The strategic assessment observed that the majority of the 23 team sites, which were handed over to the Government of the Sudan during the previous phases of the drawdown, are still occupied by the security forces, contrary to the letter of commitment given by the local authorities on the future use of the premises, whereas others have been abandoned and are at risk of becoming unusable if not properly maintained. The Government has reiterated its commitment that the premises are to be exclusively used for civilian purposes and has undertaken to expedite that process. The mission should strengthen the protection of personnel and assets, following the attack and looting of the UNAMID “super camp” in El Geneina on 14 and 15 May, prior to its handover.

32. Many interlocutors noted the need for enhancing rule of law mechanisms. In Labado, East Darfur, the absence of local courts is reportedly encouraging criminality and impunity. In Mornei, West Darfur, community leaders undertook to ensure their own security. In Um Barrou, North Darfur, the population relies on rural courts, while in Al Salam area, in South Darfur, the level of police presence in several villages is low and logistical challenges are hampering their work. UNAMID continues to support the extension of State authority at the local level, including by assisting with the establishment of the rural courts and strengthening the capacities of the police through programmatic funding and the State liaison functions.

4. State liaison functions

33. Considerable progress has been made in implementing the transition through the establishment of the State liaison functions in four Darfur states (East Darfur, West Darfur, North Darfur and South Darfur) in line with the recommendation made in the previous report (S/2018/530), following the conclusion of 10 memorandums of understanding and the transfer of funds to nine United Nations country team entities. Within that framework, 58 UNAMID staff, including police advisors, have co-located with nine United Nations agencies to jointly implement \$15 million of programmatic activities aimed at advancing three transition priorities in order to prevent a relapse into conflict, namely, rule of law (police, justice and corrections), durable solutions for the displaced populations and host communities, and human rights and capacity-building. A UNAMID mobile team is monitoring the human rights situation in the areas covered by the State liaison functions. About 47 per cent of allocated funds have been either disbursed or committed in support of programmatic activities.

34. Within less than a year, the State liaison functions have proven to be promising pilot initiatives on the integration of the United Nations system across Darfur and have enabled the joint planning, programming and implementation of mandated activities between UNAMID and the United Nations country team, in coordination with government counterparts. The co-location of UNAMID staff has enhanced the United Nations country team’s capacity in the four Darfur states. However, the short-term nature of funding and the challenging fundraising context threaten the sustainability of the impact, although linkages between State liaison function activities and existing United Nations agencies projects and programmes have been made to enhance it. Joint UNAMID-United Nations country team activities will serve as a catalyst for further investments in critical conflict prevention and peacebuilding, including continued humanitarian assistance as well as multi-year investments in resilience. Under the joint leadership of the resident coordinator and the Deputy Joint Special Representative a transition cell has been established in Khartoum to facilitate

the establishment of the State liaison functions and programme design and implementation. Programme management and operations aspects are coordinated by mission components in Darfur. However, coordination and communication at the State level and in the United Nations country team in Khartoum must be enhanced. State liaison function teams also reported challenges with implementation linked to cash and fuel shortages caused by the overall economic crisis in the Sudan, which are expected to continue to affect delivery.

5. Progress on the implementation of benchmarks

35. In its presidential statement of 11 December 2018 (S/PRST/2018/19), the Security Council requested a streamlining of the benchmarks and indicators proposed by the Secretary-General (see S/2018/912), while acknowledging that some were more immediate priorities and others reflected longer-term peacebuilding objectives in Darfur. Substantively, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur provisions would serve as a basis for indicators of achievement for the eventual exit of UNAMID (see resolution 2429 (2018)). The assessment team is therefore proposing a streamlined set of benchmarks and indicators of achievement as guidance for the period ahead, to the exit of UNAMID, and to assist the Sudanese authorities in further focusing their joint work with international partners beyond June 2020.

36. As indicated in the progress reports on UNAMID and the review of the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (S/2017/747, annex), the benchmarks related to the implementation of the institutional and legislative framework provided for in the Doha Document have been gradually completed. However, major challenges remain in guaranteeing adequate funding and human resources in order for mechanisms supporting its implementation to be fully functional.

