



## Security Council

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### Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

#### Conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Sudan

1. During its formal meeting held on 28 October 2022, the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict examined the seventh report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan ([S/2022/627](#)), covering the period from January 2020 to December 2021, which was introduced by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations also addressed the Working Group (see annex).

2. The members of the Working Group expressed deep concern at the six grave violations that continued to be committed against children by all parties to armed conflict in the Sudan. At the same time, they welcomed the steps that the country has undertaken to consolidate the gains of the action plan, which was signed with the United Nations in March 2016, pertaining to ending and preventing the recruitment and use of children. The members of the Working Group expressed concern about the impact of insecurity and of the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and related response measures on the protection of children. They underlined the importance of addressing impunity by ensuring that all perpetrators of violations and abuses are brought to justice and held accountable without undue delay. They also highlighted the importance of protecting schools from attack and in that regard recalled the Safe Schools Declaration. The members of the Working Group acknowledged the efforts of the country task force on monitoring and reporting in the Sudan, as well as the challenges that it faced. They underlined the importance of the international community's support for the Government's efforts in the protection of children.

3. The members of the Working Group welcomed the report of the Secretary-General. In accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including [1612 \(2005\)](#), [1882 \(2009\)](#), [1998 \(2011\)](#), [2068 \(2012\)](#), [2143 \(2014\)](#), [2225 \(2015\)](#), [2427 \(2018\)](#) and [2601 \(2021\)](#), the Working Group agreed to the direct action as set out below.

#### Public statement by the Chair of the Working Group

4. The Working Group agreed to address the following message to all parties to the armed conflict in the Sudan, through a public statement by its Chair:

(a) Strongly condemning all violations and abuses that continue to be committed against children by all parties to the conflict in the Sudan; urging all parties



to immediately end and prevent all violations and abuses against children, including those involving the recruitment and use of children, abduction, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals, and the denial of humanitarian access; and also urging all parties to comply with their obligations under international law;

(b) Calling upon all parties to further implement the previous conclusions of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict in the Sudan ([S/AC.51/2020/7](#));

(c) Stressing the importance of accountability for all violations and abuses against children in armed conflict; and stressing that all perpetrators must be brought to justice and held accountable without undue delay, including through timely and systematic investigations and, as appropriate, prosecution and conviction, and to ensure that all victims have access to justice and to the medical, protection and support services that they need, including through the strengthening of judicial and law enforcement capacities;

(d) Stressing that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration, and that the specific needs and vulnerabilities of boys and girls, as well as children with disabilities and displaced children, should be duly considered when planning and carrying out actions concerning children in situations of armed conflict;

(e) Strongly condemning the increase and continued high level of recruitment and use of children by armed groups, and strongly urging all parties to release immediately and without preconditions all children from their ranks, hand them over to relevant civilian child protection actors, and end and prevent further recruitment and use of children, including the re-recruitment of children who have been released, in line with international humanitarian law and, as applicable, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict;

(f) Expressing concern about the deprivation of liberty of children for their association or alleged association with armed groups; welcoming in that regard the release of the detained children by the Government of Sudan; and emphasizing the importance of treating children associated with armed groups, including those who may have committed crimes, primarily as victims of recruitment and use, of working to ensure their full reintegration through family- and community-based gender-sensitive reintegration programmes, access to health care, including mental health and psychosocial support, and education programmes, guided by the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (the Paris Principles) and the national strategic plan for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for children who have previously been involved in armed movements, of raising awareness and working with communities to avoid the stigmatization of those children and facilitate their return, and of ensuring that, where children face prosecution for allegedly committing crimes, those prosecutions are carried out with respect for the rights of the child;

(g) Expressing deep concern at the high number of children killed or maimed, including as a result of the use of small arms and light weapons, explosive remnants of war, mortar and rocket attacks and the use of improvised explosive devices; calling upon all parties to respect their obligations under international law, to cease the killing and maiming of children and to end immediately and definitively the indiscriminate use of explosive devices; and calling upon the Government to fully implement its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction;

