



**Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
(RJMEC)**

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE 37TH MEETING OF THE RECONSTITUTED JOINT
MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMISSION HELD ON 8TH AUGUST 2024 AT
BEIJING JUBA HOTEL, SOUTH SUDAN**

The Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) convened its 37th meeting on 8th August 2024 in Juba, South Sudan from 10: 58am. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Amb. Maj Gen (rtd) Charles Tai Gituai, Interim Chairperson of the RJMEC.

Agenda

1. Opening Prayers
2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Adoption of the Minutes of the 36th RJMEC Meeting
5. Statement by the RJMEC Interim Chairperson
6. Report from the RTGoNU
7. Report from the NTC
8. Briefing from the UNMISS SRSG
9. Reports from Political and Legal Institutions
 - a. NEC
 - b. NCRC
 - c. PPC
10. Reports from Security Mechanisms
 - a. CTSAMVM
 - b. JDB
 - c. SDSR Board
 - d. JTSC
 - e. JMCC
 - f. DDR Commission
11. Discussions
12. Review of the Resolution
13. Date for the Next Meeting
14. A.O.B
15. Chairperson's Closing Remarks
16. Closing Prayers.

Attendance:

For the Parties to the R-ARCSS:

1. Hon. Dr. Martin Elia Lomuro (ITGoNU)
2. Hon. Mary Nawai Martin (ITGoNU)
3. Hon. Gatwech Lam Puoch (SPLM/A- IO)
4. Hon. Sandra Bona Malwal (SPLM/A-IO)
5. Hon. Margaret Girma Lukurnyang (SSOA)
6. Maj. Gen. Bior Leek Kuareng (FD)
7. Hon. Wilson Lodiong Sebit (OPP)

For the Other South Sudanese Stakeholders and Adherents:

1. Most Rev. Moses Deng Bol (Faith-based Leader)
2. Ms Florence Agiba (Youth)
3. Mrs. Norah Zangabeyo (Women Bloc)
4. Dr Angelina Bazugba (Academia)
5. Mrs Yar Manoa (Business Community)
6. Mrs. Mr. David Kulang Cany (Business Community)
7. Mr. Akuoch Ajang Nyanhom (CSO Alliance)
8. Mr. Taban A. Christopher (CSO Forum)

For the Regional Guarantors:

1. Mr. Rabeh Mohamed (Djibouti)
2. H.E Nebil Mahdi (Ethiopia)
3. Mr. Grephas Ogutu (Kenya)
4. Mr. Job E. Elogu (Uganda)
5. H.E. Yohannes Tekle Michael (Eritrea)
6. Mr. Tukur Maigari (Nigeria)
7. H.E. Mahlodi Sam Muofhe (South Africa)
8. Dr. Prosper Addo (AUMISS)
9. Mr. Goram Goraish (Sudan)
10. Mr Mearuf Nurhusein (IGAD)

For International Partners and Friends of South Sudan:

1. H.E. Michael Alder (US)
2. Mr. Geraint Rees (UK)
3. Mr. Lars P. Henie (Norway)
4. Mr. Lothar Jaschke (EU)
5. H.E Ma Qiang (China)
6. Mr. Bouwe-Jan Smeding (IPF)
7. Mr. Guang Cong (UNMISS).

For RJMEC Secretariat:

1. Amb. Berhanu Kebede, Chief of Staff
2. Mr Oola Stephen, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Advisor
3. Ms. Frida Lyaruu (Secretary to the Plenary).

For Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms:

1. Hon. Agok Makur (PFM-OC)
2. Hon. Stephen Dut Deng (PFM-OC)
3. Ustaz Stephen Wiw Bichiok (NTC)
4. Maj. Gen Jacob Nyier Gatkuoth (JDB)
5. Brig. Hoth Giw Chan (JDB)
6. Lt Gen. Ashhab F. Fahal (JDB)
7. Maj. Gen Charles Machieng (JDB)
8. Mr. Angelo Madut (SDSR Board)
9. Maj. Gen. Pal Yiech Lam (JMCC Secretariat)
10. Lt. Gen. Dr. Olaw Adiang Nijok (JTSC)
11. Hon. Wilson Lual Lual (DDR Commission)
12. Maj Gen. Yitayal Gelaw (CTSAMVM)
13. Hon. Dr. Peter James Ladu (PPC)

14. Prof. Abednego Akok Kacuol (NEC)
15. Hon. Dr. Riang Yar Zuor (NCRC)

Observers:

1. Mr. Sencer Kagan Senol (Turkiye)
2. Kentaro Takada (Japan)
3. Mr. Marius Hochsstrasse (Switzerland)
4. Mr. Saeed Ezzat (Egypt)
5. Ms. Maryam Jaji Suleiman (UNWOMEN)
6. Mr. Lukas Dissnagd (Germany)
7. Ms. Catherine Waliaula (UNDP)
8. H.E. Kossam Mupezeni (Zimbabwe)
9. Ms. Wanjiku Nyoike (UNHCR)

List of Acronyms

CTSAMVM	Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism
CTC	CTSAMVM Technical Committee
CTRH	Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ITGoNU	Incumbent Transitional Government of National Unity
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JDB	Joint Defence Board
JMCC	Joint Military Ceasefire Commission
JRC	Judicial Reform Committee
JSC	Judicial Services Commission
JTSC	Joint Transitional Security Committee
MoFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
MoJCA	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
NCAC	National Constitutional Amendment Committee
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NCRC	National Constitutional Review Commission
NEC	National Elections Commission
NUF	Necessary Unified Forces
NTC	National Transitional Committee
PSC	Preparatory Sub-Committee
PPC	Political Parties Council
RJMEC	Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
R-ARCSS	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
RTGoNU	Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity
SDSR-B	Strategic Defence and Security Review Board
SRF	Special Reconstruction Fund
SSOA	South Sudan Opposition Alliance
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition
SSPDF	South Sudan People's Defence Force
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan

Min. 01/37/24: Opening Prayers

1. Mrs. Norah Zangaboi and Sheik Dimba Shafic Taban led the opening prayers.

Min. 02/37/24: Chairperson's Opening Remarks

2. The Chairperson welcomed the members to the 37th RJMEC meeting.

Min. 03/37/24: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The agenda was adopted without any amendment.

Min. 04/37/24: Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4. The minutes of the 36th meeting was reviewed and adopted without amendments. It was proposed, seconded and adopted as the true record of the meeting as follows:
 - 4.1. Proposer: Hon. Gatwech Lam Puoch, representative of the SPLM/A-IO.
 - 4.2. Seconder: Hon. Sandra Bona Malwal, representative of the SPLM/A-IO.

Min. 05/37/24 Statement by the RJMEC Interim Chairperson

5. The chairperson welcomed members to the meeting and commended the Republic of South Sudan on marking its 13th independence anniversary during which H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit assured the people that his government would continue to pursue peace and prosperity. In addition, he stated that whereas the work of building South Sudan continues with elections scheduled for December 2024, there was little clarity regarding the position of the RTGoNU and the Parties over the conduct of elections, and implementation of critical elections-related tasks which remained pending. He also updated members on his various engagements, including with FVP Dr. Riek Machar and VP Hussein Abdelbagi, the TNLA, and the Chief Mediator of the Tumaini Initiative, among others, on the status of implementation of the R-ARCSS;
 - 5.1. The chairperson concluded by seeking clarity from that the Parties on the way forward to elections; recommended provision of the necessary resources and logistics to the Agreement institutions and mechanisms; completion of the redeployment of the unified forces, including unification of the mid-level command echelon, and commencement of Phase II training and the DDR; and expeditious passage of the National Audit Chamber Act. Further, noted that lack of adequate elections preparedness and progress in unification of forces progress was causing anxiety among the population of South Sudan as barely five months were left to elections.

Min. 06/37/24: Report from the RTGoNU

6. The RTGoNU representative, apologised for not having a written report since he had just returned to the country. However, he briefed that the High-level Standing Committee (HLSC) completed evaluation of the Roadmap. The Parties to the Agreement also provided their inputs on the way forward which would be shared.
 - 6.1. He provided the history of the Nairobi-based Tumaini Initiative which succeeded the Rome Initiative (talks). The Tumaini Initiative was to identify issues the non-signatories felt of concerns which resulted in their withdrawal from the R-ARCSS that require peace mediation. Further he informed that the RTGoNU received the Tumaini Protocols from its delegation, conducted a comparative analysis and the report was to be discussed and

presented to the President on 20th August 2024 for political guidance on the way forward. He reported that the analysis revealed deviations and repetition of some provision of the R-ARCSS.

- 6.2. The member shared the recommendations in the report as follows: (a) the Tumaini Initiative should align with and complement the R-ARCSS; (b) existing institutions should be strengthened and not new ones should be created to maintain the legitimacy of the RTGoNU; (c) the Tumaini Consensus should remove or re-align structures and mechanisms that contradict R-ARCSS, such as the High-Level Panel, National Leadership Council, National Implementation and Oversight Committee, and Security Sector Reform and Oversight Commission, and integrate them into the current mechanisms outlined in the R-ARCSS, while addressing weaknesses within existing structures; (d) the initialed Tumaini Consensus needs a review to align with the R-ARCSS; (e) the Tumaini Initiative should focus on peace and collaboration to address ongoing conflicts, ensuring unity and coherence in approach.
- 6.3. Further, he wondered how the mediators would become donors. Whilst the Tumaini Initiative has the potential to enhance the implementation of R-ARCSS, the member noted that it must align with it to avoid confusion or instability. He concluded by reiterating the RTGoNU's support to the Tumaini Initiative and that the former would like the holdout groups to return home and prepare for elections.

Min. 07/37/24: Report from the NTC

7. The representative of the NTC apologized for not having a written report. However, he stated that the NTC had not done any activity in July 2024 due to lack of funding. Meanwhile, it held a meeting and discussed the deployment of the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) of the NUF. A report of the IGP instructing the team to start deployment with an exception to the Wildlife had been circulated. Further, he informed that the NTC was yet to receive funding since January 2024 to support the mechanisms implementing the R-ARCSS. Lack of implementation was also affecting submission of its progress reports to the RJMEC.

