



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

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE 38TH MEETING OF THE RECONSTITUTED JOINT
MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMISSION HELD ON 31ST OCTOBER 2024 AT
BEIJING JUBA HOTEL, SOUTH SUDAN**

The Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) convened its 38th meeting on 31st October 2024 in Juba, South Sudan from 10: 30am. 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 37th 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. Mary Nawai Martin (ITGoNU)
2. Hon. Michael Chiangtier (ITGoNU)
3. Ho. Nadia Arop Dudi (ITGoNU)
4. Hon. Dr. Joseph Geng Akech (ITGoNU)
5. Hon. Gatwech Lam Puoch (SPLM/A- IO)
6. Hon. Sandra Bona Malwal (SPLM/A-IO)
7. Hon. Margaret Girma Lukurnyang (SSOA)
8. Maj. Gen. Bior Leek Kuareng (FD)
9. Hon. Wilson Lodiong Scbit (OPP)

For the Other South Sudanese Stakeholders and Adherents:

1. Bishop Enock Tombe Stephen (Faith-based Leader) – online
2. Fr. Moses Deng Bol (Faith-based Leader)
3. Sheik Jaralnebi Khamis Mursal (Faith-based Leader)
4. Amb. John Gai (Eminent Personality) - online
5. Ms Florence Agiba (Youth)
6. Mrs. Maria Gideon Gakmar (Women Bloc)
7. Prof. Paulina Riak (Academia)
8. Mrs Yar Manoa Majok (Business Community)
9. Mr. Dabek Mabior Arok (CSO Alliance)

For the Regional Guarantors:

1. Mr. Rabeh Mohamed (Djibouti)
2. Amb. Ababi Demissie (Ethiopia)
3. H.E. Isam Kamar (Sudan)
4. Mr. Job E. Elogu (Uganda)
5. H.E. Yohannes Tekle Michael (Eritrea)
6. Mr. Tukur Maigari (Nigeria)
7. Mr. Luvuyo Mato (South Africa)
8. Dr. Prosper N. Addo (AUMISS)

For International Partners and Friends of South Sudan:

1. Mr. Nolan S. Klein (US)
2. H.E Guy Warrington (UK)
3. Ms. Inger Elisabeth Meyer (Norway)
4. H.E Timo Olkkonen (EU)
5. H.E Ma Qiang (China)
6. Mr. Bouwe-Jan Smeding (IPF)
7. Prof. Nicholas Haysom (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. Lt. Gen. Gabriel Duop Lam (JDB)
2. Lt. Gen Rabi Mujung Emmanuel (JDB)
3. Maj. Gen Jacob Nyier Gatkuoth (JDB)
4. Mr. Angelo Madut (SDSR Board)
5. Maj. Gen Buda John Aban (JMCC Secretariat)
6. Maj. Gen. Pal Yiech Lam (JMCC Secretariat)
7. Lt. Gen. Wesley Welebi Samson (JTSC)
8. Maj Gen. Yitayal Gelaw (CTSAMVM)
9. Hon. Dr. Lona James Ludiyo Elia (PPC)
10. Prof. Abednego Akok Kacuol (NEC)
11. Hon. Dr. Riag Yar Zuor (NCRC)
12. Canon Justice James Ogoola (JRC)

13. Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch (JRC)

Observers:

1. Mr. Sencer Kagan Senol (Turkiye)
2. H.E. Toshio Odagiri (Japan)
3. Mr. Johan Gely (Switzerland)
4. Mr. Saeed Ezzat (Egypt)
5. Ms. Maryam Jaji Sulciman (UNWOMEN)
6. Dr. Bjorn Niere (Germany)
7. Ms. Catherine Waliaula (UNDP)
8. Mr. Brian Vere (Zimbabwe)
9. Bala Joseph (UNHCR)
10. Maj. Ezra Tumwesigye (SSM)

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
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
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. 01/38/24: Opening Prayers

1. Hon. Dr. Lona James Ludiro Elia and Sheik Jaralnebi Khamis Mursal led the opening prayers.

Min. 02/38/24: Chairperson's Opening Remarks

2. The Chairperson welcomed the members to the 38th meeting of the RJMEC and the first plenary after the RARCSS was extended on September 18th, 2024.

Min. 03/38/24: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The agenda was adopted without any amendment.

Min. 04/38/24: Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4. The minutes of the 37th RJMEC meeting was reviewed and adopted without amendments. It was proposed, seconded and adopted as the true record of the previous meeting as follows:

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

4.2. **Seconded:** Hon. Dr. Nadia Adop Dudi, representative of the ITGoNU.