(h) Expressing grave concern at the high number of cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated against children, recognizing the underreporting

of sexual violence against children in Darfur, among other places, due to impunity, stigma and discrimination; urging all parties to take immediate and specific measures to put an end to and prevent the perpetration of rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence against children by members of their respective forces, stressing the importance of accountability for those responsible for sexual and gender-based violence against children, and of providing non-discriminatory and comprehensive specialized services, health, including mental health and psychosocial support, including sexual and reproductive health services, legal and livelihood support and services, to survivors of sexual violence;

(i) Strongly condemning attacks on schools and hospitals in violation of international law, calling upon all parties to comply with applicable international law and to respect the civilian character of schools and hospitals, including their personnel, as such, and to end and prevent attacks or threats of attacks against those institutions and their personnel, as well as the military use of schools, and in that regard recalling the Safe Schools Declaration, endorsed by the Sudan in December 2015; noting the effect that attacks on schools and their use can have on the enjoyment of the right to education; and also noting that attacks and looting of schools and school materials affected access to education for a great number of children during the reporting period;

(j) Strongly condemning the abduction of children, including for ransom, recruitment and use, and for the purpose of sexual and gender-based violence and for trafficking, including for forced labour; and urging all parties to cease the abduction of children and all violations and abuses committed against abducted children and to immediately release without precondition all abducted children and hand them over to relevant civilian child protection actors;

(k) Strongly condemning all incidents of denial of humanitarian access, including attacks on humanitarian personnel and looting of humanitarian goods; expressing serious concern that access by the United Nations and other humanitarian actors to vulnerable populations, including children, was restricted during the reporting period, and that children living in conflict-affected areas were deprived of basic humanitarian assistance, and calling upon all parties to allow and facilitate, in accordance with international law, safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access; recalling the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian emergency assistance, adopted in the General Assembly resolution [46/182](#), as well as the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence to respect the exclusively humanitarian nature and impartiality of humanitarian aid and to respect the work of all United Nations agencies and their humanitarian partners, without adverse distinction; and emphasizing the need to ensure the safety of and access for mine action operations;

(l) Calling upon the armed groups listed in the annexes to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict ([S/2022/493](#)) who have existing action plans and road maps on the protection of children with the United Nations, namely the Justice and Equality Movement, the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu and Malik Agar factions, to cooperate with the country task force on the swift and full implementation of their action plans and road maps; and urging the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid, including all its factions, to engage with the United Nations on the development of an action plan;

(m) Noting with concern that access to conflict-affected areas in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan was constrained during the reporting period owing to insecurity, which presented challenges to the verification and attribution of the six grave violations against children, and that the information contained in the report of

the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan (S/2022/627) may not reflect the full impact of armed conflict on children in the Sudan; and emphasizing the importance of ensuring dedicated child protection and monitoring capacities following the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur from Darfur;

*To the Government of the Sudan*

(n) Welcoming the efforts made by the Government of the Sudan to ensure continued compliance with and to consolidate the gains of the action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children, signed in 2016, while expressing grave concern about the continuing violations and abuses against children in the Sudan; noting the context of efforts towards the forming of a civilian-led government; and stressing the need to continue efforts to protect children, in particular the importance of long-term protection measures, including the strengthening of social services and the building of strong institutions with the capacity to ensure the rights and respond to the needs of children, including through the continuation of efforts to identify and screen children in all of their forces, the endorsement of handover protocols and the implementation of complaint procedures and awareness-raising activities, and to engage with the United Nations on a longer-term national plan to prevent all violations and abuses;

(o) Welcoming the collaboration between the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations to strengthen the protection of children, and the adoption, by the national authorities and armed group signatories to the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan (of October 2020), of a road map based on the 2016 action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children, as well as the efforts of the Government of the Sudan in negotiating with the remaining armed groups that have yet to sign the Peace Agreement; urging the movements to join them; calling for the timely implementation of the road map; and urging the full operationalization and use of high-level and technical committees to ensure the coordination and implementation of all its provisions;

(p) Encouraging the Government to continue and strengthen measures to end and prevent the killing and maiming of children and other instances of the six grave violations committed by all parties, including in the context of armed conflict and military operations;

(q) Welcoming the ongoing implementation of the national strategic plan for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for children who have previously been involved in armed movements, involving social inclusion programmes, such as education and vocational training or apprenticeship, and other programmes aimed at preparing them to become active members of society.