37. The State liaison functions have proven to be an enabling framework for the Government of the Sudan and civil society to focus on priority areas for sustaining peace. In the rule of law area, they contribute to strengthening the criminal justice chain in the return and settlement areas, strengthening the rural courts mandated to adjudicate intercommunal conflicts and providing mediation services, contributing to community stabilization and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and strengthening accountability for conflict-related crimes. In the area of protection and human rights, they present an opportunity to engage with the authorities, the National Human Rights Commission and civil society on developing a stronger civilian protection framework and early warning mechanisms and strengthening national capacity in monitoring and reporting on human rights and transitional justice. Discussions with the Sudanese authorities are ongoing on the opening of a country office of OHCHR. An OHCHR technical assessment team visited the Sudan in early December 2018 and subsequently submitted to the Government of the Sudan a proposal on the establishment of a fully mandated country office. The Sudanese authorities extended an invitation to OHCHR in April, and subsequently in May 2019, to initiate negotiations on the draft host country agreement, but the visit was postponed to a later date in the light of recent events.

38. Addressing the needs of internally displaced persons in a sustainable way remains one of the pertinent challenges to preventing a relapse into conflict in Darfur. In the 2018 United Nations humanitarian needs overview, it was noted that there were 2 million internally displaced persons in the Sudan, including 1.8 million in Darfur, of whom 1.6 million were registered in camps. There are also 300,000 refugees from Darfur in Chad, some of whom are currently returning. Darfur is also offering shelter to some 147,000 South Sudanese refugees, 80 per cent of whom live in out-of-camp settlements among host communities. Darfur state governments have offered internally displaced persons three options to ensure their long-term needs, namely,

integration into host communities, return to their areas of origin or relocation to another area. The implementation of those options at the state level is mixed, with North and South Darfur states being at an advanced stage of implementation. Internally displaced persons face ongoing challenges in terms of security, access to lands of origin and livelihoods and lack of economic opportunities. Tensions exist with host communities in urban areas, where the presence of internally displaced persons has affected the communal makeup of towns and placed a strain on local resources.

B. Operational issues

39. During the reporting period, 11 incidents of shooting, intimidation or threats and physical assault targeting United Nations and humanitarian personnel were recorded, all of them criminal in nature. There were 36 denials of access and restrictions of movement to UNAMID in areas of clashes with armed groups, of which 34 were imposed by the Government and two by SLA/AW. There was significant improvement in the release of shipments and issuance of visas, with only four shipments delayed beyond the normal approval period and 97 per cent of visas approved. On 18 April, the Transitional Military Council reassured United Nations representatives of its support for the implementation of their mandates.

IV. Framing the exit and the whole-of-system approach

40. The strategic assessment team concluded that, while a number of challenges remained in Darfur, there had been no strategic reversal of the positive trajectory with regard to Darfur, since the previous mandate renewal. The recent political developments in Khartoum, however, necessitate a responsible exit strategy for the mission. While the current dynamics do not warrant a change of the exit date, in June 2020, the mission should implement a gradual drawdown. In that regard, activities directly aimed at political support and mediation, conflict prevention, reconciliation and protection must be maintained and scaled up during the transition, with a focus on identified priority areas in Jebel Marra. It is also recommended that a human rights-based approach underpin programmatic activities in the State liaison functions, in particular in the areas of rule of law and protection, including advocacy and capacity-building. An increased focus on community-based support and accompaniment is also recommended, pending the establishment of long-term governance structures on the basis of a national consensus on the way forward, which is the object of the ongoing political negotiations. A review of the situation should be conducted in November 2019 to determine the appropriate course of action regarding the pace of the drawdown of uniformed personnel and reductions in civilian personnel.

