



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

**8825**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
 Tuesday, 27 July 2021, 10 a.m.  
 New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival . . . . .	(France)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Lipand
	India . . . . .	Mr. Kakanur
	Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Flynn
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Ochoa Martínez
	Niger . . . . .	Mr. Aougi
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. DeShong
	Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Ladeb
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Farrey
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Mills
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mrs. Tra Phuong Nguyen

## Agenda

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

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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, to participate in this meeting.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Khare.

**Mr. Khare:** I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity to again provide an update on the progress on the closure of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) following the termination of its mandate on 31 December 2020.

I am pleased to report that, recently, the Secretariat achieved the initial milestone set by the Council to withdraw all uniformed personnel formerly deployed to the Mission and staff not involved in its liquidation, except for those that have constituted a uniformed guard unit, as authorized by the Council, by the deadline of 30 June 2021.

This task involved the repatriation of almost 6,000 troops and police, as well as the separation of almost 1,200 staff. It also involved consultation with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that uniformed members who expressed a desire not to return for reasons related to international protection needs were processed by the refugee authorities of the Government of the Sudan. I am grateful to the countries concerned in acknowledging that the status of these individuals in seeking asylum is a humanitarian act, not based on political considerations.

The drawdown also involved the parallel closure and handover of the former Mission headquarters and 13 team sites to local authorities for civilian use in Central, South and North Darfur states, as UNAMID equipment was recovered, environmental remediation

was completed and former Mission personnel were withdrawn. All remaining personnel and assets are now consolidated within the El Fasher logistics facility, other than small components based in Khartoum and Port Sudan, to support the transport of assets and interaction with the authorities during the liquidation of UNAMID.

To ensure that progress remains on track, earlier this month I concluded my second official visit to the Sudan since the conclusion of the mandate on 30 December 2020. Between 6 and 15 July, I met again with Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chair of the Sovereign Council, as well as with the Deputy Chair, Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo — otherwise known as General Hemeti — and the Minister of Interior, Lieutenant General Ezzeldin El Sheikh. In addition, I interacted with the newly appointed Governor of Darfur, Minni Minawi, as well as the new Wali of North Darfur state, Nimir Abdel-Rahman. All leaders shared their satisfaction at the successful achievement of the expedited timelines and discussed ways to resolve outstanding issues related to the liquidation and wider transition implications.

I wish to stress that following this visit to the Sudan, I also met with the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ms. Monique Nsanzabaganwa, and the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, on 19 July in Addis Ababa, to, inter alia, report on progress in closing the former African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

Members will be cognizant of my notes to the Council on 25 June and 2 July, highlighting key issues and the completion of UNAMID's drawdown, including the withdrawal of 22 military and police contingents. I can report that contingent-owned equipment belonging to Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, China, Jordan, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania and Togo has now either returned to its home country or been deployed to another peacekeeping operation. Further, the equipment of Djibouti, Ethiopia and the Gambia is in Port Sudan awaiting vessels for transport, and equipment belonging to Egypt, Pakistan and Rwanda, as well as that of a Chinese engineering unit, is en route from Darfur to Port Sudan.

A guard unit authorized by the Security Council, comprising 360 police from former formed police units from Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan, remains in

El Fasher to provide internal security to remaining United Nations personnel and assets. I should note that the primary responsibility to provide security for these United Nations assets and personnel rests with the Government of the Sudan, and I am pleased to report that it is prepared to take necessary actions and do so in coordination with the guard unit.

Since I last briefed the Security Council (see S/2021/246), the General Assembly has approved funding amounting to \$79 million to support the final liquidation of UNAMID no later than 30 June 2022. While morale within the liquidation team remains high, liquidation will still involve a sustained effort across a number of complex tasks. Among the more urgent tasks is the destruction of ammunition. Members have before them hard copies of photographs of the ammunition before and after, to which I draw their attention. Much of this ammunition was found to have reached its expiration date and was therefore volatile. After increasing incineration capacity, this effort is now almost complete.

The facilities and equipment handed over to local authorities to date, outside of El Fasher, had a residual value exceeding \$41 million. Nevertheless, as I reported to the Council in my note of 25 June, confirmed and unconfirmed reports suggest varying degrees of destruction and theft at 10 of the 14 sites handed over to local authorities. While the associated assets no longer belonged to the United Nations, these are major losses for the communities involved. I note that although authorities have made commitments to investigating these incidents, various Sudanese interlocutors have nevertheless suggested that these events resulted from underlying tensions among groups locally, along with concerns, whether real or perceived, surrounding equitable access to the facilities and equipment that was handed over.

In moving forward with the disposal of the remaining property of UNAMID, I draw the Council's attention to the map of the El Fasher logistics base distributed to members in hard copy to illustrate the complexity of the task at hand and the future value of such a facility for the people of Darfur. The premises in El Fasher are not just a base, but have the capacity to form a substantial community in its own right, with extensive office infrastructure, more than a thousand self-contained living units, a significant number of facilities for collective working and learning arrangements, a hospital facility, water

storage, purification equipment and distribution lines, a power-generation and -distribution network, waste-water treatment facilities, a major fuel-storage depot, recreational facilities, maintenance and vehicles workshops, incineration facilities, communication towers, and large warehousing capacities, including a refrigerated warehouse used for food supplies.