5. The Working Group agreed to address a message, through a public statement by the Chair of the Working Group, to community and religious leaders:

(a) Emphasizing the important role of community and religious leaders in strengthening the protection of children affected by armed conflict;

(b) Urging them to strengthen community-level protection and to publicly condemn and continue to advocate ending and preventing violations and abuses against children, in particular those involving the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, abductions, and attacks and threats of attacks against schools and hospitals, as well as to engage with the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders to support the reintegration of children affected by armed conflict in

their communities, including by raising awareness to avoid the stigmatization of such children.

### **Recommendations to the Security Council**

6. The Working Group agreed to recommend the following to the Security Council:

(a) To recommend that the Security Council continue to take into due consideration the situation of children and armed conflict in the Sudan, in particular when reviewing the mandates of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and their activities;

(b) To encourage the Security Council to ensure the continuation of, and support for, the implementation of a child protection mandate for UNITAMS, especially with regard to monitoring, reporting, training and mainstreaming, as well as of dialogue with parties to armed conflict on action plans and support in their implementation; and stressing the need for adequate capacity in that regard.

7. The Working Group agreed to recommend that the President of the Security Council transmit a letter, addressed to the Government of the Sudan, referring to the Group's public statement:

(a) Stressing the primary role of the Government in providing protection and relief to all children affected by armed conflict in the Sudan, and recognizing the importance of strengthening national capacities in that regard;

(b) Welcoming the signing of the Sudan political framework agreement on 5 December 2022; calling upon all stakeholders to remain committed to the democratic transition in order for the aspirations of the Sudanese people for a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous future to be realized; and reaffirming its readiness to support the Sudan in that regard;

(c) Welcoming the development, by the technical committee supported by the country task force, of a national framework for the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, which was endorsed on 13 June 2022 by the National High-Level Committee on the Action Plan;

(d) Encouraging the Government to treat children associated with armed groups, including those who may have committed crimes, primarily as victims of recruitment and use, to comply with its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the obligation that the arrest, detention and imprisonment of children should be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time; and urging the Government to prioritize their reintegration, through family- and community-based programmes, including access to health care, including mental health and psychosocial support, and education programmes, as guided by the Paris Principles, which it has endorsed; to raise awareness and work with communities to avoid stigmatization of those children and facilitate their return; and to ensure that, where children face prosecution for allegedly committing crimes, those prosecutions are carried out with respect for the rights of the child;

(e) Welcoming the command orders renewed and disseminated by the Sudanese Armed Forces to prevent the recruitment and use of children, and also noting that the Justice and Equality Movement had issued command orders to prevent the recruitment and use of children;

(f) Calling upon the Government to continue its efforts to address impunity by ensuring that all perpetrators of violations and abuses are brought to justice and held accountable without undue delay, including through timely and systematic

investigations and, as appropriate, prosecution and conviction, in a manner consistent with its obligations under international law, to ensure that all victims have access to justice, to provide remedies to those victims, including the medical and psychosocial support services that they need and to strengthen judicial and law enforcement capacities;

(g) Recalling the endorsement of and the need to implement the Safe Schools Declaration by the Government of the Sudan, and encouraging it to continue its efforts in that regard;

(h) Calling upon the Government to take immediate and specific measures to put an end to and prevent the perpetration of rape and other forms of sexual violence against children by members of its security forces; stressing the importance of accountability for all those responsible for sexual and gender-based violence against children, and of providing non-discriminatory and comprehensive specialized services, health, including mental health and psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health services, legal and livelihood support and services, to survivors of sexual violence; and urging renewed efforts in implementing 2020 Framework of Cooperation of the Sudan and the United Nations on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence in Conflict;