Min. 05/38/24 Statement by the RJMEC Interim Chairperson

5. The Chairperson welcomed members to the first RJMEC meeting since the Parties to R-ARCSS extended the Transitional Period by 24 months, endorsed by the RTGoNU Council of Ministers, consented to by the RJMEC, ratified by the Transitional National Legislature, and assented to by South Sudan's President, H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit. He noted that the extended transitional period is effective from February 22, 2025, to February 22, 2027, which requires careful planning and urgency to ensure the elections are held as scheduled.
- 5.1. Furthermore, the Chairperson underscored that the extension of the R-ARCSS was met with mixed reactions due to the slow pace of implementation and the lack of adherence to its timelines. He highlighted the need for a clear demonstration of political will, and to overcome trust deficit, lack of dedicated and predictable funding, and capacity gaps.
- 5.2. The Chairperson encouraged the RTGoNU to do things differently in order to adhere to the agreed timelines and implementation schedule as per the extended period. Specifically, the RTGoNU needed to: a) provide a strategy with a clear, coherent and overarching action plan, budget and timeline for the implementation of the priority tasks for the extended transitional period to build confidence, and aid resource mobilisation and support; b) coordinate the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms so that their workplans are aligned, coherent, and collaborative to ensure effective and efficient implementation; c) mobilise and dedicate adequate and predictable funding to the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms; d) enhance effectiveness of the Government-Trilateral Taskforce to help identify areas of collaboration and support to address issues related to the constitution-making and electoral processes in a timely manner; e) increase women's representation and participation in the executive and legislative appointments up to and beyond the 35% minimum threshold; f) expedite completion of the unification of forces and their deployment, and DDR; g) address questions of how South Sudanese refugees and IDPs will participate in the constitution-making and electoral processes; and h) complete enactment of the CTRH and CRA bills to pave way for establishment and operationalization of the two transitional justice mechanisms; and

- 5.3. In conclusion, the Chairperson urged the Parties to expedite the implementation of the constitution-making and electoral processes, and unification of forces. In addition, he observed that South Sudan has friends and partners willing to support the R-ARCSS, provided the RTGoNU provides the bulk of the funding. Securing predictable funding and making early progress will signal the Parties' commitment to fulfilling their promises and attract timely support. He appealed to the RTGoNU to make significant steps in the Agreement's implementation before the end of the year as a Christmas gift to the people of South Sudan.

Min. 06/38/24: Report from the RTGoNU

6. The RTGoNU representative, apologized for not having a written report and further thanked members for endorsing the extension. The member further informed that after the endorsement of the resolution of the RJMEC on the extension by the RTGoNU Council of Ministers, it was ratified by the TNLA. The High-Level Standing Committee (HLSC) conducted a mission to in Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda to engage its leaders and disseminate the decision of the Government of South Sudan on the extension. Upon return, Hon. Dr. Martin Elia Lomuro would engage with the RJMEC Chairperson on briefing the members on the decision of the RTGoNU and further report on the HLSC's engagements in the region.

Min. 07/38/24: Report from the NTC

7. The representative of the NTC neither attended nor submitted a written report to the plenary.

Min. 08/38/24: Briefing from UNMISS SRSG

8. The UNMISS SRSG highlighted the following in his report to the plenary:
- 8.1. noted that the weeks that had passed since the decision to extend the transitional period was made, urged the Parties to fulfil their promises and produce a realistic workplan for the 24 months and underscored the need for urgency of restoring confidence in the political leadership's commitment and funding.
 - 8.2. achievable benchmarks to be addressed by February 2025 included deploying NUF, promoting civic education, preparing voter registration, amending the National Security Services (NSS) Bill, developing a code of conduct, and fostering political and open space.
 - 8.3. underscored the need for clarity on responsibility-sharing on electoral security.
 - 8.4. informed of expanded assistance offered by UNMISS to the NEC beyond technical discussions and capacity building, exploring packages that combine hardware and software, and utilizing in-house expertise in electoral, political, and law enforcement including in electoral security issues. The AU and IGAD are also expected to contribute to this support; and
 - 8.5. urged the RTGoNU to reconvene the monthly Joint Gov't-Trilateral Taskforce meetings with the UN, AU, IGAD and Troika to support the prioritization and resourcing of the constitution-making and electoral processes;
 - 8.6. commended the JRC for the completion of its work;
 - 8.7. took note of the HLSC's meeting with H.E. William Ruto, president of the Republic of Kenya.
 - 8.8. raised concerns on the persistence of subnational violence, noting its 43% increase in violent incidents compared to 2023;
 - 8.9. informed of the RTGoNU's pledge of US \$76 million for flood response, noting the situation was less severe than initially feared. In conclusion, he reiterated the UN's readiness to support the RTGoNU in fulfilling its promises and completing the transition.