In addition to the fixed facilities, a wide variety of moveable equipment and inventories have been consolidated at the El Fasher base, including hundreds of vehicles, generators, furniture, information and communications technology equipment, and supplies for the maintenance of facilities and equipment. As the Council will observe, it is critical that the Government of the Sudan makes every effort to ensure that this enormous reserve of facilities and equipment is sustainably applied to national imperatives for civilian use.

It is my intention to support the team that remains in UNAMID through disposal of remaining assets across two distinct liquidation phases: 1 July to 30 September 2021 — a final three-month period for the withdrawal of retained United Nations assets, sales to other United Nations entities and non-government organizations at market value, destruction of equipment subject to end-user restrictions, and commercial sales of equipment that mostly has been scrapped because it is beyond economical repair or use; then, from 1 October 2021 forward — donation and associated distribution of remaining fixed and moveable assets to Government institutions and related non-government organizations in the Sudan based on the General Assembly's consideration of a holistic, Sudanese-owned donation plan.

The first phase of this process is well under way. Since the UNAMID mandate came to an end, UNAMID equipment currently valued at \$8.1 million has been transferred to other operations, including the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. This process will continue. In addition, so far this month, two convoys have departed El Fasher with valuable equipment that will be restored as needed and held within the peacekeeping reserve at Brindisi for future deployment to other field missions. Nevertheless, the vast bulk of UNAMID assets will remain in the Sudan for donation to the Sudanese authorities for civilian use. In pausing

to better illustrate the potential benefits to the people of Darfur, just as an example, the mission currently holds 170 tons of sodium hypochlorite salt, which can be used to purify 6.8 billion litres of water, which is enough to meet the clean-water drinking and cooking needs of more than a million people for a year.

To this end, during my recent visit to the Sudan, I implored all Government interlocutors to emphasize the immediate development of a single, holistic donation plan, with input and agreement from Government interlocutors at the national and local levels. The United Nations country team and UNITAMS have committed to supporting the Government in identifying sustainable imperatives that would best benefit local communities. This plan could form the foundation for the Secretary-General to present a proposal to the General Assembly, as required by the United Nations regulations and rules, to guide the donation of equipment and facilities in support of such identified national priorities as the national plan for the protection of civilians. Successful completion and approval of such a plan can hasten the full departure of the remaining remnants of UNAMID prior to June 2022.

Building on the success of the experience of the hand-over of the substantial Zalingei headquarters site, which was gradually turned over to local authorities for use and occupation by the local university, I further expressed to Sudanese officials our intention to proceed with a phased hand-over of the El Fasher site in segments, beginning in November. If hand-over can progress in this fashion, it will equally allow for the phased reduction of the guard unit, the only United Nations uniformed personnel remaining currently in Darfur.

For all the foregoing to occur in an orderly and speedy fashion, I must raise the issue of the armed movements that have stationed forces around the El Fasher compound since the beginning of June, which I reported on in my note of 25 June 2021. Units from at least five different groups, as well as the Sudanese Armed Forces, have been identified by colleagues based in El Fasher. I have provided two photographs in hard copy to Council members so that they can see where these armed groups are located. After an initial period of confusion among these groups, which led to the disruption of UNAMID movements and, in some cases, harassment of United Nations personnel and vendors, movements have for the most part proceeded as needed in recent weeks. Nevertheless, coordination

and leadership among these units are critical if the remaining liquidation process is to proceed smoothly for the long-term sustainable benefit of the Sudan and its people. I therefore intend to continue to closely monitor the liquidation of UNAMID based on my recent discussions with the President, the Vice-President and the new Governor and Wali of Darfur and North Darfur, respectively.

In conclusion, allow me to thank the Government of the Sudan for its support thus far in achieving the timely and successful drawdown of UNAMID, and I look forward to continued cooperation to achieve our shared objectives.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Khare for his briefing.

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

**Ms. Farrey** (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Khare for his briefing.

I will focus my remarks on three areas: the contribution of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to Darfur, the mission's drawdown and liquidation, and the future of Darfur.

Almost 14 years ago to this day, the Security Council authorized the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the first and only hybrid African Union-United Nations peacekeeping mission, in response to the conflict in Darfur (resolution 1769 (2007)). The United Kingdom expresses its deep appreciation to all personnel who served in UNAMID's deployment. In particular, we pay tribute to UNAMID personnel who gave their lives to bring stability to Darfur. We also acknowledge the unique partnership between the United Nations and the African Union throughout the deployment, which we hope will continue as both organizations continue to support the Sudan.

Throughout its deployment and during its drawdown, UNAMID has operated in challenging conditions and has had to navigate new numerous obstacles in order to implement the resolutions of the Security Council. While there are many lessons to be learned, it is undeniable that the Darfur that we see today is more peaceful and stable because of UNAMID's contribution. It is our hope that the lessons

learned from UNAMID's deployment and drawdown will help to inform future peacekeeping operations and transitions, consolidate peacekeeping gains and support lasting, sustainable peace wherever the United Nations is deployed.