Min. 08/37/24: Briefing from UNMISS SRSG

8. UNMISS SRSG congratulated South Sudan on its 13th Independence Day anniversary and honored fallen heroes. In addition, he briefed that: (a) Nairobi negotiations progressed, resulting in agreements on several protocol, and the High-Level Standing Committee of the parties in Juba completed its report on the Roadmap implementation; (b) there is an urgent need for alignment between the Tumaini Initiative and the Revitalized Peace Agreement, and clarity on remaining tasks in the Roadmap; (c) with five months until elections, minimal progress in electoral and constitutional preparations noted. In that regard, UNMISS, AUMISS, and IGAD stressed the importance of consensus-based decision-making as per Revitalized Agreement protocols, procedures and timelines; (d) concerns have been raised over the National Security Service Bill on it impacts on civic, political, and personal liberties, requiring the President's redress and provision of clear directives; and (e) progress in the Revitalized Peace Agreement is critical, especially in Transitional Security Arrangements (TSA), requiring the Security Mechanisms needed to act swiftly to complete Phase I and Phase II unification. Progress in TSA will give confidence and mitigate subnational violence, and prevent a return to large-scale conflict.
- 8.1. The SRSG also noted the following: the economic crisis in South Sudan is exacerbated by the depreciation of the SSP against the US dollar, affecting purchasing power and making it difficult for the population to meet basic needs; the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, which

aims to assist 6 million people, is only 30.8 percent funded. Humanitarian efforts are focusing on 31 counties in the Greater Upper Nile, Abyei Administrative Area and other areas of greater need; the national men's basketball team, Bright Stars, has demonstrated that with unity, progress can be achieved; and President Kiir's Martyrs Day message emphasized the importance of hard work towards peace and unity.

- 8.2. He concluded by reiterating that political transition in South Sudan was set for February 2025, demanding leadership and commitment from all parties, and that the United Nations, along with trilateral partners IGAD and AU, reaffirm support for credible elections and durable peace for future generations.

Statement by the IGAD

- 8.3. IGAD commended the progress made in the ongoing peace mediation between the RTGoNU and the holdout groups in Nairobi and urged all parties to finalize the remaining issues. However, he noted that the implementation of the R-ARCSS, including electoral preparations were slow, with no signs of holding elections in December 2024 as planned. It is hoped that the outcome of the concluded inter-party dialogue and the recommendations made to the Presidency would pave the way forward. He urged all parties in the Tumaini Initiative to show compromise and not to divide along political lines.
- 8.4. Furthermore, IGAD raised concerns regarding the economic difficulties and flooding impacting South Sudan, urging all parties to cooperate. The member called for enhanced coordination between UN agencies and the RTGoNU. Despite these challenges, IGAD acknowledged the progress made in implementing the R-ARCSS and reaffirmed its commitment to promoting inclusivity, effective implementation of the R-ARCSS, and stability in the region.

Statement by the AUMISS

- 8.5. The AUMISS extended congratulations to the people of South Sudan on the 13th anniversary of their independence, emphasizing the importance of continuing the pursuit of peace. They expressed commitment to fostering transition and good governance within the country. Hope was expressed that inter-party dialogue would facilitate lasting peace, with an emphasis on the crucial role of dialogue, trust, and confidence in shaping the future of South Sudan. Additionally, they applauded the Bright Starts initiative for its positive impact on South Sudan and the broader African continent.

Statement by the Civil Society Alliance

- 8.6. Dr. Lomuro was thanked for critically analyzing the Tumaini initiative, aligning with the sentiments of the civil society organizations. Concerns were raised regarding the escalating insecurity in South Sudan, highlighting specific incidents such as road ambushes on the Yei-Morobo Road and the tragic loss of 12 citizens in Equatoria. The delay in deploying the NUF was questioned, with calls for the RTGoNU to expedite this process and initiate Phase II of the NUF. Additionally, there were concerns regarding Articles 54 and 55 of the National Security Services (NSS) Bill, previously passed by the RTNLA, and whether it had been enacted given the constitutional time lapse. An appeal was made to the President not to sign the NSS Bill, citing fears that it could undermine fundamental freedoms. The issue of inflation impacting the South

Sudanese Pound was also addressed, urging the RTGoNU to mitigate the influence of the black market. Finally, there was a call for the RTGoNU to allocate resources for the effective implementation of the R-ARCSS.

Statement by the EU

- 8.7. The EU thanked the Chair for the statement, noting the R-ARCSS needs to be expedited, including TSA and deployment of the NUF. The EU calls for political decisions that facilitate free, fair, credible, and peaceful elections, alongside a need for consultative and inclusive dialogue. The EU has played a significant role as the primary financial supporter of UN initiatives aimed at fostering a conducive electoral environment, and the 10 points of UNMISS communicated to the Government a year ago, while the Constitution Making Act 2022 is highlighted as pivotal for the country's constitutional development and transitional justice efforts.
- 8.8. However, delays in Chapter 3 have intensified the suffering of the population and hampered inclusivity. The EU is also focused on enhancing agricultural capabilities to bolster resilience, improve productivity, address food security, and mitigate climate change effects. The regional engagement from IGAD, the African Union, neighboring states, and South Africa is encouraged to fortify the South Sudan peace process. Furthermore, the EU supports the Tumaini Initiative, which aims to ensure civil society participation in peacebuilding, electoral processes, and constitutional formulation, and urges the government to tackle impunity, investigate human rights abuses, and create a more open political and civic space.

