



Security Council

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Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [2736 \(2024\)](#), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan, in consultation with the Sudanese authorities and regional stakeholders, and building on existing mediation and good offices mechanisms.

2. After more than 18 months of relentless fighting, the conflict in the Sudan shows no sign of waning. The fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, and allied armed groups, has devastated the lives and livelihoods of the Sudanese people, resulting in world's largest displacement crisis, the wholesale destruction of homes and other civilian infrastructure and risks regional spillover. Security and living conditions for people in most parts of the country are extremely dire and continue to deteriorate. An immediate cessation of hostilities would provide the most direct means of improving the protection of civilians in the Sudan. A renewed and coordinated diplomatic push is urgently needed to bring about a negotiated solution to end this horrendous conflict and restore peace and stability in the Sudan.

3. Pursuant to resolution [2736 \(2024\)](#), the United Nations undertook consultations, in-person and virtually, with the Sudanese authorities and regional stakeholders. Consultations were also held with all Security Council members, Member States from the region and beyond, as well as with the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the League of Arab States (LAS). In addition, discussions were held with civil society representatives both within and outside of the Sudan, including women leaders, and international and national non-governmental organizations. Consultations were also conducted within the United Nations system at the Headquarters and field levels. This broad set of consultations served to obtain different perspectives on protection challenges in the current context and to solicit views on recommendations for enhancing the protection of civilians.

II. Context

A. Conduct of hostilities and its impact on civilians

4. The intense fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces persists unabated, now extending across most of the country. The Secretary-



General has repeatedly expressed his concern regarding the spillover of the war into neighbouring countries, risking further destabilization across an already volatile region, causing additional refugee flows and further fuelling a regional war economy. Gross human rights violations and abuses and serious violations of international humanitarian law by all parties are widely reported. Actions by all parties in violation of their legal obligations may amount to war crimes and other atrocity crimes.

5. The impact of this relentless fighting and the parties' failure to uphold their obligations under international law have been devastating. The Sudan now constitutes the world's largest displacement crisis. More than 11 million people have fled their homes since April of 2023. Of the 2.9 million people who have sought safety in neighbouring countries, approximately 51 per cent are female and 52 per cent are children under the age of 18. Of the 8.1 million people reported to have been internally displaced during that period, approximately 54 per cent are female and 53 per cent are children. Many of the displaced have been uprooted multiple times, including more than 1 million people who were already in situations of displacement prior to the current crisis. Indiscriminate aerial bombing by the Sudanese Armed Forces and indiscriminate artillery shelling by the Rapid Support Forces and their allies in particular have caused civilian deaths and injuries, as well as widespread damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure, including in urban areas. The extensive use of explosive weapons reported across the country has left a deadly legacy of widespread explosive hazard contamination.

6. Widespread and systematic conflict-related sexual violence used as a tactic of war is grim hallmark of the current conflict. During her mission to Chad in July, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict heard harrowing accounts of rape and other forms of sexual violence involving multiple perpetrators; the use of sexual violence against women and girls that was ethnically motivated; instances of rape in front of family members; trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation of women and girls; and abductions of women to extort ransom payments from their family members.¹ The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has stressed that such heinous acts, reportedly predominantly perpetrated by the Rapid Support Forces and its allied militias, may amount to war crimes and other atrocity crimes.² Incidents of conflict-related sexual violence, as well as other forms of gender-based violence such as forced marriage, are severely underreported and access to life-saving medical and psychosocial services, logistical support and legal assistance for survivors remains challenging. Service providers are increasingly being targeted and attacked for speaking out or providing assistance to survivors.

7. Children have also been gravely affected. Over 1,500 grave violations against children were verified between January and September 2024, while the incidents remain equally underreported. There are indications that the total number of children affected by grave violations in 2024 will be even higher than in 2023 if the current conflict dynamics continue. The killing and maiming of children remains the most prevalent verified violation, followed by sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals, the denial of humanitarian access, the recruitment and use of children and abduction. Most violations, which are attributable to both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, continue to occur during clashes and crossfire between, on the one side, the Rapid Support Forces and militias aligned with them, and, on the

¹ A war waged on the bodies of women and girls: following visit to Chad, UN Special Representative, Ms. Pramila Patten, calls for the immediate cessation of sexual violence by parties to the conflict in Sudan and urges for funding to support survivors, New York, 24 July 2024.

² UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, statement to the 55th Session of the Human Rights Council – Enhanced Interactive dialogue on Sudan, 1 March 2024.

other side, the Sudanese Armed Forces and armed movements aligned with them. Violations are also directly attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. The Darfur region continues to be the most affected region as far as grave violations are concerned.

8. Meanwhile, the parties are continuing to pursue military gains. Intense clashes between the warring parties continue in Khartoum, Omdurman and Bahri, with the main battles taking place around key strategic installations, but with widespread reports of civilian impacts. In September 2024, the Sudanese Armed Forces launched a major offensive aiming to recapture the capital from the control of the Rapid Support Forces. As a result of the clashes, there have been a growing number of civilian casualties and displaced persons, and extensive damage to essential infrastructure in greater Khartoum. The parties have shown little to no regard for civilian lives and property in their attempt to control the capital.

9. The situation is also increasingly alarming in the city of El Fasher and surrounding areas in North Darfur State, which have remained under siege by the Rapid Support Forces since May 2024. The Rapid Support Forces has besieged and bombed critical civilian infrastructure, including homes, schools, water points, markets and the only functioning hospital, affecting the fundamental human rights of the population and making life in El Fasher extremely perilous. Over 900,000 people are trapped in the city, living under dire conditions, while movement out of the city poses even greater risks for those fleeing. Since August, the Rapid Support Forces have launched a number of major assaults in the broader El Fasher area, which intensified in September, while the Sudanese Armed Forces launched indiscriminate aerial attacks. These have led to hundreds of civilian casualties and mass displacement. The internally displaced persons camps in the vicinity of El Fasher are at particular risk. A continued escalation of fighting could unleash large-scale intercommunal violence across Darfur. In other parts of Darfur, including Nyala, South Darfur, El Genina, West Darfur, and El Dien, East Darfur, the Sudanese Armed Forces have conducted airstrikes over the past few months that have reportedly resulted in civilian casualties.

10. There has been an alarming intensification of intercommunal and identity-based violence, fuelled by an increase in hate speech and campaigns to incite violence. In different parts of Darfur, especially in West Darfur, fighting has been characterized by reports of ethnically motivated attacks against civilians. These include summary executions, sexual violence and forced displacement perpetrated predominately by the Rapid Support Forces and allied Arab militia, notably targeting specific ethnic communities. The Sudanese Armed Forces and affiliated intelligence entities are also reportedly responsible for arbitrary detentions, torture and extrajudicial killings based on perceived ethnic or community origin. The clashes in and around El Fasher since May have also raised concerns about similar dynamics. Ethnically motivated attacks are linked to intercommunal tensions that have been aggravated by the lack of accountability for the crimes perpetrated in the past and exacerbated by the conflict between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces. The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide has on multiple occasions warned of a growing risk of genocide and other atrocity crimes in the Sudan.

11. It is also of serious concern that, between June and August 2024, the fighting has spread and intensified in other regions of the Sudan. In Gezira State, over 100 civilians were reportedly killed in an attack by the Rapid Support Forces on Wad Al-Noura village in June, and clashes between the warring parties also spread eastward. Throughout June and July, the Rapid Support Forces clashed with the Sudanese Armed Forces and its allies in Sennar. In early August, the Rapid Support Forces began to expand its military attacks to Blue Nile State. On 11 August, the

Rapid Support Forces allegedly retaliated against civilians in Galagni who had stood against their troops entering the village in an attempt to abduct women and girls, causing a significant number of civilian casualties. South Kordofan State has seen an increase in violence since June, exacerbated by complex conflict dynamics involving the Sudanese Armed Forces, Rapid Support Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North al-Hilu faction. In North Kordofan State, the Rapid Support Forces and Sudanese Armed Forces have clashed repeatedly, particularly in and around the State's capital, El Obeid.