Statement by the AUMISS

- 8.10. The AUMISS representative welcomed the previous statements and highlighted the following:
- 8.10.1. expressed hope that the recent postponement of elections and the extension the transition period will be the last;
 - 8.10.2. looked forward to revised timelines to enable the various institutions, including NEC, NCRC, PPC and NBS achieve their targets, while partners strategise to support their initiatives going forward;
 - 8.10.3. encouraged an inclusive peace process at the Tumaini Initiative, called on parties to reach a consensus that complements the R-ARCSS to facilitate the implementation of the remaining tasks under the R-ARCSS; and
 - 8.10.4. reiterated AUMISS' commitment to the peace process in South Sudan in support and solidarity with the Government and people of South Sudan.

Statement by the AU C5

- 8.11. The representative of the AU C5 commended the work of the JRC) and reiterated its provision of continuous support to the people of South Sudan in the implementation of the R-ARCSS. The C5 called on the RTGoNU to seize the opportunity of the extension of the Transitional Period and postponement of the election to double its efforts in the implementation of the remaining tasks of the R-ARCSS. Further, the AU C5 appealed to the international community to continue supporting the people of South Sudan in the implementation of the R-ARCSS. The representative reaffirmed the commitment of the Republic of South Africa and the C5 to remain seized of the situation in the country and in supporting the people of South Sudan in implementation of the remaining tasks.

Statement by the Civil Society Alliance

- 8.12. The CSOs appreciated the RJMEC members for their commitment towards realization of peace in South Sudan. Being the first meeting after the extension of the Transitional Period, the RTGoNU is encouraged to use this period as an opportunity to expedite the implementation of the critical pending tasks of the R-ARCSS, to prioritise and put much efforts to complete the unification of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF) within the time frame. The member took note of the report of the JRC and the establishment of the electoral institutions at the state level. Much work remains to be done on the constitutional process and making the necessary provision for the upcoming elections. In addition, establishing the transitional justice mechanisms is essential in promoting reconciliation and healing process. The CSOs commit to disseminate the R-ARCSS and to create awareness to the people of South Sudan.

Statement by the IGAD

- 8.13. The IGAD forum of Ambassadors and the IGAD family in South Sudan welcomed the decision to extend the transitional period by 24 months, commended the RTGoNU for the consensual decision and encouraged continued dialogue to address governance issues and resolve differences for the nation's benefit and lasting peace. The immediate priorities include provision of adequate funding for the relevant institutions to complete outstanding tasks within the extended period and

the development by the RTGoNU of a clear roadmap and implementation plan for free, fair, and credible elections in December 2026. The RTGoNU has the responsibility for implementing the R-ARCSS, and IGAD is committed to support South Sudan's aspirations for a stable and prosperous future.

Statement by the IPF

- 8.14. There are concerns regarding the completion of the permanent constitution, census, and deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces. This requires a clear work plan and timeline to implement these tasks and to move the country forward in the coming two years. The IPF also acknowledged the achievements with the Tumaini Initiative, called for an inclusive approach and requested an update on its status. They welcomed recommendations from the JRC and looked forward to their full implementation. There are concerns regarding an increase in armed attacks, ambushes, and inter-communal violence, resulting in the loss of many civilian lives. In that regard, the RTGoNU needed to take full responsibility for security and protection. The IPF took note of the deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation in South Sudan and observed how crucial it was for the 2024/2025 budget to be passed without further delay, as many institutions depend on funding for their progress.

Statement by the Troika

- 8.15. The Troika representative expressed disappointment that the RTGoNU failed to implement the 2022 Roadmap and instead sought to extend its transitional status for two more years. The member called for a significant change from the RTGoNU to demonstrate its commitment to implementing the R-ARCSS, including urgent progress, adequate funding allocation, and sustained dialogue. Further, the RTGoNU did not show any intention to make this the last extension, and despite calls from partners and institutions, they did not present a credible plan on their next steps or funding requirements. Moreover, there was a need to respond to the 10 questions identified by UNMISS, the AUMISS, and IGAD as key markers of progress. The lack of political will was the main obstacle to progress, not a lack of time or funding. The actions of South Sudan leaders will demonstrate their political will to meet their commitments within the current extension period. The Troika will remain focused on these developments and commit to supporting the people of South Sudan in their journey towards democracy.
- 8.15.1. The UK Ambassador expressed his reservations on the outcome of the 3rd Extraordinary RJMEC meeting held on 18 September 2024, and that the UK Government disassociated itself from the resolution.

Statement by the EU

- 8.16. The EU's focus at this meeting was to gauge the level of engagement by the RTGoNU in implementing the R-ARCSS, and to understand the differences between the current situation and the previous extension in 2022. Political decisions could have been made quickly when political will was present, noting the key political questions put forward by the UNMISS, AUMISS, and IGAD 15 months prior, such as the nature of elections and their relation to the constitution, needed to be addressed. A work-plan was expected for the implementation of the R-ARCSS with clear timelines and budgets, with confirmed government funding. The EU has supported the transition in South Sudan through various initiatives, including RJMEC, CTSAMVM, electoral preparations, legal reforms, constitution-making, and civil society dialogue. The extension meant that the timelines for support had changed, and discussions needed to be held to determine the practical implications of the change. Demonstrations of seriousness and political will were crucial

for these deliberations. In conclusion, the EU commended the JRC for its report on the progress made.

Statement by Eminent Personality

- 8.17. Thanked the RJMEC Interim Chairperson for facilitating the members participating in the Tumaini Initiative to be part of the meeting. With the two years extension of the Transitional Period, there was need for clarity on the way forward. The presidency needed to meet regularly to reflect on the way forward for the country.
- 8.18. The R-ARCSS implementing institutions and mechanisms were frustrated with the status quo due to lack of funding. The mechanisms need therefore to engage and assess themselves as to why they provide the same reports to the RJMEC meetings. They must take responsibility to have a clear workplan, priorities and implementable programs. Also, the institutions and mechanisms need to seek to meet the Presidency and convey their messages that the mechanisms would function and proceed well when funded. The regional guarantors and international partners have been advising the RTGoNU for a while now. It was time for the RTGoNU to question and assess its functioning on the stalled implementation of the R-ARCSS.
- 8.19. On Tumaini Initiative, the member informed that he has been attending the talks which had been misunderstood in different sectors. Tumaini was attempting to identify gaps in the R-ARCSS and modalities of strengthening its implementation. The Tumaini Initiative hinges on three pillars: the constitutional-making process, security and election institutions. The fear of the people was the fact that Tumaini had gone to the drawing board identifying five chapters and annexing the pending tasks to it. The Tumaini Initiative has become the R-ARCSS the same way the R-ARCSS became the Roadmap in 2022. Lastly, the implementation mechanisms in the R-ARCSS were not constitutional entities but bodies set up to implement the Peace Agreement with membership drawn from the R-ARCSS.

Statement by Youth

- 8.20. Thanked RJMEC members for the continued efforts toward search for peace and stability in South Sudan. While acknowledging the challenges that led to the extension, expressed disappointment that these are two more years of uncertainty and delayed dreams. In last two months, there were serious security concerns such as the road ambushes along Juba-Nimule highway, sub-national violence and inter-communal clashes as in Lakes and Warrap States which resulted in the deaths of 20 people and 38 injuries; 17 deaths reported from the clashes in Nasir County; and 24 deaths in Central Equatoria with victims being 10 boys from Wandoruba, 9 from Nkulibaba of Ganju Payam and 4 from Kajokeji, which occurred in October 2024.
- 8.21. The economic hardship in Juba is alarming and is triggering cases of suicide committed by citizens. This calls for the RTGoNU to prioritise the welfare of the people by regulating commodities prices, reducing inflation rates through the Central Bank, paying arrears of salaries to the civil servants and others. The Parties to the R-ARCSS need to exhibit the spirit of cooperation used for the extension to implement priority tasks for elections to happen in 2026. Also, a clear Roadmap with tangible milestone and accountability should be provided by RTGoNU in this regard. On their part, the stakeholders should also support the youth to enable their inclusive and meaningful participation in the peace process as provided for in their action plan. There is also a need to enhance completion of Transitional Security Arrangements to protect the citizens; and to expedite implementation of all critical pending tasks.

Min. 9/38/24: 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) neither attended nor submitted a written report.

Report from the Judicial Review Committee (JRC)

9.2. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) conducted a three-day validation workshop for the JRC report, from 23- 25 October 2024 in Juba. The validation was attended by FVP Dr. Riek Machar, and several cabinet ministers, including the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Chief Justice, Governor of Western Bahr el Ghazal State, Rt. Hon. Speaker of Western Equatoria State Assembly, Deputy Governor Central Equatoria State, and several high-ranking national and State Government officials, as well as Ambassadors and Heads of Missions including the African Union, IGAD, and UN.

9.3. Key findings from the workshop included: strong public support for the reforms of the Judiciary, the need to restore public confidence in the Judiciary; interference in its independence; support for the establishment of an independent, impartial and credible Constitutional Court; low numbers of judges at all court levels; underrepresentation of women in the Judiciary; need for robust and continuous judicial training; enhancing the role of police and prison services in the justice delivery system; poor welfare/working conditions; lack of housing, health insurance and transportation; case backlog; and poor physical infrastructure;

9.4. The JRC completed the final report with recommendations on judiciary reforms to be transmitted to the (RTGoNU for consideration. The JRC acknowledged the commitment and support of the RTGoNU, RJMEC, IGAD, EU, Japan, UNDP, UNMISS, UNWomen, and Max Planck Foundation. The Committee further commended its members, resource persons from the Judiciary and MoJCA as well as the Ministry's Taskforce on Chapters 5 and 6 and Judicial Reforms.

Report from the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC)

9.5. Despite financial constraints, the NCRC made significant progress in recent years. In collaboration with Max Planck Foundation and UNMISS, it conducted a training exercise on federalism aimed at enabling the Commissioners to participate effectively in civic education and public consultations exercises. Further, the Commission worked on constructions, renovations, and other requirements, including the installation of electrical and air conditioning systems, furniture for the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC), construction of three medium-sized cottages, provision of laptops, desktops, printers, and stationaries, and installation of a solar system. NCRC was undertaking work on its Civic Education and Public Consultations plans for the States, Administrative Areas, and the diaspora, with the hope of launching a nation-wide campaign before the end of 2024 once funding would be availed. The budgets of the Commission and other institutions were before the TNLA and was referred to the Specialized Parliamentary Committee.

9.6. The NCRC appealed to the RTGoNU to expedite the budgetary process and avail the required funds for the Commission and other institutions to ensure their mandates are fulfilled within the stipulated time frame. The extension of the Transitional Period was undertaken after the reviews of the timelines and action plans of the various institutions, so it was not necessary to link funding to the production of an Implementation Matrix by the RTGoNU.

Report from the Political Parties Council (PPC)

- 9.7. The PPC actively engaged in administrative and operational activities under the Political Party Act 2012, as amended 2022. The PPC's priority areas include registering political parties, capacity building, auditing and compliance, dispute resolution, consultation dialogue, and enhancing the Council's capacity. The priority areas include capacity-building initiatives through sensitization and awareness of the Council members and political parties on laws governing registration and management of political parties. The PPC planned to address disputes between political parties, coalition parties, and independent candidates and political parties. Furthermore, the Council aimed to establish Political Parties Coordination Offices in all the States and Administrative Areas, recruit Administrators and Inspectors, and ensure gender mainstreaming. It is committed to adhering to the 35% affirmative requirement in the R-ARCSS, the Political Parties Act 2012, as amended 2022 and to explore strategies for mainstreaming gender within the Council.
- 9.8. The Council engaged with high-level delegations, attended conferences on women peace and security, and conducted workshops on the governance system of 29 political parties, convening a meeting with the EU, UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team, (IEAT) and UNWomen to review recommendations from a capacity building workshop for women members in political parties, participating in a two-day workshop on judicial reform in South Sudan, and attending the 11th RJMEC Governance Working Committee meeting. The Council has continued to hold strategic discussions with stakeholders for partnership and collaboration.
- 9.9. Engagements with stakeholders have continued, with strategic discussions, media interviews, and meetings with the UN IEAT to strategize on implementing key recommendations. Action plans include registering political parties, establishing offices in the States and Administrative Areas, recruiting administrators and inspectors, strengthening PPC staff and Councilors, conducting exchange visits to neighbouring countries, and conducting an assessment of the political parties' governance system. The Council continues to collaborate with current and potential partners to ensure effective regulation of political parties' activities.

Min. 10/38/24: Report from the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM)

10. Since the previous RJMEC Plenary meeting, there were no serious ceasefire incidents involving the Parties to the R-ARCSS. However, concerns remained in several areas that could exacerbate, if not checked. Recent reports pertained to armed attacks in Yambio, Western Equatoria State which resulted in the deaths of three security forces personnel, injuries to three security forces personnel, and two civilians. This has led to heightened tensions between the signatory parties, arrest of a senior officer, and confiscation of weapons. The perpetrators of these attacks remained at large.
- 10.1. CTSAMVM conducted a long-duration patrol to Nasir town to investigate reports of armed clashes involving SSPDF soldiers and civilians. Preliminary report suggested that tensions had receded, but trust-building was required to establish a peaceful coexistence between the parties. It was imperative that the armed forces maintain the highest levels of discipline when operating among the civil population.
- 10.2. CTSAMVM's Monitoring and Verification Team (MVT) in Juba conducted a long-duration patrol to Eastern Equatoria State, engaging local leaders to promote cooperation and monitor compliance with the R-ARCSS. It further observed slow progress in the deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF), with eight military battalions deployed so far. There is a high-level of expectation among the population, eagerly awaiting the deployment of the NUF. On 13 September 2024, CTSAMVM submitted a request to the Joint Defence Board for an update on the status of NUF deployments;

- 10.3. There was a small reduction in the number of civilian areas/buildings occupied by military forces. The signatory parties needed to vacate all occupied civilian areas as stipulated in the R-ARCSS;
- 10.4. Two Board and two CTSAMVM Technical Committee meetings were held since the last RJMEC Plenary. One violation report was presented and discussed; however, another interim report was yet to be processed. The 11th report submitted during 2024 involved independent acts of indiscipline perpetrated by some soldiers against civilians.
- 10.5. The international observers have undergone a rotation since the last report, submitted routine reports on a daily basis and investigative reports when tasked.

Report from the Joint Defence Board (JDB)

- 10.6. The security situation in South Sudan was relatively calm as the Parties to the R-ARCSS observed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. However, there are some security challenges in some parts of the country due to intercommunal violence. The JDB was working with the leadership of the Organised Forces to expedite the redeployment of Phase I, NUF. The Security Mechanisms presented a comprehensive work plan to the National Technical Committee (NTC), detailing timeframes and budgets for the completion of deployment and commencement of Phase II.
- 10.7. The logistical situation of all forces was dire, requiring urgent need for food and other items. The JDB awaited funding for all tasks of the Transitional Security Arrangements, faced shortages of medicines and food in training centers and assembly areas, experienced difficulties in running day-to-day activities due to lack of office space and operational funds, and continued to lack remuneration for officers deployed to the Security Mechanisms since 2019.
- 10.8. Recommended resolution of the impasse on the ranks to inject momentum into the Transitional Security Arrangements, soliciting funding for critical pending activities, and ensuring harmony between deployed NUF in their locations of deployment. In conclusion, the JDB commended the leadership of the Parties, particularly the RTGoNU for their support towards the peace process as well as IGAD and its partners, international partners and friends of South Sudan for their continued role in ensuring sustainable peace returns to the country.

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

- 10.9. The SDSR-B submitted its budget and activities timeline to the National Transition Committee (NTC) in September 2024. The Board was preparing for the Security Sector Reform Conference in November 2024. However, it continued to face challenges due to a lack of funding which affected progress and requiring timely completion of its tasks.

Report from the Joint Military Ceasefire Commission (JTSC)

- 10.10. The JTSC did not have activities in place. It handed over all the Cantonment sites and Training centers to the JMCC. The Mechanism continued to face financial challenges – a situation shared by all the other mechanisms. The JTSC prepared a budget for Phase II activities of the NUF but could not commence work due to lack of funding for logistics such as food, incentives, and allowances. If efforts are not made to push the RTGoNU to implement the R-ARCSS, the situation will remain the same.

Report from the Joint Military Ceasefire Commission (JMCC)

- 10.11. The challenges facing preparations for Phase II NUF, include lack of funding (incentives, allowances, and accommodation) for JMCC, as well as the delivery of food to the Cantonment Sites and barracks. Clashes occurred in Nasir, Upper Nile State between SSPDF and armed civilians due to lack of trust caused by a situation of a pregnant woman. Deployment and confirmation list of NUF for oppositions in the Training Centers and Cantonment Sites were not yet signed by the President. The NTC, RJMEC, CTSAMVM, and UNMISS leaderships were requested to facilitate their members' visits to assembling points, and to deliver food to Cantonment Sites and barracks. The RTGoNU to release incentives and accommodation for JMCC members, follow up on deployments and confirmation lists, and deploy NUFs to all counties affected by insecurity for sustainable peace and security. The NTC need to provide funds for all remaining activities to speed up the implementation.

Min. 11/38/24: 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. *RJMEC*: The Interim Chairperson thanked the JRC for its work done in South Sudan with the hope that the report would be used to reform the judiciary to enhance justice. The RTGoNU therefore needed to use the report's recommendations to inform judicial reforms.
- 11.2. *EU*: Registered his concerns that no progress was made in the last two months after the extension of the R-ARCSS, which left the international community disappointed as nothing could be discussed at the plenary and appealed to the RTGoNU to show progress in the next RJMEC plenary.
- 11.3. *JDB*: Highlighted the concerns raised by the Interim Chair on the incidents that happened in Nasir, Wandoruba, Ganji and Kajo Keji, noting the JDB planned to investigate the incidents, and that those involved would be accountable. In the next RJMEC meeting, the JDB would share a report on the findings. CTSAMVM, too, needed to investigate the incidents and report to RJMEC on the findings. Recommended that statements detailing progress made by the parties and mechanisms and from CTSAMVM and other security mechanisms should be made in the presence of the media representatives. This would give people a chance to hear about the R-ARCSS and its implementation, which could put pressure on the RTGoNU to speed up the process.
- 11.3.1. On the incidents of insecurity that happened in Wandoruba, in Nasir County, and those involved, the JDB co-chairperson met, where the government established a committee to investigate those who committed the atrocities in the areas. The co-chairpersons stated that the fighting in Nasir continued for a year and a half between the army and local youth, resulting in the loss of lives in the area. However, the JDB was committed to developing a comprehensive solution to address the recurring incidents in Nasir. The Board was mobilizing one (1) battalion from the NUF to build confidence in the local population. In Wandoruba, the JDB sent a neutral force to fight the enemy. It may take time; however, the JDB has sent some forces from different training centers to protect the local population. They also assembled II Companies in Luri, to be assigned to Wandoruba where the army was fighting the rebels;

- 11.3.2. Concerning the tension, the parties must close the gap when they see a vacuum that could destabilize the country. The mechanisms were eager to carry out their mandates, ensuring a return to normalcy at the end of this transition, as they did not anticipate any further delays or extensions. He appealed to the President to secure funding, and to the parties should refrain from giving lip service to the citizens to allow them to enjoy the peace while the local population enjoys the peace dividends.
- 11.4. *SDSR Board*: The statement of the RJMEC Chairperson that mentioned the obstacles, among others, were the lack of political will and funding, was crucial. The question by the RJMEC Chairperson on what the RTGoNU would do differently was in place. The IGAD Heads of State and Government needed to convene a meeting on quarterly and evaluate the outstanding issues of the R-ARCSS. On another note, the dissemination of the R-ARCSS to the people failed as most citizens in villages do not understand its provisions. The Parties to the R-ARCSS or the High-Level Standing Committee should give a chance to people to discuss different issues, debate, etc. The international community also need to support the implementation of the R-ARCSS through institutions and mechanisms and to alleviate the suffering of the people. If there is no commitment from the Parties, there is no need to wait for the two years, but rather to call on the Political Parties Council (PPC) and National Elections Commission (NEC) to conduct the elections.
- 11.5. *FDs*: The FD representative met his principal and asked for the RTGoNU work plan for the extended period, for which he was informed there was neither a two-year work plan in place nor a clear plan for the elections as well. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the RTGoNU representative's verbal statement to the plenary. In addition, the absence of the NTC report indicated a lack of seriousness and absence of R-ARCSS implementation plan. He cautioned the RTGoNU members that the current situation is subject to change. He urged the RTGoNU to speak to the people about the current status quo and whether they wanted to extend it or not. Additionally, the RTGoNU should enquire about the people's understanding of the Tumaini Initiative. He expressed concerns about the lack of political will and funding for the implementation of the R-ARCSS over the past six years. He questioned the rationale behind the delegation's decision to brief the Heads of State and Government in the region before presenting its plan to the people of South Sudan. Reported that the unified command had been deployed; however, the number of those deployed was not shared. Expressed that something was missing on the issue of the deployment of the second echelon, which had been recommended by the former Deputy Chair of the Sudan Sovereign Council, Gen. Hemeti, to be decided by parties. It was emphasised that the deployment of the second echelon by a country demonstrates its seriousness. If the RTGoNU decided to deploy today, it was the SSPDF. He shared his concerns of the risk of having no elections at the end of the current extension due to a lack of funding and commitment among the leaders. He advised the plenary to remain optimistic about the absence of an elections. As for the Tumaini Initiative, people were aware of those who are either pro or against it within the RTGoNU.
- 11.6. *OPP*: The country is being held hostage by the current status quo, as there is no progress to report for over six years. He redefined the meaning of evaluation to include assessing the current situation. He questioned the members about their evaluations, despite the reports and situation remaining unchanged. The members were concerned about the NTC Chairperson's absence from the plenary, which should have been used to inform members of its plan and submit the report to the Minister of Finance and Planning, and RTGoNU's Council of Ministers. They recommended that the RJMEC develop a new strategy to guarantee RTGoNU's accountability. In addition, he raised concerns about the salary, which had not been paid to all civil servants. Most members of TNLA were evicted as they could not pay house rent and urged the RTGoNU to come up with ideas on how to rescue the situation.

- 11.7. *Faith-Based Leader*: He proposed to the RJMEC Interim Chairperson to allow the report of the mechanisms to be made open to allow people to read and understand what was happening. In addition, the proposal was made to the RJMEC to extend an invitation to the NTC Chairperson to attend and provide a report in the next RJMEC plenary. Lack of funding and food delivery are caused by a lack of political will. There is therefore a need to know the reason for the extension if there was no funding.
- 11.8. *CSO Alliance*: Reports indicated that there was not much progress on the implementation of the R-ARCSS due to lack of funding. There was a need to do things differently by starting to engage and follow up with the RTGoNU. Furthermore, it was necessary to establish specific mechanisms for monitoring implementations and resolving challenges, as the meeting does not require financial resources.
- 11.9. *Academic*: The previous speakers summarised the situation in South Sudan which remained unchanged since 2019. She questioned the government's satisfaction with the ongoing war, their self-interest, and their lack of concern for the country. The current opposition was an integral part of the existing status quo. The lack of political will was not convincing when the leaders could extend the Transitional Period that lasted for six years. She expressed her admiration for the JRC's work, highlighting its reliance on external funding. Meanwhile, some members of the RTGoNU were touring the region, despite its claims of financial constraints. The perceived superiority of those in the army changed, with children now fleeing when they saw soldiers.
- 11.10. *ITGoNU*: After the extension of the R-ARCSS there were different views, with some supporting and others against the extension. The R-ARCSS was extended to address specific issues not previously addressed. The RTGNU colleagues were engaging with the region because they believed that even a poor extension was preferable to returning to war. There was indeed the need to do things differently. The RTGoNU took note of all the concerns and recognised that it was part of the people, sharing social and political issues together. The RTGoNU made a successful presentation to the Council of Ministers sharing all the concerns raised by the RJMEC members, citizens, CSOs, and international partners. The member commended the statement made by the representative of Academia, reaffirming that the RTGoNU was ready to work with Tumaini Initiative to allow the holdout groups to come back to South Sudan.
- 11.11. *ITGoNU*: Welcomed all the comments made, as they represented the voices of the people. As a new member of the Plenary, she reiterated the reasons for the extension were a national agenda and the responsibility of the RTGoNU to rescue the TSA which had not been completed. The member apologised for not submitting a report of the RTGoNU, underscoring that it was an opportunity for the RTGoNU to do things differently and implement the R-ARCSS. The two-year extended period was insufficient to complete the pending critical tasks; however, the RTGoNU pledged to make necessary changes and submit a report. An extraordinary meeting of RJMEC was contemplated to present a report detailing the work plan and budget for the next two-year extended period. Further, the RTGoNU would make sure that it refocuses and prioritises the activities and presents its report to members each time RJMEC meets. It is crucial to reform and fund the security sector, stressing the need for South Sudan to establish a robust security sector. Moreover, the role of women in the country needed to be recognized at all levels, and the women need to be persistent in their efforts to secure a place in the political arena.
- 11.12. *RTGoNU*: Thanked members for attending the plenary, those who supported the extension, and pledged their commitment to the RTGoNU. The High-Level Standing Committee delegation were briefing the leaders in the region on the R-ARCSS. The RTGoNU's three arms agreed on the extension, and the TNLA was responsible for informing the public about the extension. All, including the opposition, supported the extension as a response to the

challenges the RTGoNU was facing. Additionally, the Tumaini Initiative is intended to bring those who were outside back to South Sudan. The challenge posed by the influx of refugees in South Sudan prompted the RTGoNU to allocate funds for support and rescue efforts. The regional and international community need to continue supporting the RTGoNU in the implementation of the R-ARCSS. The RTGoNU reiterated its plan to present a report that showcases its commitment to the people and the political will behind it. Also, the Security Mechanisms has a duty to inform the members about all incidents that occurred within the country.

- 11.13. *RJMEC Chair*: It was important to have a deliberate commitment by the RTGoNU by coordinating themselves to always avail and present the RTGoNU's report to the plenary. It was the only time that the ministers were able to showcase what the RTGoNU had done. This was a priority and an obligation to present a comprehensive report to the RJMEC members. The RTGoNU was to brief members in their capacity as the guarantors, the international community, or stakeholders. Furthermore, the security mechanisms to brief the RJMEC plenary to showcase the progress, commitment, and priority based on the implementation of the Agreement. He underlined the obligations of all members for their attendance at the RJMEC meetings.

Min. 12/38/24: Review of the Resolution

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

Min. 13/38/24: Date for the Next Meeting

13. It was agreed that date for the 39th RJMEC monthly meeting would be announced by the RJMEC Secretariat.

Min. 14/38/24: A.O.B.

14. There was no A.O.B raised at the meeting.

Min. 15/38/24: Chairperson's Closing Remarks

15. The Chairperson appreciated the members for the constructive engagements in the meeting, encouraged them to always remain seized of the RJMEC matters and appealed to members to attend the RJMEC plenaries which help to assess the implementation of the R-ARCSS. The meeting came up with was the focus on the concrete strategies, actionable plans and predictable budgets. He reiterated the need to have political will and commitment which was central in the success of the implementation of the R-ARCSS. In the meeting, members expressed serious disappointments for lack of progress since the last time the RJMEC met. Reiterated the need for the call for the spirit of collegiality which was demonstrated during the extension and for it to be sustained until election by 2026. It was the responsibility of the RTGoNU to ensure critical tasks are executed, there was political will, and funding was availed to the institutions and mechanisms to implement the R-ARCSS. In conclusion, he appealed for the creation of an impetus for the regional and international community to come on board and support the implementation of the R-ARCSS.

Min.16/38/24: Closing Prayers

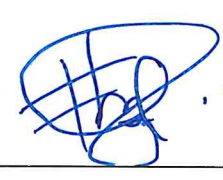
16. The Most Rt Rev. Moses Deng and Sheik Jaralnebi Khamis Mursal led the closing prayers. There being no any other business, the 38th RJMEC monthly meeting was adjourned at 14: 30 hours.

Min.17/38/24: Adoption of the Minutes

17. The minutes of the 38th RJMEC meeting are proposed, seconded and adopted as the true record of the meeting as follows:

17.1. Proposer: Maj. Gen Bior Leek, representative of the SPLM/FDs

17.2. Secunder: Mrs. Yar Manoa Majok, representative of the Business Community

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