(i) Calling upon the Government to ensure that the rights and needs of conflict-affected children are taken into account in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and during talks for any future peace agreements, including provisions on the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, as well as provisions on the rights and well-being of children, and that these are integrated into peace negotiations, ceasefire and peace agreements, and provisions for ceasefire monitoring, where appropriate, and taking into account children's views in those processes, where possible, while recalling the Practical guidance for mediators to protect children in situations of armed conflict;

(j) Calling upon the Government of the Sudan to continue to strengthen its legal framework of the Sudan for the protection of children, including by continuing national efforts to apply and strengthen the existing Child Act and by ratifying the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;

(k) Underlining that achieving durable peace, democracy and economic recovery in the Sudan is the only sustainable way to protect children affected by years of armed conflict; noting the efforts of the Government of Sudan in negotiations with the remaining armed groups that have yet to sign the Peace Agreement; and urging the movements to join them;

(l) Inviting the Government to keep the Working Group informed of its efforts to implement the recommendations of the Working Group and the Secretary-General, as appropriate.

8. The Working Group agreed to recommend that the President of the Security Council transmit a letter to the Secretary-General:

(a) Requesting him to ensure the continued effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict in the Sudan and of the child protection component of UNITAMS and UNISFA, including by allocating sufficient dedicated child protection capacity to the component;

(b) Also requesting him to encourage the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting and other relevant United Nations entities to continue their engagement and efforts to support the Government in addressing violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict, including through the protection of children, the reintegration of children affected by the conflict, including

displaced children, the monitoring and reporting on the situation of children affected by conflict, the monitoring and implementation of action plans with armed groups and the conclusion of new action plans with armed groups;

(c) Encouraging the Secretary-General, including through his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, to broadly disseminate the Practical guidance for mediators to protect children in situations of armed conflict to the relevant actors involved in the peace and mediation processes in the Sudan, to ensure that the protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children affected by armed conflict are fully incorporated and prioritized in all post-conflict recovery and reconstruction planning, programmes and strategies, as appropriate, as well as in efforts on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and encourage and facilitate consideration of the views of children in the processes in the Sudan.

9. The Working Group agreed to recommend that the President of the Security Council transmit a letter to the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1591 \(2005\)](#) concerning the Sudan:

(a) Recalling paragraph 7 (b) of resolution [1882 \(2009\)](#), by which the Security Council requested enhanced communication between the Working Group and relevant Security Council sanctions committees, including through the exchange of pertinent information on violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict;

(b) Encouraging the continued sharing of relevant information by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict with the Committee and the Working Group;

(c) Encouraging the Committee to continue to consider the designation for sanctions of individuals and entities, in accordance with the rules and guidelines of the Committee, and stressing that measures imposed by the Committee are not intended to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population in the Sudan.

#### **Direct action by the Working Group**

10. The Working Group agreed to send letters from the Chair of the Working Group addressed to the World Bank and other donors:

(a) Stressing that the best way to protect children is through peace, and urging donors to continue to provide political and financial support to Sudanese peacebuilding initiatives and to the implementation of the peace process;

(b) Calling upon donors to provide support for programmes and initiatives aimed at protecting children in the context of armed conflict in the Sudan, including reintegration, strengthening of the national legal and judicial mechanisms, in particular with regard to addressing impunity for violations and abuses against children in armed conflict, ensuring timely and appropriate care and services, including sexual and reproductive health and support for child victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence, and bolstering the development of national education and health systems, and to step up support for mine action and clearance operations, as well as to find durable solutions for internally displaced children;

(c) Also calling upon donors to support the child protection efforts and initiatives of United Nations agencies and other relevant organizations in the field relating to strengthening national capacity-building, pertinent national institutions and their programmes, and reintegration programming for children, and highlighting that the reintegration of such children must be in line with international law, including the best interests of the child;

(d) Inviting donors to support the humanitarian and sustainable development effort in the Sudan, including with regard to tackling the rapidly deteriorating food security situation and climate change and the risk of acute malnutrition, especially among vulnerable children; and emphasizing the importance of continued engagement and support for the economy of the Sudan, including through support for the most vulnerable, the creation of jobs and the development of livelihood options;

(e) Urging donors and stakeholders to support the democratic transition in the Sudan in the aspects of financial support and capacity-building, to help to protect children affected by conflict and their reintegration, and recalling donors' pledges made at the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference, held in Berlin on 25 June 2020;

(f) Inviting donors to keep the Working Group informed of their funding and assistance efforts, as appropriate.