12. Seasonal rains paused or limited fighting in several areas of the country during July and August. However, both parties used the period of reduced fighting to recruit fighters and acquire new weapons, reinforce frontlines and train new troops. Consequently, the conflict risks dramatically escalating at the onset of the dry season. The longer this conflict persists, the greater the threat of the fragmentation of the Sudan, with devastating and unpredictable consequences for its people and the wider region, where many countries already grapple with fragility and internal crises.

13. Across the different areas of conflict, both parties continue their indiscriminate attacks in residential neighbourhoods and sites sheltering internally displaced people. They are deploying military equipment and taking positions in or close to residential areas. They are using explosive weapons with wide-area effects and are taking over civilian buildings to use for military purposes, including hospitals and many private residences. There have also been reports of the parties torturing and killing persons hors de combat. This raises grave concern about possible widespread violations of the obligations of the parties under international humanitarian law, including the rules of distinction, proportionality and precautions in the conduct of hostilities, as well as the obligation of humane treatment.

14. There has been a serious increase in the reported number of human rights violations and abuses, both in areas the Sudanese Armed Forces claims to be under its control and in the areas the Rapid Support Forces claims are under its control, despite pledges by both parties to protect civilians. These include summary executions, abductions and enforced disappearances and arbitrary and incommunicado detentions of civilians by both parties, subjecting many to torture, sexual violence and other violations and abuses. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has stressed his concern about the fate of thousands of civilians held in arbitrary detention by both parties and their affiliates since the start of the conflict and the hundreds who have been forcibly disappeared. They include political activists, human rights defenders, members of resistance committees, alleged supporters of one of the fighting parties, and many others. Many have been allegedly tortured, and many have died from their wounds. Individuals are often detained on the basis of their community or family or origin links, perceived political affiliations or opposition to the war, among other reasons. Of particular concern is the pattern of targeted arrest, detention and torture of resistance committee members, human rights defenders, activists, journalists and members of emergency response rooms.

15. The interruption of telecommunications, notably the widespread Internet blackout, has seriously restricted the availability of information critical for people to gain access to emergency and essential services and to take measures for their own protection. Both parties are also responsible for using emergency orders to restrict civic space, in particular the freedom of expression and association. This has a severe impact on civilians, including curbing their civic engagement.

16. The conflict is also having a devastating impact on economic and social rights, in particular the rights to food, health, housing and education. As of June 2024, an estimated 14 million children were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection,

lacking access to food, water, shelter, electricity and healthcare. In addition, around 19 million children in the Sudan were out of school, leaving them increasingly vulnerable to recruitment and use by armed actors. This will have a long-term impact. The decision by the warring parties to continue fighting is placing the children and young people of the Sudan at risk of becoming a lost generation.

17. The actions of the parties have triggered a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented scale in the history of the Sudan, with profound and enduring consequences for the country. The destruction of agricultural systems and food supply chains and the curtailment of humanitarian access have created the world's largest hunger crisis, with half of the country's population – close to 26 million people – acutely food insecure as of September 2024. That figure includes 755,000 people estimated to be in situations of catastrophic food insecurity, as defined by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) – comparable to famine conditions (i.e. IPC Phase 5). Just under five million children under the age of five, as well as pregnant and nursing women, are acutely malnourished. In August, the IPC Famine Review Committee confirmed that famine conditions were present in the Zamzam displacement camp in North Darfur, estimated to be hosting roughly 500,000 people fleeing repeated violence. The Committee warned that similar conditions were likely present in two other displacement sites in the area, with a total of 14 localities across the country at immediate risk of famine.

18. The recent wave of clashes, including the takeover by the Rapid Support Forces of much of Sennar State in early July 2024, has not only triggered new displacement, further straining already overcrowded reception sites in eastern Sudan, but has also further damaged food production capacities. This will likely accelerate the deterioration of the food security situation in other parts of the country.