41. The team proposes that the mission transition from prevention through peacekeeping to prevention through peacebuilding, given that: (a) with the current peacekeeping footprint, which as at January 2019 covers only a fraction of the Darfur territory, UNAMID would have a minimal impact in addressing security challenges in the region; (b) the Government of the Sudan has continued to extend State authority across Darfur, and its security forces control the territory; (c) the withdrawal of UNAMID in 2017 and 2018 from areas previously under its control has had only a minimal adverse impact; (d) the prospects for a rapid resumption of the political process that could justify retaining a security presence to accompany its security-related outcome in the coming months are uncertain; and (e) the present set of outstanding challenges will require political support, peacebuilding and stabilization efforts. In view of the foregoing, the team concluded that peacekeeping was no longer

the most appropriate instrument in Darfur and that the conditions were met for the drawdown to proceed.

42. The mission's current priorities therefore must be revisited, and its mandate during its final year of operation should focus on political facilitation, civilian protection in the areas of deployment and the State liaison functions, as an innovative integration mechanism of the whole-of-system approach in support of the Sudanese authorities, aimed at playing a catalytic role in building peace. In that regard, the four current transition priorities can serve as anchors to optimize the mandate and reconfigure the mission accordingly. It is recommended that investments be made in the transition and efforts on resource mobilization be intensified.

A. Streamlining benchmarks and adjusting the posture of the mission

43. In view of the progress made in the implementation of the benchmarks and outstanding priorities for sustaining peace in Darfur, the strategic assessment team proposes that the benchmarks be streamlined to serve as long-term progress indicators, beyond the departure of UNAMID, along the following three priority areas:

(a) **The political process:** The review team recommends that the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations develop an updated strategy on the Darfur peace process with the support of Member States, the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, UNAMID and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa. The following benchmarks would take priority:

(i) Peace talks between parties resume with the full support of relevant internal and external stakeholders. In this context, a number of trust-building measures, including the lifting of the state of emergency in Darfur and renewed commitment of the parties to participate in the talks, are necessary;

(ii) The Doha Document for Peace in Darfur commissions and the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund are staffed and operational in all Darfur states. Mechanisms are in place to ensure the accompaniment of the political process, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants and arms control;

(iii) Remaining phases of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultations process are completed and its outcomes, especially those related to the governance system, are reflected in the constitutional process;

(b) **Institution-building:** The political process must be accompanied by efforts to strengthen Sudanese rule of law institutions, which will create the conditions necessary for a functioning administration capable of ensuring public safety services, access to and delivery of justice, access to land and other natural resources and respect for the fundamental rights of the population, in line with the international obligations of the Sudan. The following benchmarks would apply:

(i) Police stations, offices of public prosecutors, courts and prison and detention facilities are established in main areas of return and resettlement of internally displaced persons. Those institutions should be able to perform basic functions;

(ii) The Darfur Land Commission is fully functional, and the rural courts are established and functioning in priority areas of return and resettlement and those affected by intercommunal conflicts;

(iii) Measures are in place to ensure that the Special Prosecutor of the Special Court for Darfur Crimes takes a balanced approach to investigations, including in cases of conflict-related sexual violence;

(iv) The National Human Rights Commission functions in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and its human rights subcommittees are operational in Darfur;

(v) In accordance with the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, the Government will establish unrestricted access for international and national actors providing support and protection to internally displaced persons, refugees and victims of conflict;

(c) **Long-term support to stabilization:** Reliable rule of law and police institutions, creating durable solutions for internally displaced persons, delivering basic services and ensuring a sustainable, rights-based approach for the Darfur population will establish the longer-term conditions necessary for the prevention of a relapse into conflict. These and the following benchmarks constitute long-term objectives for the Government of the Sudan and its national and international partners:

(i) The Sudan Police Force, the Special Court for Darfur Crimes, the Office of the Special Prosecutor and the courts and prison authorities are established and able to execute their functions in accordance with human rights and international standards across Darfur, with special focus on cases of sexual and gender-based violence and child protection;

(ii) Local government institutions and the tribal administration are able to address intercommunal and other local conflicts;

(iii) In line with the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, the Sudanese authorities take the measures necessary to ensure the rights of freedom of expression, of assembly and association, the right to participate in public affairs and the right to form and participate in civil society organizations in Darfur;

(iv) Negotiations with OHCHR are concluded on the establishment of a fully mandated country office in the Sudan.