Statement by the Troika

- 8.9. The Troika urged the RTGoNU to fulfil its commitment to the people of South Sudan by implementing the R-ARCSS, noting with only five months left until elections, the RTGoNU and the parties must intensify their efforts to create conditions for genuine and peaceful elections, advancing peace, human rights, and democracy. They called for a leadership-level inter-party dialogue, including the President, FVP, and other leaders, to make genuine and peaceful elections possible.
- 8.10. On the Tumaini Initiative, it provides a foundation for the inclusion of non-signatory groups to sustain peace and complements the implementation of the R-ARCSS.
- 8.11. The Troika expressed concerns about the passage of NSS Act that gives the NSS the authority to conduct arrests and detentions without warrants, as it would undermine the RTGoNU's assertions of political and civic space, if entered into force. Further, they expressed concerns that security sector reform is not taking place as agreed, with deployment remaining at 7% of the planned 83,000 forces and limited to the SSPDF. This is necessary to counter the growing impact of intercommunal violence and to create a conducive environment for political campaigns before the elections; and noted that the coming months would be challenging, with over 3 million people potentially affected by floods, 750,000 returnees and refugees seeking shelter, and teachers and public servants experiencing significant salary arrears. The Troika reiterated its continued support to the people of South Sudan, noting, however, that it was imperative that the RTGoNU provides the necessary resources to the most vulnerable groups in response to escalating needs.

Statement by the IPF

- 8.12. The IPF expressed concerns about the slow pace of implementation of the South Sudan Peace Agreement, as only six months remain until the end of the Transitional Period. It underscored its supports to the Tumaini Initiative, being a continuation of Rome peace talks and not a replacement for the R-ARCSS. However, it underlined concerns with recent developments where the SPLM-IO withdrew its participation, leading to a stalemate.
- 8.13. They observed the impact of deteriorating situation of South Sudan's economy and humanitarian situation, particularly on women and youth. The IPF called for prioritization of the delayed 2024/2025 budget and salary payments to build confidence and trust among the people. Further, IPF noted that only eight battalions of the army from the graduated NUF are deployed, and the unified middle command structure were not agreed upon.
- 8.14. The IPF further took note of the report that the High-Level Standing Committee for the implementation of the R-ARCSS completed an assessment on the implementation and urged the plenary to update on the way forward, as elections might take place in December 2024. The IPF representative emphasized the importance of focusing on the interests of the population of South Sudan, including sufficient time and opportunity for civic education on elections to ensure peaceful, credible, and free elections.

Statement by China

- 8.15. China noted that the peace process in South Sudan has seen new developments, with stakeholders engaging in dialogue. He commended the High-Level Standing Committee for reviewing the implementation status of the Revitalized Agreement and the Roadmap, and for submitting a report to the Presidency. Further, he urged all parties to prioritize the country and people's interests, resolve differences, build consensus through dialogue and consultation.
- 8.16. Additionally, he expressed hopes that all parties could work together to maintain peace and stability, explore a development path that suits South Sudan's national conditions, and respect its sovereignty. China also called on the international community to increase humanitarian and development assistance to help South Sudan overcome difficulties. He reiterated China's commitment on providing humanitarian assistance and support to South Sudan's development with concrete actions. In conclusion, he informed that the next Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing will further deepen cooperation with South Sudan in energy, infrastructure, agriculture, education, health, and other fields.

Min. 9/37/24: Reports from Institutions and Mechanisms on progress in implementation of the R-ARCSS:

9. The following are the reports from the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms:

Report from the (PFM-OC)

- 9.1. The Public Finance Management-Oversight Committee (PFM-OC) met 82 times, drafted over 345 resolutions, and supported incremental growth in revenue mobilization. Further, it conducted capacity building workshops for accounting officers, PFM working groups, and change agents, supported by the development partners and the Government;

- 9.2. Furthermore, the PFM-OC supported legal reforms of 24 laws through the NCAC and supervised the establishment and operationalization of the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Authority (PPDAA). Generally, planned activities in all the 11 priority areas have been successfully executed.
- 9.3. However, challenges in the PFM-reform process include reduced government revenues due to the conflict in Sudan; low technical capacity and exposure for some staff; and resistance to change in different ministries and agencies.
- 9.4. The PFM-OC's medium-term plans include enhancing revenue mobilization, supporting the productive sector, promoting accountability institutions, supporting capacity building and skills transfer, and promoting transparency and accountability in the management of government funds.

Report from the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC)

- 9.5. The NCRC conducted a capacity building training in June 2024 on constitutional issues relevant to South Sudan, including judicial independence, separation of powers, federalism, local government, traditional authority, and media role in constitution-making. Some progress was made in institutional strengthening through renovation of NCRC's facilities, with assistance from its partner, UNDP. The partner was expected to assist in reactivating NCRC's internet facility. However, renovation of the main meeting hall, office of the Secretary General, and construction of the CDC, remained incomplete due to financial constraints.

Report from the Political Parties Council (PPC)

- 9.6. The PPC prioritized several areas, including political party registration, capacity strengthening, transparency, and empowering political parties. The Council's milestones achieved since the last plenary, included the establishment of new headquarters, full registration of 15 new parties, institutional strengthening (e.g., website development, branding, purchasing office essentials, furniture, media equipment, and consumables, and re-organization of the organization). Held a joint meeting with AUMISS, IGAD, UNMISS and RJMEC leadership in July and updated them on its activities and preparedness for the elections. The PPC also held strategic discussions with partners and media to inform the public on the PPC's mandate and activities.
- 9.7. The PPC plans to undertake the following tasks: (a) unveil its 'Advanced Registration System'; (b) register mergers and pre-election coalitions; (c) recruit personnel workforce; (d) train ICT personnel (e) establish offices in the States, Administrative Area; (f) recruit coordinators and inspectors; and (g) begin enrolment of members of political parties from September 2024.

Min. 10/37/24: Report from the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM)

10. The CTSAMVM Chair reported no serious ceasefire incidents between Parties to the Agreement since the last meeting. However, CTSAMVM identified several areas of concern, including tensions in some communities, recurrent clashes, and SGBV. CTSAMVM initiated an investigation into an armed clash between SSPDF and SPLM/A-IO forces at Motot Payam in Uror County, Jonglei State. There were no confirmed instances of SGBV attributable to members of the R-ARCSS, but a rape in Yambio County was being addressed within the legal system. Soldiers' actions negatively impact civilians and violate the Agreement, and it is crucial to prevent escalation in tensions;
- 10.1. CTSAMVM observed slow progress in the deployment of the NUF, with eight military battalions deployed so far. The Presidency agreed to initiate phase two training of the NUF within two weeks, but no further information was received. CTSAMVM visited Kaljak, Muom, and Masina Bira

Training Centers and Ngo Halima and Bong Cantonment Sites, but most graduates had returned to their home villages in search of work. Lack of food and medicine was the most pressing logistical challenge among the Training Centers visited;

- 10.2. There are no changes to the number of civilian areas/buildings occupied by military forces, and CTSAMVM reminded the signatory parties to vacate all occupied civilian areas as stipulated within the R-ARCSS. Three CTSAMVM Board Meetings and two CTSAMVM Technical Committee meetings were held since the previous RJMEC plenary, with two reports discussed and published. One report references an armed exchange between the Unity State Governor's convoy protection detail and SPLM/A-IO forces in Jamus/Barkur, reminding both parties to uphold agreements, cease hostile military actions, and respect civilian protection under Articles 2.1.10.7.2 of the R-ARCSS, Article 3.2(a) and 5.1 of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

Report from the Joint Defence Board (JDB)

- 10.3. The JDB's informed that the Parties to the R-ARCSS were observing the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, despite security challenges in parts of the country primarily due to inter-communal violence. The JDB was working with the Organized Forces to expedite the deployment of the NUF, graduated in Phase I. However, all logistics including food items, were exhausted, necessitating the more food items. The challenges include the lack of funds for the deployment, medicine, food in training centers and assembly areas, for running the day-to-day activities of the Transitional Security Arrangements, and a lack of remuneration for the Security Mechanisms since 2019. The JDB reiterated its appreciation to the leadership of the Parties, the RTGoNU, IGAD, its Special Envoy, and its partners and friends of South Sudan for their support in the South Sudan peace process.

Report from the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) Board

- 10.4. The SDSR-B held a 2-day workshop on strategic models for Security Sector Reforms in July 2024, guided by an African Union expert. The Board was fine-tuning documents for submission to principals. However, the Board faces lack of funding, which hinders progress and timely completion of its tasks.

Report from the Joint Military Ceasefire Commission (JMCC)

- 10.5. The JMCC prepared a budget for Phase II activities, but faces lack of incentives, allowances, and food for cantonment sites and barracks. The deployment and confirmation list of NUFs for opposition in training centers and cantonment sites were yet to be signed by the President. In that regard, the JMCC appealed to NTC, RJMEC, CTSAMVM, and UNMISS to facilitate their members to deliver food to cantonment sites and barracks, and for incentives and accommodations to JMCC members.

Report from the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Commission

- 10.6. The Community Violence Reduction (CVR) pilot project in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal State, graduated 100 beneficiaries in life skills, including 50 ex-combatants and 50 conflict-affected communities. The skills acquired will help secure jobs or start businesses, reducing violence and promoting social cohesion. The project aims to inform donors and partners to support CVR implementation, inform decision-making bodies to consider CVR as a component of DDR integration programs, and harmonize CVR activities and projects. A total 104 beneficiaries completed their three-month training in driving, computer literacy, art and design, and carpentry.

- 10.7. DDRC faced challenges including persistent lack of funding and lack of prioritization and empowerment from the Commission. In 2024, the Commission has been engaging stakeholders to support the implementation of the CVR program and construct transitional facilities if funds are made available. Furthermore, it appealed to the China Embassy to honour the \$ 2 million USD it pledged in 2021 to support the mobile demobilization centre in Central Equatoria. The Commission plans to kickstart a rollout exercise after having finalised an assessment of 2,000 ex-combatant awaiting to convert them into proper civilians once funding was secured.

Min. 11/37/24: Discussions on Statements and Reports

11. Members welcomed the statement of the RJMEC Chairperson and reports from the RTGoNU, the DSRSG, and the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms. In addition, the following issues were raised and discussed:
- 11.1. *SPLM/A-IO*: Asked for more clarity on the \$75,000 registration fees for Political Parties. It was understood that the legal opinion of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) would prevail on the way forward.
- 11.2. *CSO Forum*: Asked the Chairperson of NEC on how people will ensure that those nominated were not nominated in favor of the President or the Party. Questioned if PPC had a strategy on how it would treat the principals whose parties were not registered by the closure of registration on 30th June 2024.
- 11.3. *Business Community*: Asked for more clarity on how the PPC purchased 1,000 laptops and whether it followed the government procurement procedure or purchased the equipment's from a single source;
- 11.4. *Academia*: Asked the PPC to correct the word parity from its report which meant 50/50 and not 35%. Requested to be briefed as to when voter registration would commence since the NEC Chairperson announced the elections date. Additionally, she requested for more clarification on the issue of voter registration after being informed that the CSOs or the people to conduct the civic education would need to be certified by the Political Parties Council;
- 11.5. *RJMEC*: The Interim Chairperson enquired to know whether elections were to be conducted as announced by the Chairperson of NEC and if so when voter registration would start.
- 11.6. *PPC*: The Chairperson of the PPC thanked the RJMEC member for her clarity on the word parity and promised to rephrase the language on the gender quota. He informed members that the PPC logo included the Abyei Administrative Area as expected. The purchase of the equipment for the Council was done with transparency and followed all the Government procurement procedures. The end of the transitional period will be marked by elections. He advised the parties who were not registered to register since registration was a continuous process, reiterating that PPC would not bend the laws for the parties not registered before elections. He noted that the \$ 75,000 parties' registration fees stipulated in the PPC Act is payable at the South Sudanese Pound prevailing rate at the time of registration.
- 11.7. *NEC*: Reported that members were nominated by the Parties and their names submitted to NEC. Further, the issue of civic and voter registration is clarified on the Elections Calendar which NEC submitted to the principals for making a political decision before sharing it with the citizens.
- 11.8. *RTGoNU*: Refuted the information circulating that the Roadmap was implemented at 10% and further requested the members to refrain from making conclusion until the report was endorsed by the Principals. He noted that PPC was established recently and was doing well for

the first time, with professionals who were never present in the past. The NEC submitted Elections Calendar which awaited the decision of the Presidency. He informed the NCRC that the official government exchange rate was used for the initial disbursement of the funds to the Commission though budgeted and approved in USD.

- 11.9. *SPLM/IO*: Underscored that the R-ARCSS should have been implemented in later and spirit and not otherwise. The member noted that the NUF should have been unified before electoral process kickstarted which would foresee other parties not having military wings. The member called on the PPC to be impartial, and that the legal opinion from the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) must be binding to the Council. He asked the Chair to invite the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to attend the RJMEC meeting to be able to clarify to the members.
- 11.10. *South Africa*: Expressed his disappointment for not being able to support the country to conduct an election. He reiterated South Africa's support to the RTGoNU to embark on a democratic election as planned in December 2024. He expressed that the AU C5 was chaired by South Africa and was operating from Addis Ababa, noting that in 2022, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa tried to convene the AUC5, and it did not materialise. However, he promised to engage the Minister of Justice of South Africa to try and attempt to convene the AU C5 at Ministerial level in Addis Ababa. The member reiterated his intention to engage Hon. Dr. Elia Lomuro to engage the President of South Sudan to approach the President of South Africa to call for the AU C5 meeting of the Heads of State to gauge support from the neighboring and African countries to South Sudan. The member underscored that most people from different parts of South Sudan were looking forward to a democratic election this December 2024.
- 11.11. *RTGoNU*: Commended the bilateral support and friendship between South Sudan and South Africa that has seen interest for support in good faith. While visiting South Africa, the member submitted the budget to support different institutions and mechanisms to the government and will continue to engage the South African leadership for support.
- 11.12. *CSO Forum*: Raised concerns on the contradictory statements between the CTSAMVM that reported clashes in Motot Payam in Uror County, while that of the JDB claimed the situation was normal. He urged the Mechanisms to be transparent in reporting actual incidents to help the leadership to make right decisions to neutralise the situation. Further questioned on what happens to the reports submitted by the committees set to investigate an incident which are expected to recommend on what needs to be done. The member also raised concerns on what would happen if the JMCC was prepared for Phase II of the NUF while the Phase I forces were undeployed.
- 11.13. *Women Bloc*: Asked what the future size of the army would be and advised the heads of the organised forces to streamline the number of recruits that would be needed. Emphasised that the army was expected to be a nonpartisan and not aligning themselves with political parties in order to instil confidence in the population. In addressing the issue of economic crisis facing the country, she underscored that soldiers were expected to produce for themselves and some of their harvest to be sold in the markets.
- 11.14. *Faith Based*: Expressed that despite the R-ARCSS having reduced the overall political conflict in South Sudan, however, it had also brought in a number of challenges such as the intercommunal violence that had increased since it was signed in 2018. Others included the worsened economic crisis which weakened South Sudanese Pounds; the slow implementation of the R-ARCSS; shrinking political space worsened by the NSS Bill passed by the Parliament; and the issue of the holdout group. If the Parties felt that the R-ARCSS was implemented in letter and spirit, then the country should embark on elections in December 2024 and if it wasn't

possible due to challenges then they should opt for the Tumaini Initiative. He echoed that if both wouldn't bring changes then an inclusive dialogue would be preferred rather than depending on the unilateral decisions by the party's alone without the listening to the views of the citizens.

- 11.15. *Business Community*: Shared concerns that the RTGoNU violated the R-ARCSS and failed to implement the R-ARCSS and the Roadmap pushing the country to a survival stage. Also, that the RTGoNU spearheaded implementation of tasks that did not change the status quo of the country leaving the economy to dwindle. She called on the RTGoNU to put more efforts in Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS.
- 11.16. *Youth*: Expressed that youth engagement was always forgotten by the PPC and NCRC and requested NEC and PPC to look into it. The member commended the RTGoNU Minister for Cabinet Affairs on clarifying the issues on the Tumaini Initiative. However, she appealed to the Minister to report more on the looming economic situation, hunger in Abyei, etc which were very important. Requested to be informed on the RTGoNU's plans to expedite the enactment of the pending bills, especially those stipulated in the R-ARCSS. The member referenced the minutes of the 36th RJMEC meeting, bullet paragraph 10.31, whereas the TNLA summoned the Cabinet Minister, Governor of the Central Bank and the Minister of Finance on the diverted funds and requested the Minister of Cabinet Affairs to report on the issue to the plenary.
- 11.17. *NEC*: Informed the members on the 1972 Peace Agreement between the Anyanya forces and the Sudan Armed Forces which took a short time to be trained and integrated to one army. Secondly, the level of insecurity wasn't this high. He questioned why the unification of the NUF was taking longer than anticipated, using lots of funds, lacking commitment of the implementers, and where due to the lack of political will of the Parties. This called for the signatories to the Agreement to assess and agree on the way forward.
- 11.18. *PPC*: Questioned the relationship between the political wing that exist among the parties to the Peace Agreement whether there were military mechanisms assessing the existing relationship between the armed forces at the cantonment centres and the political parties in town. Secondly, how the monitoring mechanisms could assist the political parties that missed the deadline to register their parties with PPC when the deadline lapsed, and election was eminent in December 2024 and the fact that the law must be respected.
- 11.19. *RTGoNU*: Responded on the concerns shared that the RTGoNU had failed to implement the Agreement as follows: South Sudan was in war for many years, however, peace prevailed because of the R-ARCSS. The other challenge that contributed to the failure to implement the Agreement was the fact that party signatories to the R-ARCSS were politicised, and to return to the previous status quo required determination and patience. It was the parties to the R-ARCSS that would decide on the way forward. The country has embarked on building a professional national army, police, security and the first time was unifying the forces. In that regard, South Sudan is stuck with the R-ARCSS until elections. However, he reiterated that the challenge was not lack of political will but rather funding worsened by the Sudan war which made it difficult for the RTGoNU to deal with the two Sudanese warring principals. On the Anyanya liberation and integration, he highlighted that the philosophy of liberation and the formation the army of the Anyanya and that of the SPLA were very different from the attitude, generation and the intension. Advised the stakeholders not to panic with regards to the NSS Bill, until the opinion of MoJCA was presented to the President. He underscored that the Tumaini Initiative must be reduced to an annex of the R-ARCSS as recommended by the HLSC. That his summon to appear before the TNLA was a scam and a political defamation case where the \$10 million was paid in South Sudanese Pounds by the Ministry of Finance and Planning to the Ministry for Cabinet Affairs.

- 11.20. *FDs*: Referred to a previous report of NEC to the plenary that election would be managed by the Police and graduated NUF. He underscored that in the streets citizens were prepared and looked forward to the election day. Further asked why the forces had not been paid for the past 9 months, which may push them to be spoilers. He noted that some of the members nominated for the NEC state offices were constitutional post-holders in government from different parties. He then questioned whether the appointees would be impartial.
- 11.21. *SSOA*: Shared her concerns as to why the Chairperson of the PPC was not transparent on the issues of registration fee and the names of the parties already registered when the information should be accessible to the public. She called for an inter-party dialogue to continue since the Tumaini Initiative was to align itself to the R-ARCSS.
- 11.22. *SPLM/A-IO*: Thanked the RTGoNU representative for the informative and transparent briefing on the status quo of the Tumaini Initiative, highlighting the position of the SPLM/A-IO and its withdrawal based on the deviation of the Tumaini Initiative which was expected to align itself with the R-ARCSS. The member commended the analysis of the HLSC on the way forward and called for implementing the R-ARCSS in letter and spirit. Thanked the CTSAMAVM Chairperson for reporting the incident in Nasir County involving the SSPDF soldiers and civilians, who had been in the area for the past 9 years. Expressed that the reason for a conflict between the people of Nasir and civilian was due to the overstay of the forces. He called for the force to be deployed to another place. Additionally, SPLM/IG (SSPDF) also had a military wing in Abyei which had joined hands with Nuer in that area. Informed members that the CTRH and CRA Bills were for the 2nd reading and had been referred and awaited to be tabled for the 3rd and 4th reading before passing them.
- 11.23. *SPLM/A-IO*: Further commended the statement of the RJMEC which was well articulated and covered all the issues on the R-ARCSS. Thanked Hon. Martin Elia Lomuro for the crystal-clear elaboration of the Tumaini Initiative and its deviation from the RARCSS. Highlighted that it was the responsibility of the R-ARCSS to initiate the meeting of the principals and signatories to the R-ARCSS to discuss critical issues of concern which were not being addressed. Advised the inter-party dialogues to urgently commence and inform citizens if at all there would be an election or an extension of the R-ARCSS. Requested for clarity on the government delegation who dismisses rumours on SSBC that the Tumaini Initiative was dead and further calling all the media houses to visit Nairobi. He claimed that peace was around the corner. In this regard, questioned if the RTGoNU delegation in Nairobi continued with the talks as RTGoNU or SPLM-IG since the Tumaini Initiative was misleading and deviating from the R-ARCSS.
- 11.24. *ITGoNU*: Highlighted that the CTRH and CRA bills were for 3rd and 4th reading. Commended all the RJMEC members committed in attending the meeting which was a collective responsibility in addressing the issues concerning the people of South Sudan. Appealed to the members to have patience and wait for the outcome of the meeting of the Presidency on the issue of election. Informed members that the TNLA would not go on recess but would rather continue to discuss and pass the pending bills. Highlighted that the main source of funding for the government of South Sudan was oil, whereas since the outbreak of war in Sudan the country has been suffering and dependent on the non-oil revenue. Meanwhile, the country also had challenges from floods, hunger, the influx of refugees and returnees which hindered the government to pay salaries to its civil servants.
- 11.25. *RTGoNU*: Noted that election revolved around security. The Ministry of Interior established a unit called “Electoral Security Committee” which needed to be strengthened, trained and professionalised to protect the elections. Where there is deficit of forces then government would call for support from the neighbouring countries in the region. This will also ensure election was credible and that there was no suspicion of rigging the elections using security. Reminded

members that the responsibility of the army was to protect the country externally from any aggression. Expressed that most countries in the region did not have tribal elements because they were professional and have a well-established military. In that regard, he reassured the members that election would trigger armed conflict in South Sudan.

Min. 12/37/24: Review of the Resolution

12. The resolution of the meeting was reviewed, and the final version and shared with the members.

Min. 13/37/24: Date for the Next Meeting

13. It was agreed that date for the 38th RJMEC monthly meeting would be on 19th September 2024.

Min. 14/37/24: A.O.B.

14. There was not any other business discussed.

Min. 15/37/24: Chairperson's Closing Remarks

15. The Chairperson appreciated the members for the constructive engagements in the meeting, encouraged them to always remain seized of RJMEC matters and appealed to members to attend the RJMEC plenaries which help to assess the implementation of the R-ARCSS.

Min.16/37/24: Closing Prayers

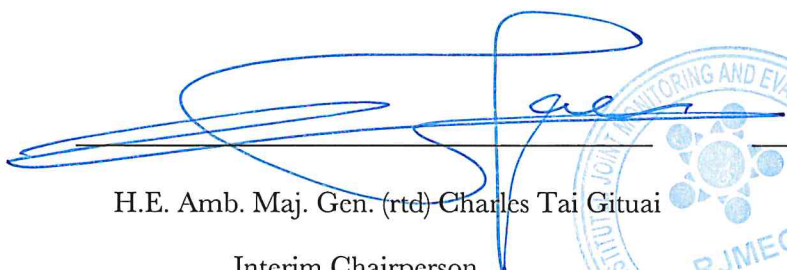
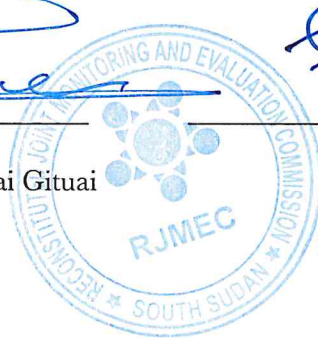
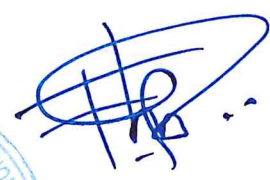
16. Bishop Moses Deng led the closing prayers, and there being no any other business, the 37th RJMEC monthly meeting was adjourned at 15: 35 hours.

Min.17/37/24: Adoption of the Minutes

17. The minutes of the 37th RJMEC meeting are proposed, seconded and adopted as the true record of the meeting as follows:

17.1. Proposer: H.E Guy Warrington, Ambassador of the UK

17.2. Secunder: Hon. Dr. Nadia Arop Dudi, representative of the ITGoNU

		
H.E. Amb. Maj. Gen. (rtd) Charles Tai Gituai		Ms. Frida Lyaruu
Interim Chairperson		Secretary to the Plenary