19. Basic services have effectively collapsed across most of the country. Humanitarian organizations estimate that less than 25 per cent of health facilities are functioning in the worst-affected areas. Combined with the rainy season that peaked last month, this has contributed to deadly outbreaks of cholera, dengue fever and malaria. Severe flooding across much of the country has compounded civilian suffering and further complicated response efforts.

20. Humanitarian access challenges continue to severely constrain the ability of humanitarian organizations to scale up the response across a vast area. The decision of the Sudanese authorities to reopen temporarily the Adre border crossing between Chad and Darfur allowed life-saving aid to reach areas of acute need that are not accessible via other routes. However, the volume of aid crossing the border remains a fraction of what is urgently needed.

21. Humanitarian access via key crossline routes also remains heavily constrained despite repeated commitments to facilitate aid operations, limiting the ability of humanitarian organizations to reach areas of acute needs across the country. Movements along key routes have been blocked or complicated due to insecurity and active conflict, as well as severe flooding over recent months. For the routes that have now been declared open, movements have continued to be delayed by administrative and bureaucratic restrictions imposed by the parties. Allowing the resumption of domestic humanitarian air services to transport personnel and small items is critical.

22. More broadly, repeated commitments to facilitate humanitarian operations are not translating into the step change in the quality of humanitarian access on the ground that is required to match needs.

B. Political context and efforts to promote peace and the protection of civilians

23. The warring parties in the Sudan have not engaged in face-to-face dialogue since the last round of the Jeddah Declaration talks, and have continued to issue public statements indicating their intention to seek a military victory. Nevertheless, regional and international partners and Member States have intensified their efforts in recent months to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict.

24. Since assuming his position in November 2023, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, has used his good offices with the parties and neighbouring states to complement and coordinate regional peace efforts. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution [2736 \(2024\)](#), from 11 to 19 July 2024, the Personal Envoy convened proximity talks in Geneva between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. The proceedings focused on measures to ensure the safe and unfettered distribution of humanitarian assistance and on options to ensure the protection of civilians across the Sudan. During the proximity talks, the delegation nominated by General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan stressed the need to implement the commitments contained in the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan, signed by the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in May 2023, as a precursor for any further engagement on protection of civilians.

25. Following the conclusion of the talks, in a letter dated 19 July 2024 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Rapid Support Forces outlined its unilateral commitments on the protection of civilians and humanitarian access in its areas of control. The Sudanese Armed Forces released a statement reaffirming a commitment to continue positively engaging with the United Nations to alleviate the humanitarian suffering.

26. Building on this engagement, the United States of America, alongside Saudi Arabia and Switzerland, convened an initiative in Switzerland from 14 to 23 August, with Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the United Nations and the African Union attending as observers. While the Sudanese Armed Forces did not send a delegation to Switzerland, the Rapid Support Forces sent representatives. During the process, the Sudanese authorities in Port Sudan announced the reopening and expansion of critical humanitarian access routes and provided commitments to improve the protection of civilians. The co-convenors and observers – now collaborating under the parameters of the Aligned for Advancing Lifesaving and Peace in Sudan Group – also presented a proposal to both parties for a mechanism to pursue the compliance and implementation of their commitments in the Jeddah Declaration and international humanitarian and human rights law to form the basis of further discussions and agreement between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces.

27. Despite this recent engagement on critical protection issues, the parties have largely failed to implement their commitments in the Jeddah Declaration concerning the protection of civilians. The unilateral commitments outlined by the Rapid Support Forces at the conclusion of the proximity talks in Geneva have also not translated into sufficient improvements on the ground. The allegations and counter-allegations by the parties with respect to the lack of implementation of the commitments in the Jeddah Declaration have now themselves become a contentious issue and an obstacle to negotiations between the parties, further delaying any real action to protect civilians.