B. Leveraging the State liaison functions

44. The State liaison function framework has enabled UNAMID, the United Nations country team and the Sudanese authorities to work together towards addressing critical conflict drivers and preventing a relapse into conflict, on the basis of joint analysis and planning. Moving forward, UNAMID should expand the use of the State liaison functions as an entry point for integration and for enhanced ownership of the Sudanese authorities. The recent political developments in the Sudan warrant flexibility, adjustments to programming and closer coordination with local authorities and partners to enhance ownership. The mission and the United Nations country team should strengthen planning, analytical capacity, coordination and communication with regard to the State liaison functions at all levels. It is recommended that the mission-specific programme management and coordination functions are merged with those of the transition cell and that the State liaison functions coordination structure be strengthened at the Darfur level.

45. As part of the next phase of the mission drawdown in the greater Jebel Marra area, the existing State liaison functions in North Darfur and South Darfur should be expanded and additional State liaison functions established in Central Darfur, to also include Golo. All remaining UNAMID programmatic resources should be

reprogrammed to support ongoing peacebuilding activities and the State liaison functions. It is recommended that the administrative and financial arrangements governing the State liaison functions and the related personnel be retained until December 2020.

46. Under the leadership of the Government and with the support of Germany, Italy, Qatar, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the European Union and UNDP, the revitalization of the Darfur Development Strategy commenced in March 2019 and is expected to be finalized later in 2019. The revitalized Strategy will serve as the overall strategy for peace consolidation by addressing conflict drivers, stabilization and longer-term development in Darfur. As such, relevant State liaison functions, the Peacebuilding Fund and other activities must feed into and be aligned with the Strategy, prioritizing peacebuilding, providing fast and catalytic support and creating a bridge with the political objectives of the benchmarks. Recommendations of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultations process should inform both the next phase of the Strategy and ongoing peacebuilding programmes.

C. Balancing peacekeeping and peacebuilding priorities for prevention

47. In the light of the foregoing, the strategic assessment team concluded that the present conditions across Darfur and the outstanding challenges towards a lasting peace are no longer of a peacekeeping nature and therefore proposed that the strategic focus and mandate of UNAMID shift to political and peacebuilding support, in line with the recommendations contained in the previous report (S/2018/530). This requires an adjustment of the mission's posture, footprint and operational capabilities and warrants a gradual and responsible drawdown of peacekeeping personnel and an exit by June 2020.

Drawdown options

48. Three options are proposed for the Security Council's consideration. Two options consist of two phases, using the same time frames but different paces of drawdown, namely, 1 July to 31 December 2019 and 1 January to 30 June 2020. One option has three phases, namely, 1 July to 31 December 2019, 1 January to 31 March 2020 and 1 April to 30 June 2020. In support of efforts to reach a political settlement, a module composed of military observers, individual police officers and civilian staff will interact with parties on the ground. In addition, a reserve capacity of up to one battalion is maintained to intervene in extremis situations, such as when the physical protection of civilians is required, notwithstanding access request, and Sudanese security forces are not able to act. The three options are as follows:

(a) Option one takes into account the conflict trends of the past year and the areas affected by the events since 11 April 2019, which are proposed for closure during phase two. The mission will maintain a reserve of a minimum of two companies to intervene in extremis in locations from which UNAMID will withdraw during phase one. The following eight team sites will be closed in phase one: Kabkabiya, Sortony, Kutum, Tawilla, Shangil Tobay, Menawashi, Khor Abeche and Saraf Umra. At least 1,759 military personnel, 287 individual police officers and 4 formed police units will be repatriated. The closure of the remaining five team sites (Zalingei, Golo, Kass, Nertiti and Kalma), including the repatriation of the rest of the uniformed personnel and contingent-owned equipment will take place during phase two;

(b) Option two follows the same rationale as option one, while adopting a more gradual drawdown. During phase one, the following eight team sites will be closed: Kabkabiya, Sortony, Kutum, Tawilla, Shangil Tobay, Menawashi, Khor