The United Kingdom welcomes the Government of the Sudan's cooperation during UNAMID's drawdown and urges its full cooperation with the remaining liquidation phase, in line with resolution 2559 (2020). In particular, we stress the need for federal- and state-level cooperation, including the safety and freedom of movement of personnel and assets. The close coordination of all stakeholders is essential to ensuring that the liquidation of UNAMID's assets is responsible and transparent, in line with United Nations regulations and best practices.

The destruction of many former UNAMID sites following their handover to local authorities is deeply regrettable. We therefore reiterate the expectation for remaining sites to be used for civilian purposes so that they can continue to benefit local communities in new ways.

Darfur, and the Sudan more widely, have seen a significant period of change in recent years, and we welcome the commitments made to peace and the transition to democracy. Now that peacekeeping forces have drawn down, it is crucial to continue to build upon and consolidate peacekeeping gains. For that reason, the United Kingdom repeats its call for the full and sustained implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement. We welcome the recent decrees establishing the Darfur ceasefire monitoring mechanisms and urge the swift deployment of the field teams, as well as the operationalization of the Peace Commission, the swift deployment of joint security forces and the full implementation of the national plan for civilian protection.

While peacekeeping may have come to an end in Darfur, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and its integrated country team will continue to play a crucial role in supporting the Government of the Sudan's efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability in Darfur.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom reiterates the need for continued cooperation among all stakeholders across the United Nations system and beyond during the remaining liquidation phase of UNAMID and through the deployment of UNITAMS in order to consolidate

the progress in peace and security that has been made in Darfur.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I thank Under-Secretary-General Khare for his comprehensive briefing today.

First, let me highlight the positive political developments in the Sudan over the past months. The key message to draw from them is that, although many challenges remain, the transition in the Sudan is irreversible and represents a unique opportunity to create the conditions necessary for sustainable economic growth. In that regard, we thank the transitional Government and the Darfur state capitals, for their role in ensuring the responsible drawdown of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

That brings me to my second point, which is that the fragile security situation in Darfur and the confusion regarding the end-use of team sites and assets are creating challenging conditions for the Blue Helmets. It is therefore crucial that the drawdown of UNAMID be done in a sustainable and orderly way. Protecting civilians must remain at the core of all efforts, even during UNAMID's drawdown and thereafter.

We are happy to note that UNAMID remains on schedule for the closure of team sites and that the mission has accelerated the process to allow for contingencies. Norway hopes that the recent advances will prevent any unnecessary delays during the coming rainy season. We were also pleased to learn about the conclusion of the framework agreement on the civilian end-use of team sites and assets. That is particularly relevant against the backdrop of the significant looting that was seen at former UNAMID camps in both Nyala and in El Geneina. We therefore urge the Sudanese Government to protect the assets handed over from UNAMID, as they will be of direct benefit to the civilian population in Darfur. Such steps will provide a solid basis for liquidating the mission within the next 12 months.

That brings me to my final point. With the drawdown of UNAMID, greater responsibility now lies with the Sudanese authorities and the Sudanese security forces in particular. The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and the remaining parts of the United Nations system must ensure support for the Sudanese authorities in protecting civilians and preventing human rights violations and abuses.

We must also secure the completion or handover to the Sudanese authorities of residual activities done by UNAMID. That includes activities in the areas of the rule of law, community policing, preventing gender-based violence and community stabilization.

Let me conclude by extending our sincere gratitude to UNAMID civilian and uniformed personnel, particularly those who gave their lives while serving to promote peace and stability. We would also like to thank the troop- and police-contributing countries, the United Nations country team, UNITAMS and the humanitarian community for their invaluable support for peace in Darfur. Norway stands ready to support the people of the Sudan at this defining moment.

**Mr. Ladeb** (Tunisia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the A3+1, namely, Kenya, the Niger, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

At the outset, we would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his comprehensive briefing on the ongoing drawdown and closure process of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), and I welcome the representative of the Sudan.

UNAMID, which was established in July 2007 pursuant to resolution 1769 (2007), as the first hybrid operation between the United Nations and the African Union, was an important experience in terms of cooperation with regional organizations, as enshrined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Following the termination of its mandate through resolution 2559 (2020), today we are witnessing the closure of one of the largest peacekeeping operations in the history of the United Nations, which, during its 13-year mandate, involved more than 100,000 military and police peacekeepers from dozens of Member States from around the world.

The exemplary cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union will leave a historical record of important achievements in Darfur, as UNAMID played a crucial role in supporting the protection of civilians, particularly internally displaced persons, community stabilization, support for the rule of law and the provision of humanitarian aid, as well as the implementation of the peace process and mediation between the Government of the Sudan and the armed groups. The mission also worked to empower women, addressed sexual and gender-based violence, protected

and promoted human rights and helped in the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

UNAMID was at the forefront of efforts to lay the critical foundation for peace in Darfur. The A3+1 express their sincere gratitude and appreciation to all UNAMID civilian and uniformed personnel for their invaluable support for peace in Darfur. Our heartfelt thoughts are with the peacekeepers who lost their lives in the service of peace and their families. We believe that the assessment of UNAMID's mission and achievements should be a strong basis for further consolidating cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The lessons learned from the mission's experience should also guide the next steps and pave the way for future exit strategies.