28. Regional engagement remains critical in advancing peace efforts. On 21 June 2024, the African Union Peace and Security Council established an ad hoc presidential committee comprising one Head of State and Government from each

region of Africa to facilitate face-to-face engagements between the leaders of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. It also requested that the African Union Commission, in coordination with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, investigate and make recommendations on practical measures to be undertaken for the protection of civilians in the Sudan. The African Union, together with IGAD, also continues to lead efforts to convene Sudanese civilians in preparation for an inter-Sudanese political dialogue.

29. International actors, including the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, continue their concerted efforts to enhance the coordination of mediation efforts. On 12 June 2024, a consultative meeting on enhancing coordination of peace initiatives and efforts for the Sudan was convened by LAS in Cairo and attended by multilateral organizations and Member States leading on mediation initiatives. A second consultative meeting to continue coordination efforts was held in Djibouti on 24 July, and further iterations are planned in October and November, under the auspices, respectively, of Mauritania, which currently holds the Presidency of the African Union, and the European Union. As initiated by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General during the high-level ministerial meeting for advancing the Sudan peace initiatives in Paris on 15 April 2024, sustained consultations led to the holding on 25 and 26 July of a mediators' planning retreat, hosted by Djibouti and co-organized by the African Union, the European Union, LAS, IGAD and the United Nations, to enhance the coordination of international peacemaking efforts by affirming principles of cooperation and encouraging interactions between them.

III. Duties of the parties to ensure the protection of civilians in the Sudan

30. The primary responsibility to protect civilians lies first and foremost with the Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese Armed Forces, as well as the Rapid Support Forces and other parties to the conflict in the Sudan that act as affiliates of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces or may act independently. It is therefore essential that they respect their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in addition to their own repeated commitments to this effect, including the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan and other relevant instruments.

31. The warring parties are responsible for ensuring that all forces under their command and/or control fulfil their obligations under international law. All parties must have clear command orders and codes of conduct to ensure that international humanitarian law and human rights are upheld by all forces under their command and/or control. The United Nations stands ready to encourage training and capacity-building seeking to reinforce the warring parties' respect for international humanitarian law and human rights, including the development of regulations and other operational documents.

32. In the conduct of hostilities, the warring parties are bound by the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions. Indiscriminate aerial bombardments, artillery or mortar shelling must stop immediately. The use of explosive weapons, including those delivered through uncrewed aerial vehicle systems (drones) with wide-area effects in populated areas should also be avoided. Civilian objects, such as hospitals, schools, markets, water facilities, food stores and agricultural land, must be protected. Public institutions and private properties that have been occupied for military purposes must be vacated. Furthermore, civilians wishing to flee areas of hostilities must be allowed safe passage, and those who remain must still be protected.

33. The parties must also treat all persons under their control humanely. In particular, the warring parties must take immediate measures to halt any conflict-related sexual violence, prevent future occurrence of conflict-related sexual violence and provide survivors with the necessary protection, services and access to justice.

34. Violations against children in the Sudan must stop, and immediate steps must be taken to release without preconditions any children associated with the parties to the conflict and hand them over to civilian protection actors. Furthermore, the arrest and detention of children without due process is illegal and in violation of international humanitarian and human rights law. Children should be treated primarily as victims, with detention used only as a measure of last resort and for the minimum necessary period. Alternatives to detention should be prioritized.

35. Famine conditions cannot be tolerated. Food and other life-saving humanitarian assistance needs to reach those in need, including in the Zamzam camp and other displacement sites in North Darfur in which famine conditions have been identified, and in all other areas at risk of famine or extreme hunger. The use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited and attacks on vital goods, infrastructure and services necessary for food systems and food production must stop and be prevented as a matter of urgency. The parties must protect objects necessary for the production and distribution of food, as well as farmers and herders and crop-protection committees. The recommendations outlined in March 2024 in a briefing to the Security Council pursuant to Security Council resolution [2417 \(2018\)](#), given by the Director for Operations and Advocacy of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, remain relevant.

36. Humanitarian access remains an urgent priority to deliver critical aid to all those in need and to ease the suffering of the Sudanese people. The warring parties must ensure rapid, safe, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access through all necessary cross-border and crossline routes, to enable local and international humanitarian organizations to reach people in need effectively across the country. Procedures for the crossline and cross-border passage of humanitarian relief must be simplified and expedited. This includes streamlined approvals for the deployment of communications and other equipment necessary to ensure safe and efficient humanitarian operations. The freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel around the country and the re-establishment of humanitarian presence in key field locations must be ensured. Simplified procedures must also be put in place to enable rapid safety assessments and facilitate approvals to allow for the resumption of humanitarian air services, to transport both personnel and relief items as needed. The Sudanese authorities should keep the Adré crossing open for humanitarian supplies and personnel and facilitate the use of other cross-border routes for humanitarian purposes as needed.

37. It is imperative that humanitarian personnel and assets be protected. Accountability must be enforced whenever humanitarian workers, including local responders, are targeted or deliberately impeded in a manner that leaves civilians without the essentials to survive.

38. In areas of fighting, the parties should agree to humanitarian pauses and commit to their unconditional implementation. These pauses must allow the safe passage of civilians and facilitate the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, on the basis of need and without discrimination. The United Nations is ready to support negotiations to reach such agreements.

39. The warring parties must take concrete steps to ensure that perpetrators of serious violations and abuses of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law, including sexual violence, are held accountable. They should also

share details of their internal accountability mechanisms and actions taken to enforce command orders.

IV. Recommendations for the protection of civilians in the Sudan

A. Intensifying diplomacy towards ending the fighting

40. The most effective way of ensuring the comprehensive and sustained protection of civilians in the Sudan is for this devastating conflict to end and for the parties to heed the Security Council's call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, leading to a sustainable resolution of the conflict through dialogue. There is no military solution to this conflict. The United Nations remains steadfast in its commitment to support this effort. Ultimately, the decision to end this senseless bloodshed rests with the warring parties. I call upon General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo and all other actors to act responsibly and to engage in genuine dialogue to end the conflict.

41. A renewed diplomatic push is urgently needed to ensure the parties uphold their legal obligations and to bring the parties back to the negotiating table to agree on a comprehensive nationwide ceasefire and concurrently create the conditions for a genuine inclusive peace process. I call upon all Member States and regional organizations to redouble their efforts towards our common goal of silencing the guns once and for all in the Sudan. The Security Council has a particular responsibility in this regard, not least by acting with common cause and urgency. I also welcome the ongoing efforts of the African Union and the Peace and Security Council. The development of flexible contributions to peacemaking, in particular through the personal involvements of some Heads of State, should also be pursued and articulated to enhance diplomatic leverage and ensure concrete and sustained progress in the efforts to resolve the conflict. My Personal Envoy will step up his good offices to that end. I strongly encourage such a surge in diplomacy with mutually reinforcing and well-coordinated actions.

42. Until a nationwide ceasefire is secured, I call upon the warring parties and relevant stakeholders to engage in efforts to ensure scalable, locally negotiated ceasefires and other de-escalation or violence-reduction measures to protect civilians and prevent the further spread of conflict. Such arrangements can help build confidence between the parties, laying the groundwork for a broader ceasefire agreement. Such arrangements had met some success earlier in the conflict but have come under enormous strain, with local responders and peacebuilders now subject to intimidation and local systems depleted and overwhelmed. The United Nations remains available to facilitate and support these initiatives, building on existing mediation and good offices mechanisms, and drawing on its institutional experience.

43. In accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular those pertaining to women and peace and security and youth and peace and security, the peace process in the Sudan should be fully representative of all segments of Sudanese society and include the meaningful participation of women, young people and other underrepresented categories. This process should lay the foundations for a transition to a civilian Government that represents the interests of the full spectrum of Sudanese society. An inclusive political process will be essential to ensuring that peace, once achieved, is sustainable. Continued support from the international community to the country's vibrant arena of civilian political actors remains critical as they plan for a future political process. The Personal Envoy stands ready to support the African

Union, IGAD, LAS and other key regional actors, to help advance an inclusive and comprehensive Sudanese-led political process.

B. Changing the behaviour in conflict of the warring parties

44. I strongly recommend the warring parties to establish a robust and transparent compliance mechanism, with the support of key partners, as a critical step to ensuring that the Jeddah Declaration commitments are realized on the ground. Through the set-up of this mechanism, the parties can jointly agree on a road map and modalities for monitoring compliance with their commitments. The United Nations stands ready to engage with key Member States and regional partners on ways to provide support to such a mechanism, as feasible and agreed to by both warring parties.

45. The direct or indirect flow of weapons and ammunitions into the Sudan, which continue to fuel this conflict, must cease immediately. The transfer of arms and military material to Darfur violates the arms embargo measures adopted by the Security Council in its resolutions [1556 \(2004\)](#) and [1591 \(2005\)](#).

C. Support for broader protection measures

46. Monitoring and reporting on violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights are essential to verify allegations, produce evidence of the human impact of the conflict, recommend protective action and for the purposes of accountability. In the Sudan, access for international investigative mechanisms remains a challenge due to the security situation and bureaucratic impediments imposed by the Sudanese authorities. Nonetheless, existing mechanisms, such as the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan, established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [54/2](#), constitute an invaluable, independent way to investigate and report on violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties. It is imperative that the fact-finding mission be provided with the financial resources necessary to allow it to fulfil its mandate. In addition, access should be granted to United Nations personnel, including the issuance, pursuant to the obligations of the Government of the Sudan under international law, of visas for international United Nations staff and permits and authorizations for their movement within the country. The security of United Nations staff must be guaranteed. The availability of accurate and verifiable information gathered on the ground is key to supporting efforts aimed at addressing violations. I call upon the Security Council and relevant Member States to urge the Sudanese authorities to grant full and unfettered access to international investigative mechanisms and United Nations personnel in the country for this purpose.

47. The cooperation of Member States with, and support to, international and regional independent investigation bodies, such as the above-mentioned independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan and the African Union-mandated fact-finding mission, remain critical in view of future accountability. I encourage the expeditious deployment of the African Union mandated fact-finding mission and urge full support to ensure that it is adequately enabled to carry out its important work.

48. Adequate, transparent, independent and credible domestic accountability mechanisms must be put in place, including to ensure that the rights to the truth, to remedy and to reparation are fulfilled.³ Further efforts are required by the parties to

³ See [A/RES/60/147](#) Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of

ensure accountability for the serious violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed in the Sudan. All investigations into serious violations and abuses must be conducted in an independent, transparent and impartial manner.

49. Building on its resolution [2736 \(2024\)](#) and relevant resolutions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the Security Council should urge the parties to comply with their obligations under international law to ensure the protection of civic space, allowing civil society, journalists and media outlets to operate safely. In addition, the Council should strongly condemn unlawful attacks on telecommunications infrastructure and urge the Government of the Sudan and all stakeholders to restore services to ensure that civilians can gain access to emergency and essential services and take measures for their own protection.

50. The international community should provide enhanced and flexible financial and technical support to Sudanese civil society organizations and networks, including those led by women and young people, to bolster their protection efforts on the ground. Training and capacity-building on international human rights and humanitarian law should be supported. Sudanese civil society organizations and networks identify protection needs, document violations and develop localized protection responses. They do so despite facing immense challenges, operating under precarious conditions amid intolerable targeted violence and security risks. Similar support should be provided to national and local journalists, operating both online and offline, whose efforts, inter alia, guarantee access for civilians to life-saving information.

51. Similarly, the international community should provide technical and financial support for safe, flexible and rapid forms of support for community-based initiatives, such as emergency response rooms, resistance committees and religious institutions, which are providing life-saving aid. This should include helping to build their capacity to facilitate negotiations between the warring parties and local communities and contribute to the implementation of protection agreements. Establishing and maintaining local early warning systems is essential to alert communities to potential threats and provide information on safe routes and shelters. The investment of the international community in these systems is critical to building a protective environment.

52. I further urge Member States to honour their financial pledges without delay to ensure that timely and effective assistance reaches those most in need. The humanitarian appeals for humanitarian operations inside the Sudan and in support of refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries remain significantly underfunded. Urgent assistance is needed to avert massive loss of life in this unprecedented protection and food security crisis in the Sudan. Every day that we wait for funding to come, more lives are at risk.

53. There is a pressing need to sustain efforts on conflict prevention in areas that have not yet been affected by the fighting, building local resilience and helping to protect these areas from further destabilization. I urge Member States to ensure the necessary support and resources to the United Nations country team, to ensure it can undertake relevant prevention, resilience and peacebuilding activities, including in support of local actors that enhance civilian protection.

IV. Conclusion

54. Sudanese civil society, including women civil society organizations, is playing a strong role in advocating for peace, while continuing to support civilians in need, in the face of grave risks. Civilian political actors are also working to converge around a common vision for a future political process that paves the way for a return to a civilian-led transition. Together with these local actors, international actors have for months engaged individually and collectively towards ending the conflict. None of those efforts have so far achieved a decisive breakthrough, due to the lack of genuine commitment by the warring parties to cease hostilities and resolve their disputes through dialogue. Civilians continue to bear the brunt of these reckless actions.

55. I commend the neighbouring countries of the Sudan for their solidarity and generosity in hosting those who have fled the Sudan. This exemplary response deserves recognition and admiration from the entire international community. I urge those countries to continue to uphold their obligations under international and African refugee law by providing protection to Sudanese people seeking asylum and safety, and I call on the international community to increase its support for those efforts, including by increasing funding for the Sudan regional refugee response plan.

56. Sudanese civilians, civil society actors, international human rights organizations, the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan and others have called for the deployment of some form of impartial force to protect civilians, which is indicative of the gravity and urgency of the situation facing civilians in the country. However, at present, the conditions do not exist for the successful deployment of a United Nations force to protect civilians in the Sudan, as some interlocutors have suggested. The Secretariat stands ready to engage with the Council and other relevant stakeholders on the range of operational modalities, including localized efforts permissible under the existing conditions, that can contribute meaningfully to the reduction in violence and the protection of civilians. This may require new approaches that are adapted to the challenging circumstances of the conflict in the Sudan.

57. I call upon the Security Council, regional actors and the broader international community to intensify collective efforts in a coordinated manner to pressure the parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians and spare them from harm, and to advance decisively the shared goal of silencing the guns. Reaching an agreement on a comprehensive, nationwide ceasefire – paving the way for a political solution to the current crisis – will be the most effective way to enhance the protection of civilians. Short of that, the measures outlined in the present document can contribute to mitigating the impact of the conflict on civilians, recognizing the responsibility, obligations and agency of Sudanese authorities and actors on the ground.

58. Concurrently, the international community should consider how best it can accompany the Sudanese people on the path back to peace and stability once the conflict parties have reached agreement on a ceasefire. This includes exploring modalities for ensuring the necessary compliance, monitoring and verification of any agreement. The United Nations will continue to engage closely with key international and regional partners, including with the African Union.

59. It is high time that the warring sides recognize the irresponsible and destructive nature of continued fighting and prioritize dialogue and de-escalation. It is also important that the situation in the Sudan does not fall off the international radar. I commend the United Nations country team, under the leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Clementine Nkweta Salami, for its continued efforts, including to deliver essential humanitarian assistance, amid these very challenging

operational circumstances. The United Nations remains committed to playing an effective and supporting role in ending the conflict and restoring an inclusive civilian transition that fulfils the democratic aspirations of the Sudanese people, in cooperation with national actors and its regional and international partners. I urge the Security Council to continue its strong support for the efforts of my Personal Envoy, Ramtane Lamamra, who will continue to lead United Nations political efforts, promote dialogue and the coordination of international mediation initiatives. I urge the Council to take decisive and unified action to support the protection of all civilians in the Sudan. The unwavering focus, cooperation and unity of the Council are crucial. Inaction or division at this juncture risks graver consequences for the Sudanese people and the region. The time for decisive action is now.