## Annex

### Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan

#### Statement delivered on 28 October 2022 by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations before the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

We have read with interest the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan covering the period January 2020 to December 2021, and the recommendations contained therein. Nevertheless, we believe that the report shows a tendency to portray the situation in negative terms that do not match the facts on the ground. It appears to downplay the clear, tangible progress and the significant achievements that have been made in protecting the children of the Sudan in conflict-affected areas.

Two points need to be made at the outset. Firstly, the armed forces are committed to protecting children both in legal and practical terms. Such protection was included in the existing law on the topic, which was adopted in 2007 and amended in 2019. Secondly, the armed forces are committed to implementing the action plan concluded with the United Nations in March 2016. Moreover, the transitional Government has accelerated its measures to implement its national protection plan and put in place long-term national frameworks and laws for that purpose.

The report addresses political and security developments since the measures of 25 October 2021. It also addresses the human rights situation in the Sudan, civil rights violations, and cases of sexual violence in conflict areas. It covers economic crises, the health-care crisis associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and their effect on the broader situation.

My country wishes to make the following clarifications concerning several paragraphs in the report:

- In paragraph 2, in the introduction, reference is made to political and security tensions in conflict-affected areas having hampered the documentation and verification of grave crimes against humanity. According to the report, “the actual number of violations is likely to be higher”. In our view, that phrase does not meet the standards of accuracy and objectivity. It is not substantiated, and the violations in question have not been observed or verified in actual fact.
- National laws prohibit the recruitment of children, up until the age of 18. The recruitment form, known as form No. 5 (a), includes a section on the age of the recruit. In order to ensure thorough documentation, it requires him to provide a copy of his birth certificate or proof of age. Recruits also undergo a medical examination. This makes us fully confident that there are no underage soldiers in the armed forces, the Rapid Support Forces or any other regular forces. Accordingly, in 2018, the Sudan was removed from the blacklist of States that commit grave violations of children’s rights. There is no room for impunity for anyone who violates children’s rights. The transitional Government has renewed its commitment to all the relevant instruments, foremost among which is the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The Sudan is working to promote and strengthen children’s rights in the country. It does so because it has a duty to protect all citizens, particularly such vulnerable categories as women and children. No entity is more committed to the children of the Sudan than the competent national agencies. The Sudan appreciates the efforts made by some of our partners, including the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS); but national actors continue to take the lead role. It is therefore not correct to state,

as in paragraph 15, that the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) left a gap in child protection. Ironically, UNAMID was itself protected by the Sudanese security agencies. An entity that could not even protect itself could hardly protect children in the Sudan.

I wish to inform your distinguished Council that the Sudanese Government has made considerable efforts to protect children from violations. In order to protect their rights, it has taken the following steps:

1. The transitional Government has continued to implement the national plan for the protection of children from violations in armed conflict. It has reconfigured the two high-level committees, which are presided over by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Development, and whose membership includes the Ministry of Defence, the Secretary of the National Council for Child Welfare, other relevant ministries, the peace partners who are signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement, and the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the Sudan.