Kenya, the Niger, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commend the efforts made by the transitional Government of the Sudan and the Darfur state capital, and the role they are playing to ensure an orderly and safe withdrawal of troops, personnel and equipment. In that regard, we welcome the signature of the framework agreement on the handover of 14 sites and assets for civilian end use and the commitment announced by the Sudanese Government to ensuring that those facilities and assets will be used for social and community services. We believe that those developments will anchor a positive UNAMID legacy in the Sudan and help preserve those sites from looting.

Regarding the next steps and the liquidation phase, the A3+1 group emphasizes the key role of the Sudanese authorities and commends their commitment to swift cooperation in order to enable the full and effective deployment of the guard unit for the El Fasher logistics hub, and to ensure the protection and safety of assets and contingent-owned equipment to be repatriated. We also underline the importance for UNAMID to carry out and complete environmental clean-up and restoration, as well as the disposal of hazardous materials, including expired ammunition, in accordance with established standards.

The A3+1 group emphasizes the progress made by the Government of the Sudan in sustaining its political transition process and in implementing its national plan for the protection of civilians. We remain convinced that the support of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, as a special political mission and in line with its mandate, is crucial to helping the Sudan take forward key elements

of its transition process, which is critical to advancing an inclusive political transition and addressing long-standing challenges, leading to lasting peace in Darfur and across the region.

Among those challenges, intercommunal clashes continue to be a major source of insecurity, especially in the Darfur region. In that regard, we encourage the Sudanese authorities to accelerate the implementation of the national plan for the protection of civilians, with the objective of creating a gender-responsive and protective environment for all Sudanese.

In moving forward, sustainable development will be essential to building resilience. While commending the clearance of the country's arrears held by the World Bank and other key partners, as well as the commitments made at the 17 May Paris investors conference, the A3+1 calls on all stakeholders to fulfil their commitments and enhance efforts towards unlocking the much-needed financial support that would enable the Sudan to implement difficult economic and institutional reforms, while providing support to the population and addressing its growing socioeconomic needs.

We also encourage the international community to continue scaling up support for the Sudan's 2021 national humanitarian response plan, in order for the transitional Government to appropriately address humanitarian challenges compounded by the adverse effects of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as locust infestation and other disease outbreaks.

In conclusion, the A3+1 believes that peace in the Sudan will remain incomplete and security will remain volatile until all conflicts come to an end. That requires armed movements that remain outside the peace process to commit to negotiations that will lead to fully inclusive and sustainable peace in the Sudan. It also requires the international community to continue its crucial support to the transition in the Sudan.

Finally, we urge the Government of the Sudan to strengthen its regional collaboration and coordination so as to ensure continued peace and security. The Sudan should be both a recipient of exported peace and an exporter of peace. We strongly recommend that the Government work with neighbouring countries and make use of mechanisms in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union to do so.

**Mr. Lipand** (Estonia): I join others in thanking Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his comprehensive briefing.

At the outset, allow me to commend everyone involved who made it possible to wrap up the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) at a historic speed. That was no easy endeavour, and we appreciate the effort it took. Estonia also welcomes the Sudan's cooperation with both the United Nations and the African Union during the UNAMID drawdown. Now it is important to ensure that the liquidation process goes according to plan. We call on the Government of the Sudan and other relevant stakeholders, including the Juba Peace Agreement signatories and other armed opposition movements, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and the African Union during UNAMID's liquidation.

The pursuit of peace, justice and civilian protection in Darfur will remain relevant after the closure of UNAMID. That is why the importance of the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement cannot be overemphasized. We also urge the Government of the Sudan to take extra measures to ensure that the protection of civilians is provided for all people in Darfur, especially for populations who are more vulnerable, including women, children and the internally displaced. We call on the Sudan to cooperate closely with the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan to help build up the necessary capacities for civilian protection and to consolidate peacebuilding in Darfur more broadly.

Peace in Darfur is also critical to the Sudan's historic transition. On that note, allow me to emphasize that Estonia remains firmly committed to supporting the Sudan's democratic transition to a fully legitimate and inclusive civilian Government, which would ensure peace, freedom and justice for all Sudanese people.

Finally, I would like to thank all personnel of UNAMID for their sacrifice and efforts in helping to leave Darfur in a better condition than they found it in. UNAMID will certainly be remembered for its invaluable contributions to peace efforts in Darfur.

**Mr. Kakanur** (India): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his comprehensive briefing on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) drawdown.

I also welcome the representative of the Sudan to our meeting.

The drawdown of UNAMID has formally ended a very successful peacekeeping operation. It has been a successful example of African Union-United Nations cooperation. UNAMID has several commendable achievements to its credit, including supporting the implementation of the peace process, the protection of civilians and community stabilization.

During UNAMID's 13-year mandate, more than 100,000 military and police peacekeepers were contributed by dozens of countries around the world, including India. At its peak deployment in 2011, it had nearly 23,000 troops and police personnel. I express our gratitude to each one of the peacekeepers who served in UNAMID and pay tribute to their exemplary efforts. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the drawdown exercise has been completed within the tight timeline and benchmarks set by the Security Council.

Since February, when the Council was last briefed on the issue, UNAMID has handed over 14 team sites to the Government of the Sudan, which has committed to using them for civilian purposes, in line with the framework agreement signed on 4 March. We are happy to know that those facilities will now be utilized for capacity- and nation-building activities related to health care, education and other social services, including vocational training and community centres, as identified by the people of the Sudan themselves. We also note with appreciation that 6,000 military, police and civilian personnel, out of 7,000 who remained with the mission in January, have been repatriated to their respective countries.

UNAMID has also provided various communities of the Darfur region with vehicles, including water and sewage trucks and generators. The mission has donated its clinic, as well as medical facilities, for use by the local communities. These are all initiatives that mark a transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding that is Sudan-led and Sudan-owned. In that regard, we commend the efforts of Under-Secretary-General Khare and his team for their deft handling of the various challenges during the drawdown period.

We would also like to commend the various initiatives undertaken by the Government of the Sudan to handle the drawdown, as well as the transition to United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan, in a smooth and seamless manner.

The Government of the Sudan established unity of command and purpose by appointing a unified joint task force and the State handover committee as UNAMID's key interlocutors during the drawdown. It was through that engagement that the mission was able to listen to the specific needs of each community and identify ways to meet those needs through the provision of assets, such as water and sewage trucks, water treatment equipment, generators and vehicles, among others.

Going forward, it will be important for the Government to ensure the protection of the logistics base and the repatriation of the remaining staff to facilitate a seamless liquidation phase, which commenced on 1 July. We are confident that all pending tasks of significance, including the handing over of the El Fasher camp to the authorities in Darfur, will be completed.

To conclude, as UNAMID is now in a full-fledged liquidation phase, let us reaffirm our commitment and support to the efforts of the Sudanese authorities. For our part, India's support to the Sudan and its people has remained steadfast. Over the years, India has implemented several projects and assisted Sudanese officials and students in capacity-building. We have also extended humanitarian assistance. India will continue to extend all possible assistance to the Sudan and its people as they move ahead to consolidate the gains made over the past three years.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I think Under-Secretary-General Khare for his briefing.

All uniformed and civilian personnel of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) have withdrawn, as required under the Security Council resolution. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all UNAMID troop- and police-contributing countries for their efforts and sacrifices.

Since its establishment in 2007, UNAMID has played an important role in maintaining security and stability in Darfur, the Sudan. As the first innovative United Nations-African Union joint peacekeeping operation, UNAMID is a success story in the United Nations exploration of agile and diverse ways of supporting regional organizations in maintaining peace and security.

China hopes that the United Nations will take stock, and we look forward to the Secretary-General's assessment report, to be submitted by the end of October.

It is hoped that UNAMID will complete its liquidation process, including asset liquidation, in a methodical way, in accordance with the financial regulations and rules of the United Nations, and avoid asset loss and improper disposal.

The Sudan's Darfur region is at a critical stage of transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. The Sovereign Council and transitional Government of the Sudan are actively implementing the Juba Peace Agreement and have taken a series of pragmatic steps to maintain security and stability in Darfur. Intercommunal violence in Darfur needs to be addressed through a holistic approach involving mediation and reconciliation. The international community and the United Nations country team in the Sudan can assist and support displaced persons affected by the violence and conflict. The Sudanese government bears the primary responsibility for protecting civilians in Darfur.

Following the withdrawal of UNAMID, through its mandate, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan can help the Sudanese Government to improve its ability to protect civilians and provide the necessary support to the Government in implementing its National Plan for Civilian Protection and in strengthening its security capacity-building.

The Security Council should take the impact of the arms embargo on the Government's protection of civilians into account and should develop and take concrete steps to contain that impact. To achieve security and stability in Darfur, it is essential to emphasize both the symptoms and the root causes of violent conflict by growing the economy and improving people's livelihoods.

Due to the impact of the coronavirus disease and natural disasters the security situation in Darfur remains precarious. The international community should scale up its support and investment in the peacebuilding efforts in Darfur, help to improve the Sudan's country-owned development capabilities, properly deal with the major factors leading to violent conflict, such as land distribution, and effectively improve local livelihoods.

Since 2007, China has been engaged in UNAMID as one of the first countries to contribute peacekeepers to the mission. Over the past 13 years, approximately 5,000 Chinese peacekeepers have actively performed their duties and two peacekeepers paid the ultimate price for peace and stability in Darfur. China stands ready to work with the rest of the international community in

the ongoing effort to play a positive role in building peace in the Sudan.

**Mr. Ochoa Martínez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico appreciates the information shared by Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare on the process of downsizing and closure of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), in compliance with resolution 2559 (2020). We welcome the representative of the Sudan, present here in the Chamber.

At the outset, we would like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the UNAMID mission and its contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in Darfur. Today we honour and remember those who lost their lives while carrying out their duties in the mission.

While the situation in Darfur today is very different to that in 2007, threats to stability in the area continue, especially in terms of the protection of civilians. In the evolution from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur, we underline the importance of a smooth transition between the closure of UNAMID and the consolidation of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS).

We welcome the fact that, as Under-Secretary-General Khare pointed out, as of 30 June, most personnel had been repatriated, thereby completing the withdrawal of uniformed personnel. We note that the personnel of the guard unit, authorized by the Council, remain in place in order to protect UNAMID's personnel, property and assets during its liquidation phase. We also note with satisfaction the fact that the majority of the mission's assets will remain in the Sudan for civilian purposes and the benefit of the Sudanese people.

We acknowledge the Government of the Sudan's action in early June to ensure that armed groups around the El Fasher base ceased to interfere with the movement of the UNAMID convoys. The establishment of a joint security force, coordinated by the Sudanese Armed Forces, has been critical to meeting withdrawal and closure timelines, particularly in El Fasher.

Over the next 12 months and with a view to concluding the closure of UNAMID in a responsible and transparent manner, the Sudan must continue to ensure respect for all provisions of the status-of-forces agreement, in particular those relating to the security of

UNAMID and the coordination of all armed elements around El Fasher. Equally important will be respect for the agreement guaranteeing civilian end-use and the security and physical protection of UNAMID's team sites and assets.

I conclude by reiterating our recognition of UNAMID's achievements and Mexico's full support for the work of UNITAMS in this new phase. We also recall the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and the National plan of the Sudan for protecting civilians after the exit of UNAMID of the Government of the Sudan, as well as the need to build the confidence of local communities and the capacity of institutions to deliver justice, ensure accountability and provide legal protection to vulnerable communities.

We hope that the international community and the Security Council will wholeheartedly support the democratic transition process in this new chapter of the Sudan's history and that the promise of peace and stability in this African country will be fulfilled.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, for his briefing on the drawdown and withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We note the work of the Secretariat and the personal contribution of Mr. Khare to that complex task.

We cannot fail to recognize the courage and dedication of the peacekeepers, who made it possible to overcome a difficult period in the history of Sudanese Darfur and stabilize the region. In that regard, we express our sincere gratitude to the contributing countries of the peacekeeping and police contingents of the mission.

The Sudan now faces many challenges. This is having a negative impact on events in neighbouring Libya. It has led to an increase and the number of refugees from African States and also to the spread of the coronavirus disease.

A number of socioeconomic difficulties still need to be resolved. Under these circumstances, we believe that it is very important to maintain fair-handed contacts with the Sudanese authorities and to assist their efforts to implement the Constitutional Declaration of 17 August 2019, whose aim is to bring internal stabilization.

We welcomed the signing in October 2020 in Juba of the peace agreement between the transitional Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front. Implementing the peace agreement will be an important step towards achieving national reconciliation and would also help to resolve existing urgent social economic problems. We hope that the agreement will also be signed by those armed Sudanese armed groups that are not yet signatories.

We are pleased to note that the dynamic in Darfur has not been significantly negatively impacted. There were isolated outbreaks of intercommunal clashes in several States at the beginning of the year, but they did not change the overall picture. The swift and coordinated response of the authorities to the incidents as well as the implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians demonstrate that Khartoum is taking a comprehensive approach to stabilizing the situation.

It is our view that UNAMID has coped well with the tasks entrusted to it. The time has come to prioritize the region's recovery and economic development. With that in mind, we facilitated the adoption in June 2020 of resolution 2524 (2020), on setting up the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS). We also supported the renewal of UNITAMS' mandate for one year, in line with resolution 2579 (2021), of 3 June 2021. We trust that the work of that United Nations presence will bolster Khartoum's capacity in a range of key areas, including the peacekeeping track; the long-term stabilization of the situation in various regions of the country, including Darfur; and the conduct of economic reforms, and that it will also include fostering internal peace and law and order.

**Mr. Flynn** (Ireland): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Khare for his briefing and also welcome the participation today of the representative of the Sudan.

This kind of follow-up reporting to the Council is a vital element of protecting the gains made by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) towards achieving sustainable peace. Before I begin, like others, I would like to take this opportunity to commend all those peacekeepers and staff who served in UNAMID over the years and to remember particularly those who lost their lives doing

so. As others have said, UNAMID achieved a lot in its years of operation.

Moving from the UNAMID peacekeeping mission to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) special political mission has been among the most complex and challenging transitions that the Organization has undertaken. It has highlighted the need to plan and execute the drawdown, reconfiguration and exit of United Nations peacekeeping missions in a way that helps maintain progress towards sustainable peace. Transitions should take place in a responsible, coordinated and graduated manner responsive to the needs on the ground.

Transitions must engage with host State Governments to reinforce national ownership, so the engagement by the Sudanese authorities with Under-Secretary-General Khare is very positive. It is vital to have not only high-level political engagement but also support from a representative range of national stakeholders. Engagement with civil society, including women and youth, reinforces local ownership and supports peacebuilding objectives.

We note that UNAMID is currently on track to complete its closure by 30 June 2022. Until that time, all stakeholders must comply with the provisions of the status-of-forces agreement; that is essential for the safety of all remaining personnel as well as for the continued protection of civilians.

Regrettably, the drawdown has not been without incident. We condemn the looting of former team sites on multiple occasions this year. All armed elements positioned around the El Fasher site must be withdrawn and steps taken to prevent further looting. As the Under-Secretary-General said, UNAMID assets must not be used to fuel insecurity.

Despite the significant progress made in the Sudan's political transition toward democracy, the security situation remains deeply concerning, particularly in Darfur. In the past six months, the vacuum created by the withdrawal and delays in implementing the Juba Peace Agreement have fuelled new struggles for power and resources. Armed clashes have caused large-scale casualties and displacement as well as worrying reports of rising sexual violence. This again underlines the necessity of a comprehensive transition process that incorporates appropriate risk assessment and mitigation.

As part of the drawdown of UNAMID, responsibility for the protection of civilians now rests solely with the Government. We call for the full and immediate implementation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians and the security pillar of the Juba Peace Agreement. The work of the joint protection force is important, but it must be accompanied by community-negotiated deployment agreements, civilian oversight and effective mechanisms to ensure accountability for crimes against civilians. That is vital to breaking the cycle of impunity. Particular attention must be given to the protection of women in Darfur from sexual violence. Services for vulnerable women must be available at the local level, and women's organizations should be actively involved in the implementation of any protection initiatives in the context of the rollout of UNITAMS.

The transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS illustrates the fact that the key to creating sustainable peace rests on finding long-term and nationally owned political solutions. I encourage all Council members to consider the lessons learned from this transition and to continue to engage with and help the Sudan to find political solutions.

**Mrs. Nguyen (Viet Nam):** At the outset, I should like to thank Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his comprehensive briefing. I should like also to welcome the representative of the Sudan to today's meeting.

Fourteen years ago, the establishment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) marked a new milestone in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. UNAMID was the first joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission and also the largest at the time.

Allow me to salute the tireless efforts of all the peacekeepers and personnel of the mission as well as the troop- and police-contributing countries and other partners that contributed to the work of UNAMID throughout the years. The mission has played a critical role in the protection of civilians in the Darfur region as well as the facilitation of the Darfur Peace Agreement, thereby contributing to peace and stability in the whole of the Sudan.

UNAMID has truly become the prime example of successful cooperation between the United Nations and

the African Union in the maintenance of international peace and stability.

We note with appreciation that UNAMID has met the Council's request to complete the withdrawal of all uniformed and civilian personnel by 30 June 2021, in line with resolution 2559 (2020). Despite some challenges, that process has taken place in a timely, orderly and safe manner, thanks to the close cooperation between the mission and the Government of the Sudan and other relevant stakeholders. We understand that the process of the liquidation of the mission's assets will continue to take place in the next 12 months. It is therefore crucial to carry on with such close cooperation and ensure the safety and security of UNAMID's remaining personnel, in line with resolution 2559 (2020) and the status-of-forces agreement.

Furthermore, it is important to fully respect the framework agreements, which ensure the principle of civilian end use and the security and physical integrity of the handover of UNAMID team sites and assets.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the ongoing political and security developments in the Sudan, as the country has achieved tremendous progress on the political and security fronts in recent days. It is now transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. At the same time, we note the challenges that the country is still facing, particularly in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and addressing the coronavirus disease pandemic, food insecurity, natural disasters and intercommunal violence. In this regard, it is imperative that the Sudanese parties continue to resolve their differences in order to implement the remaining provisions of the Peace Agreement in full.

Furthermore, UNAMID's mandate has ended. We call on the Government of the Sudan to continue strengthening its primary responsibility for the protection of civilians. It is crucial to ensure the full implementation of the national plan for civilian protection and to find more comprehensive solutions to address the root causes of intercommunal violence in Darfur, including through confidence-building measures and opportunities for dialogue.

To further assist the Sudanese Government at this critical juncture, the collaboration of and support from the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), the AU and neighbouring countries will remain essential. In this regard, it is our hope that the United Nations Secretariat

and UNAMID will continue to pass on their rich experience and lessons learned to UNITAMS so that the Mission can better fulfil its mandate in supporting the transition in the Sudan and address current challenges in the country. We look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report in October this year on the lessons learned from UNAMID's experience.

In conclusion, Vietnam re-emphasizes its firm commitment to supporting the Sudan in this transitional chapter towards long-term peace and stability.

**Mr. Mills** (United States of America): I thank the Under-Secretary-General for his comprehensive brief. More importantly, I thank him for his leadership in ensuring that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) drew down in an exceptionally short period of time, given the extreme logistical constraints that the drawdown presented.

The United States joins others in thanking all UNAMID personnel for their strong commitment to advancing peace and security, from 2007 until 2020. We recognize the leadership of the United Nations and the African Union, as well as the service of the troop- and the police-contributing countries that protected civilians and advanced peace in Darfur.

While UNAMID experienced many challenges, the mission played a critical role in protecting civilians and stabilizing the region. Nonetheless, as many have noted, the root causes of violence in Darfur remain, and many areas continue to experience intercommunal violence, human rights violations and large-scale displacements. We therefore welcome the Government of the Sudan's national plan to protect civilians, and we urge Sudanese authorities to fully implement this plan, particularly in developing community-policing initiatives for displaced persons in Darfur.

Sudanese leaders must also enable full vetting of Darfur's new joint security force so that all stakeholders can have confidence in it. We emphasize that the primary responsibility for protecting civilians remains with the Government of the Sudan. We support the full utilization by the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) of its mandated authority to assist the Sudan in protecting civilians and building trust between Darfuris and the new joint force. We urge the Government of the Sudan to take full advantage of this assistance and actively cooperate with the Mission.

Now that UNAMID has entered its liquidation phase, the United States is especially concerned about the potential security risk to United Nations personnel and assets at UNAMID's former logistics base at Al Fasher. The United States strongly encourages the United Nations to use its good offices with leaders in Darfur to ensure that United Nations staff can continue the liquidation and that Sudanese authorities protect those now-handed-over team sites so that, as we heard, they can be used as health clinics, training centres and other community facilities. Our shared goal is to avoid any further violence or insecurity over these sites and to ensure civilian use of former UNAMID assets.

Let me close by saying the United States remains committed to the people of the Sudan and to working closely with the transitional Government, with our fellow members of the Security Council, with UNITAMS and with all stakeholders to support the Sudan's political transition to democratic rule.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

I would first like to thank Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his briefing and welcome the presence of the representative of Sudan with us in the Council Chamber.

For my part, I would like to stress three points, first of all, to commend the efforts of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the Department of Operational Support aimed at implementing the UNAMID withdrawal within the deadlines that had been set. This was an extremely major logistical challenge, which the United Nations was able to meet.

The cooperation of the Sudanese authorities helped to overcome the obstacles at the local level. That cooperation must continue, of course, throughout the UNAMID liquidation period, which is not over, so as to ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, as well as the protection of equipment and other holdings, as has been mentioned.

My second point concerns the withdrawal of UNAMID, which is the result of the Sudan's political will to assume full responsibility for the security of the population in Darfur. Naturally, this political will is to be welcomed. It is a necessary condition for a lasting peace. However, incidents on the ground since the

beginning of the year show that this is not enough. I am thinking first of all of the intercommunal clashes that took place in January and April. I am also thinking of the looting of several sites that had been handed over to the Sudanese authorities by UNAMID.

We encourage the Sudanese authorities to speed up the implementation of the Juba agreements, with the support of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), and to deploy the joint force provided for in these agreements as soon as possible. We also call on all armed groups that have signed the agreements to return to the Sudan and on non-signatory groups to join the peace process.

Finally, for my last point, France will remain particularly attentive to the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS. This process is essential for the success of the democratic transition in the Sudan, which is a priority for France. However, it also holds lessons for current and future transitions of peacekeeping operations. In particular, implementation of the necessary human and financial resources must receive our full attention. We will have the opportunity to examine these issues in greater depth under the Irish presidency of the Security Council in September.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

**Mr. Mohammed** (Sudan): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Atul Khare for his briefing.

Following the termination of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) by the Security Council in accordance with resolution 2559 (2020), Sudanese authorities at the federal and local levels fully cooperated with the mission to ensure an orderly and safe withdrawal of troops, personnel and equipment. In this regard, a framework agreement was signed last March between the Sudan and the Secretariat, represented by Mr. Khare, to govern this process.

As the withdrawal phase has come to completion, the Sudan is committed to positively engaging with the Secretariat during the liquidation period. We would like to emphasize that during liquidation the UNAMID base in El Fasher will be protected by Sudanese guard units to enhance safety within the perimeter of the base

and ensure that assets and contingent-owned equipment can be safely repatriated.

We would like to note that the former UNAMID team sites in Darfur, which have been handed over to the local authorities, will be protected and used for civilian purposes, in line with the framework agreement. These facilities will be assigned and used for health care, education and other social services as identified by the local communities.

As the mission enters its liquidation phase, we would like to emphasize that it is critically important for the Secretariat to carry out and complete environmental clean-up and restoration and dispose of hazardous materials, including expired ammunition, in accordance with the established practices in this regard. This task must be completed as soon as possible and prior to the end of the liquidation period.

I would like to stress that the transitional Government of the Sudan is committed to carrying out its responsibility to protect its people in Darfur after UNAMID's exit, in line with the national plan for civilian protection. With the Juba Peace Agreement, the protective environment in Darfur has been greatly strengthened and special emphasis is now being placed on displaced persons, children, women and other vulnerable groups. The Juba Peace Agreement-

mandated joint force, comprised of the Sudanese Armed Forces and former combatants of armed groups, is currently being deployed to improve civilian protection.

While shouldering its responsibility to protect, the Sudan will ensure adherence to and compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights best practices. Let me take this opportunity to praise the contributions and sacrifices of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and its troop- and police-contributing countries throughout its 13-year existence in Darfur. The people of Darfur will remain thankful for their sacrifices and contributions to peace and security.

We are aware of some remaining challenges in Darfur. My Government assures the Council that it will work closely with the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) and other bilateral, regional and international partners to effectively address them. We call on the Security Council to continue to support the work of UNITAMS as the Mission carries out its mandate. For its part, the Sudan shall support UNITAMS in order to implement its strategic objectives, as mandated by the Security Council.

*The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.*