Abeche and Saraf Umra. At least 1,719 military personnel, 330 individual police officers and 4 formed police units will be repatriated. In phase two, the mission will close Kass and Kalma, with at least 1,009 military personnel, 90 individual police officers and 2 formed police units repatriated. The closure of the remaining three team sites (Zalingei, Golo and Nertiti), including the repatriation of the rest of the uniformed personnel and contingent-owned equipment, will take place during phase three. The mission will maintain an average reserve capacity of two companies to intervene in extremis in locations from which UNAMID will withdraw during phases one and two;

(c) Option three takes into account the conflict trends of the past year and follows a geographical rationale. In addition, it puts the onus on the Sudanese authorities to deliver security in some sensitive areas, while also giving the mission sufficient time to monitor and intervene with adequate resources in case of escalation. The mission will maintain one battalion in reserve to intervene in extremis in locations from which UNAMID will withdraw during phase one. During phase one, the following 10 team sites will be closed: Kabkabiya, Sortony, Kutum, Saraf Umra, Tawilla, Shangil Tobay, Menawashi, Khor Abeche, Kass and Kalma. At least 1,759 military personnel, 420 individual police officers and 7 formed police units will be repatriated. The closure of the remaining three team sites (Golo, Nertiti and Zalingei), including the repatriation of the rest of the uniformed personnel and contingent-owned equipment will take place during phase two.

49. UNAMID will gradually drawdown uniformed capacity, and the focus will be on a controlled and coordinated exit from Darfur. The strategic assessment team considers that the closures of team sites and repatriations in June 2020 could be affected by the rainy season and would lead to the liquidation period being extended beyond the end of 2020.

50. The safety and security of the logistics hub in El Fasher should be appropriately arranged owing to its vital role in the mission's exit and liquidation. In view of this, the option of using uniformed personnel as a guard force for protection purposes, as authorized by the Security Council, should be considered for use in the final liquidation of UNAMID. In addition, the Sudanese authorities must assist, including in ensuring security escorts from team sites to El Fasher and for shipments to Port Sudan.

51. We propose the following benchmarks to monitor the progress, cooperation and support during the closure of team sites and the liquidation phase from the Sudanese authorities, who must: (a) expedite the handover of the team sites to their civilian end users, before the condition of these facilities is deteriorated by the elements. The future handover of sector headquarters and team sites should contain a time-bound clause for handover to end users; (b) expedite the issuance of visas for members of the liquidation team and export permits for all contingent-owned equipment and United Nations-owned equipment; and (c) provide security for all mission personnel, equipment and installations. On 13 May 2019, the Transitional Military Council issued decree 102 of 2019 requesting the handover of UNAMID camps to the Rapid Support Forces.

D. Enablers of the transition to peacebuilding

1. Ownership by the Government of the Sudan: joint planning, coordination and monitoring structures

52. The support of the Sudanese authorities will continue to be crucial to facilitating smooth drawdown and liquidation processes and to ensuring the timely repatriation of mission personnel and contingent-owned equipment and the transfer and disposal

of the mission's assets. Their cooperation will also be required in the expedited issuance of visas for members of the additional teams providing assistance with the drawdown and liquidation and export permits for all assets, as well as for the protection of the liquidation team and assets following a complete repatriation of UNAMID contingents and formed police units. To ensure better coordination with government officials at all levels, UNAMID should revive the existing Tripartite Coordination Mechanism at both the strategic (every 6 to 8 weeks) and working (on a monthly basis) levels. A similar consultative mechanism at the regional and state levels should also be established to facilitate liaison with Government authorities, with adequate escalation mechanisms.

2. Strengthening mission leadership and coordination with the United Nations country team

53. In support of the sustained drawdown and liquidation activities, there is a need to ensure adequate leadership, integration and coordination. The mission's substantive planning and coordination capacity is being enhanced to oversee its exit and the transition, including through the deployment of a dedicated surge capacity team to support the mission and the United Nations country team. Furthermore, the mission support component should establish an independent, standalone liquidation planning cell, within existing resources, with a focus on coordinating and directing liquidation activities. The activities must be supported by a strong communications strategy.

3. Funding: programmatic, Peacebuilding Fund and larger resource mobilization

54. Ensuring a smooth transition and avoiding a relapse into conflict by addressing the structural drivers of violent conflict in Darfur will require significant resources over the coming decades. To that end, the Peacebuilding Fund can play an important role in providing timely, catalytic and risk-tolerant support, alongside and in complement to existing and envisaged programmatic funding for Darfur, including through supporting engagement efforts of the State liaison functions and the transition priorities identified in the revised Darfur Development Strategy.

55. Should the Sudan be declared eligible for support from the Peacebuilding Fund, its use is envisaged in the following areas: (a) rule of law, with a particular focus on improving access to local justice institutions and enhancing the effectiveness of rural courts; (b) durable solutions, with a particular focus on supporting displaced populations and returnees with land rights, livelihood opportunities and access to justice and law enforcement services; and (c) peacebuilding for human security, with a focus on strengthening the capacities of local government and national institutions to promote peacebuilding and effectively address intercommunal disputes. In the first phase of support, locally based peacebuilding programmes would be developed in a locality in each Darfur state on the basis of an analysis of local conflict drivers and in coordination with and support of local administration. The programmes would also engage with existing State liaison functions and contribute to implementing the revised Darfur Development Strategy and priorities identified during the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultations process. Subsequent phases would seek to mobilize considerable additional resources towards the implementation of the revised Strategy.

4. Human rights configuration and mechanisms

56. In the period ahead, it will be essential to support the Government's efforts to meet its obligation of ensuring continuous protection of civilians. The remaining year of the operation of UNAMID presents an important opportunity to engage with the authorities and civil society on building a stronger civilian protection network and

early warning mechanisms and strengthening national capacity for monitoring and reporting with regard to human rights violations and addressing challenges, including through the implementation of the recommendations made in the context of the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council. The mission will also continue to monitor the human rights situation in the areas of both team sites and the areas covered by the State liaison functions, with a view to informing peacebuilding efforts and protection mechanisms within the United Nations country team and contributing to the United Nations protection strategy for Darfur subsequent to the withdrawal of UNAMID. As part of prevention efforts, the human rights component will work closely with police and rule of law components of the State liaison functions to maintain human rights awareness in the trainings for national police, the judiciary and security forces. Any potential support provided to non-United Nations security forces directly or indirectly will continue to be assessed in line with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

5. Security posture

57. With the drawdown of mission uniformed personnel and the noticeable reduction of the mission footprint by 31 December 2019, all plans and practical arrangements should be in place, at the latest by 31 March 2020, to facilitate the gradual and seamless transfer of designated official functions in Darfur to the resident coordinator.

V. Financial aspects

58. In its resolution [73/278](#) of 22 December 2018, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of \$715.5 million for the maintenance of UNAMID for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, inclusive of the amount of \$385.7 million previously authorized for the mission for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2018 under the terms of its resolution [72/259 B](#). As at 13 May 2019, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNAMID amounted to \$160.8 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to \$1,989.1 million. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 January 2019, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 December 2018, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VI. Observations and recommendations

59. Over a decade ago, the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council were seized of the proposal ([S/2007/307/Rev.1](#)) of 5 June 2007 on the mandate and structure of the first ever African Union-United Nations hybrid peacekeeping mission, UNAMID. While several conflict drivers and grievances have yet to be addressed, the gradual improvements in the overall security context in Darfur, and other major developments in the Sudan and the wider region, are compelling UNAMID to adjust to new realities and proceed with its reconfiguration and consider modalities for its exit by the end of 2020, as recommended by the Security Council in its resolution [2429 \(2018\)](#). At its inception, UNAMID had an expansive mandate and was the largest peace operation; it has since shifted to its current configuration, centred around the greater Jebel Marra area. Over the years, the mission has made major contributions to supporting the peace process, including implementation of the Abuja Agreement and the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, and local mediation to address intercommunal conflicts, protecting

civilians in need and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance across Darfur.

60. However, the overall situation remains challenged by the fact that, despite the signing of the pre-negotiation agreement between the Government of the Sudan and Darfur groups still active in the region and unilateral ceasefires extended by the parties, a conclusive cessation of hostilities remains to be finalized. There will be no lasting peace in Darfur without a comprehensive political solution. The events of 11 April and subsequent developments in Khartoum, including the agreement on the transitional arrangements that sets the ambitious goal of signing a peace agreement to end the conflicts in the Sudan during the first six months of the transition period, could provide such an opportunity. We encourage Sudanese stakeholders to abide by those commitments and timelines and strongly believe that those events mark an opening for the Sudan and its people, including across Darfur, to address longstanding grievances. The African Union and the United Nations stand ready to enhance their support to the Government and people of the Sudan at this critical juncture, to ensure that the transition proceeds through constructive dialogue in an orderly and inclusive fashion and that it leads to political reforms and sustainable economic recovery to the benefit of all Sudanese people.

61. The regional environment remains fluid, in particular as armed groups in Darfur continue to take active part in other conflicts in the region. As UNAMID enters its final year of operation, it is therefore imperative that regional actors remain engaged in support of the Darfur peace process and the long-term stability of the Sudan, including by impressing upon all national stakeholders to join the peace process, by avoiding the proliferation of initiatives and by deterring spoilers. For our part, we intend to develop and present to Member States in the next progress report a joint African Union-United Nations strategy that will help to pave the way for a responsible exit of the hybrid peacekeeping mission, identify those conflict drivers that would require continued attention by the Government and people of the Sudan and their regional and international partners and propose a follow-on mechanism to address long-term political challenges and grievances in Darfur.

62. While the path to long-term stability in Darfur remains fraught with challenges, including the continued presence of 1.8 million internally displaced persons, the moderate impact of the recent developments in the Sudan on the political and security situation in Darfur are an indication of the improved context, compared with that of a decade ago, and an indication that the trajectory of the region remains immune to major strategic reversals and therefore conducive to the pursuit of the drawdown of UNAMID, its subsequent exit and its liquidation by the end of 2020. However, the next phases of the drawdown must take into account possible hotspots and outstanding conflict drivers. Accordingly, we recommend that, of the three options presented for the Security Council's consideration, due attention be given to option one, given that it provides for a phased approach that would retain operational capabilities in the Jebel Marra area and other locations affected by the recent events until the end of the mission's substantive mandate in June 2020. Furthermore, we appeal to the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council to give due consideration to the proposed retention of reserve force capabilities until the closure of the mission, to intervene in extremis for the protection of civilians in the areas of operation of UNAMID.

63. Moving forward, in a responsible exit strategy for UNAMID, due consideration will be given to the need for government institutions and their counterparts in the United Nations country team to be properly equipped for sustaining the gains made over the past decade in the areas of protection, rule of law, human rights and durable solutions for internally displaced persons and local communities across Darfur. Important steps are under way in Darfur for sustaining the gains made by UNAMID,

and we welcome the positive experience of the State liaison functions. We recommend further investment in the transition and expansion of the State liaison functions in Jebel Marra as an entry point for integration and for enhanced ownership by the Government and people of the Sudan and the intensification of efforts on resource mobilization to scale up the capacities of the United Nations country team. It is our collective responsibility to meaningfully support the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur through the mobilization of international support, primarily from international financial institutions. As emphasized by the recent events in the Sudan, in the past three decades, the resilience of its social fabric and its economy have been significantly tested, and any prospects of durable peace and successful political transition in the country must be underpinned by immediate attention to the country's urgent needs in terms of economic recovery. Above all, it is imperative that the Sudanese authorities ensure that the benchmarks for the drawdown of UNAMID are met, including the augmentation of the United Nations human rights support capacity in the Sudan.

64. In conclusion, we would like to express our gratitude to the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Jeremiah Mamabolo, the mission leadership and all the personnel of UNAMID, the United Nations country team and humanitarian partners, who continue to work collaboratively on the transition towards the exit of the mission from Darfur. We also wish to commend the African Union High-level Implementation Panel led by former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, for its steadfast commitment to sustainable peace and stability in the Sudan.