2. The Ministry of Social Development has established a technical committee at the State level to develop and follow up implementation of the national plan for the protection of children from violations in armed conflict. The national road map for the protection of children in armed conflict is also being implemented. It criminalizes the recruitment and deployment of children, as well as other grave violations, by the commanders of the government security forces and the signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement. Action is being taken to raise awareness of the need to protect children from violations in armed conflict. The Government and the United Nations are conducting a joint inspection of government security forces and the signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement. State-level visits are taking place for that purpose. Child and family protection units have been established within the police services, in addition to human rights protection units in the armed forces. Numerous field visits have taken place to conflict-affected areas as part of ongoing efforts to prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers, put a stop to violations of their rights, and strengthen the birth date registration system, the complaints mechanism and the child justice system in conflict-affected areas. A unit to combat violence against women and children has been established within the Ministry of Social Development.

3. A national strategic plan has been prepared for the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of children who were previously recruited into the armed movements. The plan is consistent with the standard operating procedures for the reintegration of children into society. Field visits have been conducted to conflict-affected areas in the Darfur States and Jabal Marra. As a result, more than 250 children have been enrolled in social care plans and programmes for children in precarious situations. Those individuals have been incorporated into social integration programmes, which can take the form of professional training, trade apprenticeships or other activities that prepare them to be effective members of society.

4. Government forces (the armed forces and Rapid Support Forces) have issued and published command orders for each unit every three months. A copy is forwarded to the National Council for Child Welfare. The armed forces have been building staff capacities in protecting and strengthening children's rights. Thus far, some 700 staff members have undergone some 67 basic training sessions organized in cooperation with UNICEF and Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative. Certain armed movements that are signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement (i.e. the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudanese Alliance) have ordered all their units to prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers and the violation of their rights. The remaining movements have committed to take the same approach and to cooperate with the National Council for Child Welfare.

5. In cooperation with UNICEF, the National Council for Child Welfare has trained members of the technical committee in several areas, including protecting children from violations in armed conflict; how to work with the two high-level

committees and the technical committee; resolutions of the Security Council concerning children and armed conflict, particularly Security Council resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#); and the monitoring and reporting mechanism for violations of children's rights in armed conflict.

6. Under the auspices of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Government of the Sudan has signed an amicable settlement for the protection and safeguarding of the rights of children affected by armed conflict in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile areas, in accordance with the principle of accountability, reparations and compensation. A popular committee has been formed to assess and follow up implementation of the settlement plan. Several visits have taken place, damage assessment surveys have been conducted, and periodic reports have been sent to the African Committee of Experts. Civil society organizations and activists in the areas of human rights and children's rights have been involved in implementation.

7. Allow me to turn to implementation of human rights agreements ratified by the Sudan and the guidance set out in the section on rights and freedoms in the 2019 Constitutional Document. The Sudan is committed to its obligations in that regard, and is constructively and effectively engaging with its African regional environment. The Sudan is making genuine efforts to commit to and ratify the relevant regional human rights agreements.

8. The Sudan has continued to engage actively in all the child-related activities assessed by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict. We are strongly convinced of the importance of the topic, which is a special priority for my country. We are determined to continue cooperating and coordinating with Ms. Virginia Gamba and her distinguished Office, and we appreciate her efforts in that connection.

It is essential to support the Government's efforts to prevent and put a stop to the tribal conflicts that could trigger violence against children, and to support the Government as it rids itself of the remnants of landmines, which are a leading cause of the killing or maiming of children. The Government should also be supported in its negotiations with other armed movements that have not signed the Juba Peace Agreement concluded in October 2020, with a view to mainstreaming the protection of children into peacekeeping operations.

In order to be credible and shore up the efforts of the transitional Government to fill gaps and eliminate all forms of violence against children, it is vital to ensure accuracy and objectivity and steer clear of politicization and selectivity.

The transitional Government will continue to cooperate with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict with a view to strengthening and protecting the rights of the child. My Government reiterates that it is a party to all international and regional instruments on strengthening and protecting of the rights of the child and is committed to implementing them.

To conclude, the Government of the Sudan encourages and welcomes the field visits conducted by Ms. Gamba and her team. We hope that two years from now, there will no longer be a report on children and armed conflict in the Sudan. We will make every effort to cooperate with Ms. Gamba and the Working Group to achieve that goal.

*(Signed)* Al-Harith Idriss Al-Harith **Mohamed**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative