



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

REPORT

BY

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**ON THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVITALISED
AGREEMENT ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT IN THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**

FOR THE PERIOD

1st January to 31st March 2025

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List of Acronyms

AU	<i>African Union</i>
AUMISS	<i>African Union Mission in South Sudan</i>
CRA	<i>Compensation and Reparation Authority</i>
CTRH	<i>Commission for Truth Reconciliation and Healing</i>
CTSAMVM	<i>Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism</i>
DDR	<i>Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration</i>
EAC	<i>East African Community</i>
IDPs	<i>Internally Displaced Persons</i>
IEAT	<i>Integrated Electoral Assistance Team</i>
IGAD	<i>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</i>
JDB	<i>Joint Defense Board</i>
JMCC	<i>Joint Military Ceasefire Commission</i>
JRC	<i>Judicial Reform Committee</i>
JTSC	<i>Joint Transitional Security Committee</i>
MVT	<i>Mobile Verification Teams</i>
NAS	<i>National Salvation Front</i>
NBS	<i>National Bureau of Statistics</i>
NCAC	<i>National Constitutional Amendment Committee</i>
NCRC	<i>National Constitutional Review Commission</i>
NEC	<i>National Elections Commission</i>
NGOs	<i>Non-Governmental Organisations</i>
NSS	<i>National Security Service</i>
NUF	<i>Necessary Unified Forces</i>
PFM	<i>Public Finance Management</i>
PPC	<i>Political Parties Council</i>
R-ARCSS	<i>Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan</i>
RJMEC	<i>Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission</i>
RTGoNU	<i>Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity</i>
SDSRB	<i>Strategic Defence and Security Review Board</i>
SPLM -IG	<i>Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Government</i>
SPLM-IO	<i>Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition</i>
SSPDF	<i>South Sudan People's Defence Force</i>
TNL	<i>Transitional National Legislature</i>
TNLA	<i>Transitional National Legislative Assembly</i>
UN	<i>United Nations</i>
UNDP	<i>United Nations Development Programme</i>
UNMISS	<i>United Nations Mission in South Sudan</i>
UNHCR	<i>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</i>

Executive Summary

This report covers the status of implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) during the period 1st January to 31st March 2025 and builds on similar previous Reports Nos. 001/19 - 025/24 prepared since the signing of the R-ARCSS on 12th September 2018. In addition to the status update on implementation, it highlights the activities of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) in the fulfilment of its oversight, monitoring and evaluation mandate within the R-ARCSS; and concludes by providing key recommendations on returning the country on a sustained path to peace.

During the quarter, implementation of the Agreement ground to a halt, as the Parties engaged in repeated violations and the political and security environment markedly worsened. In scenes not seen since the signing of the R-ARCSS over six years ago, armed conflict and violence erupted across the country, several high-ranking opposition members and Parliamentarians were detained and imprisoned and the First Vice President Dr Riek Machar Teny was put under house arrest. In addition, ministerial positions at the state and national levels and those within the Presidency were reshuffled, and portfolios within some Agreement institutions and mechanisms were abandoned. In some parts of the country, civilians including women and children have borne the brunt of the fallout and have suffered serious human rights and humanitarian law violations including death, injury and displacement due to military operations and connected armed clashes.

Recent political developments in the country include political appointments and replacements at the national and gubernatorial levels, including that of the Presidency, Council of Ministers, States and Administrative Areas. Some replacements, however, involved a party to the R-ARCSS replacing its own appointees, whereas in others, the replacements were drawn from different parties, in some cases, female office bearers were replaced by male appointees signalling a deviation from the responsibility sharing arrangements including the 35% minimum threshold for women agreed among the parties, pursuant to the R-ARCSS. It should be noted that the Revitalized Peace Agreement is premised on the principles of collegiality, consultation and consensus.

Security violations to the Agreement have reportedly been made by both the South Sudan Peoples Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army – In Opposition (SPLA -IO), which now threatens the peace and stability of South Sudan. In addition, there has been no progress regarding the unification and deployment of forces, which under the R-ARCSS was intended to bring the former warring parties together under one unified command. Phase I deployment has not been completed, and Phase II training has not yet started.

Following the outbreak of violence and worsening in the political environment, the RJMEC embarked on a series of diplomatic engagements aimed at seeking solutions to stem the crisis and return the country on a path to sustainable peace. This included the involvement of the IGAD Heads of State and Government, the African Union, the United Nations and key international players. Among the outcomes were the holding of an Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government, the convening of the AU Peace and Security Council, shuttle diplomacy by various regional Special Envoys to Juba, the AU Panel of the Wise and a two-day visit by H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,

President of the Republic of Uganda. Those efforts notwithstanding, the political and security situation remained largely unchanged.

South Sudan continued to face a severe humanitarian crisis, which has been further escalated by widespread violence, intercommunal clashes, land disputes, insecurity, natural disasters, cholera outbreak and cross-border movements. The widespread violence led to increased numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) requiring urgent humanitarian assistance.

Concerning Economic and Financial Management, the Public Financial Management Oversight Committee, which comprises the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) and its development partners identified several priorities in their mid-term strategy. Of these nine are contained in the provisions of the R-ARCSS and the assessment focuses on the implementation of these provisions. Progress has also been made with the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA), which is a bank account or a set of linked bank accounts through which the government maintains its receipts and payments.

Very little progress was registered in the implementation of tasks associated with Transitional Justice, Accountability, Reconciliation and Healing. At the same time, the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC) publicly launched its civic education and public consultation process on the making of a permanent Constitution.

There is no doubt that the R-ARCSS remains the most viable framework to steer South Sudan towards the path of stability and prosperity. However, the current political and security situation is fragile and highly volatile, posing a serious threat to the survivability of the R-ARCSS. The ongoing political conflicts are also eroding opportunities the extension provided to enhance the integration of gender equality perspectives into the peace process and better prepare women for meaningful participation in the transitional justice, constitution-making and political processes ahead of the anticipated elections in December 2026.

The recommendations that follow, if acted upon, including to the Parties to the Agreement, RTGoNU, Transitional National Legislature (TNL), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, and the International Partners, are geared towards putting an end to the deteriorating security and political situation as well as to encourage a faster pace of implementation of the R-ARCSS.

a. To the Parties to the Agreement and Relevant Stakeholders:

- Cease all forms of hostility and restore adherence to the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements;
- allow CTSAMVM the opportunity to investigate, verify and report findings on alleged violations of the provisions of the permanent ceasefire;
- urgently engage in continuous dialogue at all levels, de-escalate tensions, and resolve issues in a collegial manner, embracing understanding and compromise;
- in particular, the Incumbent Transitional Government of National Unity (ITGoNU) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army - In Opposition

(SPLM/A-IO) are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment not to return the country to war through concrete actions and fidelity to the Agreement;

- participate fully in the various Agreement institutions and mechanisms, which are geared towards safeguarding the R-ARCSS;
- desist from actions that may escalate tensions by demonstrating leadership in guiding South Sudan towards the path of stability and prosperity; and
- adhere to the protocols of the unification of forces, dialogue on a viable way forward and embrace preparatory arrangements underway in this regard.

b. To the RTGoNU:

- Pursuant to the *Communiqué of the 43rd Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government on the Situation in the Republic of South Sudan*, immediately release the SPLM/A-IO leaders and military officials currently in detention, unless credible evidence warrants legal proceedings conducted transparently and in accordance with due process;
- reactivate and re-energise the functionality of all the Agreement implementation institutions and mechanisms, especially the Transitional Security Mechanisms;
- rebuild trust and confidence in the peace process and prioritise completion of the critical pending tasks of the R-ARCSS;
- encourage diplomatic and political support from the Regional Guarantors and International Partners that serve to deescalate tensions and support dialogue among the leaders of the Parties to the Agreement;
- prioritise the unification of all forces, deploy the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF) to maintain peace throughout the country, and implement comprehensive DDR;
- expedite implementation of the Judicial Reform Committee (JRC) report and its recommendation, especially the review and amendment of the Judiciary Act and reconstitution of the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to implement the reforms;
- expedite the return of the controversial National Security Services Act to the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA) for reconsideration;
- provide the necessary guidance through the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs) MoJCA to stakeholders to enable them to establish a selection panel that will recruit members to the CTRH; and
- avail sufficient funding to the NCRC in a timely manner to enable it to roll out civic education and public consultation campaigns to all parts of the country.

c. To the TNLA:

- Expedite the enactment of all the pending bills, including the NGO Amendment Bill to create the necessary civic and political space needed for the conduct of elections

d. To IGAD:

- Continue to strengthen IGAD member states' oversight engagement in the South Sudan peace process, meet regularly to take stock and pronounce themselves on the progress being made in the implementation of the R-ARCSS;
- the IGAD Council of Ministers to undertake a joint Ministerial visit to South Sudan to review the current status of the R-ARCSS, or to arrange bilateral visits; and
- mobilize regional and international in-kind and financial support for RJMEC, CTSAMVM and the overall Revitalized Peace Agreement.

e. To the African Union:

- Continue to play an active role in ensuring the success of the Agreement and in helping to maintain lasting peace and stability in South Sudan; and
- complete recruitment of the three non-South Sudanese members to the CTRH and present them to the Executive for appointment.

f. International Partners:

- Support the NCRC and the constitution-making process, including by directly funding critical mechanisms, and civic education, and providing technical and logistical support.

The recent heightening of political and security tensions in South Sudan does not bode well for the sustaining of durable peace. Every effort must be made by the Parties to the Agreement to adhere strictly to the R-ARCSS and recommit themselves to the cause of peace. While the trust among the Parties has been almost completely destroyed there is still room for dialogue and compromise. It is important that there is strict adherence to the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Civilian Protection and Humanitarian Access (CoHA) 2017 by immediate cessation of hostilities on all fronts. At the same time, efforts must be stepped up to complete the unification of forces, free those detained and move forward with the Constitution-making process. While it is true that there is a serious challenge to the Revitalized Peace Agreement, it remains ultimately the best path to lasting peace in South Sudan. Every effort should therefore be made by all to rescue the R-ARCSS and ease the burden of the long-suffering people of South Sudan.

I. Introduction

1. This report covers the status of implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) during the period 1st January to 31st March 2025 and builds on similar previous Reports Nos. 001/19 - 025/24¹ prepared since the signing of the R-ARCSS on 12th September 2018. In addition to the status update on implementation, it highlights the activities of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) in the fulfilment of its oversight, monitoring and evaluation mandate within the R-ARCSS; and concludes by providing key recommendations to the Parties and Stakeholders to the R-ARCSS, the Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU), the Transitional National Legislature, IGAD, African Union and International Partners.
2. During the quarter, implementation of the Agreement grounded to a halt as the Parties engaged in repeated violations and the political and security environment markedly worsened. In scenes not seen since the signing of the R-ARCSS over six years ago, armed conflict and violence erupted across the country, several high-ranking opposition members and Parliamentarians were detained and imprisoned and the First Vice President Dr Riek Machar Teny was put under house arrest. In addition, ministerial positions at the state and national levels and those within the Presidency were reshuffled, and portfolios within some Agreement institutions and mechanisms were abandoned.
3. Following the outbreak of violence and worsening in the political environment, the RJMEC embarked on a series of diplomatic engagements aimed at seeking solutions to stem the crisis and return the country on a path to sustainable peace. In doing so, the Parties were encouraged to dialogue and resolve their differences in an amicable manner. Those efforts notwithstanding, the political and security situation remained largely unchanged. The Transitional National Legislature (TNL) did not meet during the quarter as they have been in recess since December 2024. Moreover, Right Honourable Oyet Nathaniel Pierino, First Deputy Speaker of the TNLA and Acting Chairperson and Commander-in-Chief of SPLM/A-IO left the country citing fears for his personal safety. As such, the parliamentary recess also meant that legislative agenda could not advance with any of the remaining laws debated, including the controversially enacted National Security Services (NSS) Bill, which was returned to the Council of Ministers by the Presidency to be re-tabled before the TNL.
4. Meanwhile, the deteriorating political and security situation only served to worsen an already deplorable humanitarian crisis, as efforts to aid those in need were disrupted and aid flows were halted in some situations. Regrettably, recent attempts to move forward the Transitional Justice agenda following passage of the bills for the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) and the Compensation and Reparation Authority (CRA) late last year stalled as no further progress was registered during this reporting period.

¹ Article 7.9 of the R-ARCSS mandates the RJMEC to prepare and submit Quarterly Reports to the Executive of the RTGoNU, the RTGoNU Council of Ministers, the Transitional National Legislature, the Chairperson of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Chairperson of African Union Commission, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (PSC), the Secretary General of the United Nations and Security Council of the United Nations.

5. This report is therefore structured as follows: Section I of the report provides an overview, followed by Section II, with an analysis of the status of implementation of the R-ARCSS, Section III proposes key observations and makes recommendations to the RTGoNU, TNL, Parties, Stakeholders to the R-ARCSS, and the International Partners and Friends of South Sudan; Section IV is the conclusion.

II. Status of Implementation of the Transitional Tasks of the R-ARCSS

Chapter 1: Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity

Recent Political Developments

6. Recent political developments in the country include political appointments and replacements at the national and gubernatorial levels, including that of the Presidency, Council of Ministers, States and Administrative Areas. Some replacements, however, involved a party to the R-ARCSS replacing its own appointees, whereas in others, the replacements were drawn from different parties, in some cases, female office bearers were replaced by male appointees signalling a deviation from the responsibility sharing arrangements including the 35% minimum threshold for women agreed among the parties, pursuant to the R-ARCSS. It should be noted that the Revitalized Peace Agreement is premised on the principles of collegiality, consultation and consensus. Unilateral actions do not only violate the Revitalized Agreement, but also deeply undermine trust and confidence in the peace process.
7. At the level of the Presidency, for example, Vice Presidents H.E. Dr James Wani Igga (ITGoNU) and Chairperson of the Economic Cluster as well as H.E. Hussein Abdelbagi Akol (SSOA) and Chairperson of the Service Cluster were replaced by H.E. Dr Benjamin Bol Mel (ITGoNU) and H.E. Josephine Lagu (SSOA) respectively. Former VP Hussein Abdelbagi was appointed as the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security and former VP Dr James Wani Igga became the new Secretary General of SPLM, replacing Mr. Peter Lam Both.
8. Further changes were made at the Council of Ministers level, involving appointments of national ministers, including Hon. Wek Mamer (ITGoNU) as the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, replacing Hon. Justice Ruben Madol Arol (ITGoNU); Hon. Dr Kuyok Abol Kuyok (ITGoNU), Minister for General Education and Instructions, replacing Hon. Awut Deng Achuil (ITGoNU) and Hon. Atong Kuol Nanyang Juuk (ITGoNU), Minister of Trade and Industry, replacing Hon. Joseph Muom Majak (ITGoNU). The portfolios of the Minister of Health and the Deputy Minister for Defense, however, remained unfilled since they became vacant.
9. At the States and Administrative Area levels, changes were also made during the reporting period as follows: H.E. Alfred Futuyu Karaba (SPLM/A-IO) was relieved as the Governor of Western Equatoria State; H.E. Lt. Gen. James Koang Chuol (ITGoNU) was appointed as the Governor of Upper Nile State, replacing H.E. James Odhok Oyay (SPLM/A-IO); H.E. Magok Magok Deng (ITGoNU) was appointed the Governor of Warrap State, replacing H.E. Francis Marial Abur (ITGoNU); H.E. Dr. Riek Gai Kok (ITGoNU) was appointed the Governor of Jonglei State, replacing H.E. Majuob Bill Turuk (SSOA); and Hon. Justice Charles Abyei Jok (ITGoNU) was appointed the Chief Administrator of Abyei Administrative Area (AAA), replacing Hon. Dr. Chol Deng Alak (ITGoNU). The

positions of the Governor of Western Equatoria State and the Deputy Governor of Jonglei State, however, remained vacant as at the time of compiling this report.

10. In some of the cases, the decisions for the removal and replacement of portfolio holders were observed to be unilateral and therefore inconsistent with the letter and spirit of replacement and removal procedures outlined in the R-ARCSS. In March 2025, FVP Riek Machar was placed under house arrest and other senior political and military leaders² detained without due process. They include, among others, Hon. Puot Kang Chol, Minister for Petroleum, Hon. Stephen Par Kuol, Minister for Peacebuilding who was detained but later released and Hon. Gatwech Lam Puoch, a member of TNLA and RJMEC.
11. The various arrests of the SPLM/A-IO senior political and military leaders occurred against the backdrop of the security incidents in Nasir County, Upper Nile State. The arrests and detention of peace partners undermine the inclusivity and political power-sharing provisions of the R-ARCSS. This unilateral action destabilized the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) and prompted SPLM/A-IO to raise serious concerns regarding violations of the R-ARCSS.
12. In March, the Ugandan troops, the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) were deployed to South Sudan upon request by the RTGoNU. The FVP protested the deployment of the UPDF in a letter addressed to the UN Secretary-General, Commissioner AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) and IGAD Chair, urging that it was a gross violation of the R-ARCSS and the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access (CoHA) 2017, Article 7.4. This is indicative of lack of consultations and concurrence between the different constituent elements of the RTGoNU Presidency on the decision to invite the UPDF to deploy in South Sudan.
13. All of the aforementioned political developments immensely contributed to heightening political tensions, which undermined the limited trust and confidence which has been built between the peace partners since the signing of the R-ARCSS. Against the backdrop of the deteriorating political and security situation in the country, RJMEC increased its diplomatic engagements and consultations both in Juba and beyond in response to the prevailing political and security situation in the country. These included engagements with key personalities, including the Parties to the R-ARCSS, South Sudanese Stakeholders and Adherents, the Regional Guarantors, and International Partners and Friends of South Sudan.
14. In response to the emerging political and security situation in South Sudan, the regional Ambassadors held a series of meetings, issued a joint press statement and continued engagements with their respective capitals. This resulted in some regional Heads of State and Government engaging directly with President Salva Kiir and FVP Dr Riek Machar, appealing for de-escalation of the tension and dialogue. In solidarity with the region, the

² Some of the SPLA-IO senior officers in detention include Gen. Gabriel Duop Lam, Deputy Chief of the Defense Forces for Operation of the SSPDF, Lt Gen Wesley Welebe, Assistant Chief of Staff for Supply of the SSPDF; Thomas Jal Thomas, Deputy Inspector General of Police, and James Duop Gatleak, his deputy, among others.

international partners issued a series of press statements appealing for calm and reiterating the need to de-escalate the tension and hold dialogue urgently.

15. The 43rd Extraordinary Assembly of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Heads of State and Government convened virtually on 12 March 2025 to address the serious security situation in the Republic of South Sudan. The Summit reaffirmed R-ARCSS of 2018 as the cornerstone of the peace process in South Sudan and urged for dialogue the only means for resolving differences. It expressed deep concern at the deteriorating security conditions in South Sudan including the killing of the Commander of the SSPDF forces in Nasir, Upper Nile State, General Major Duk and others, including a UN crew during evacuation which they strongly condemned. It strongly urged the Parties to immediately de-escalate tensions, adhere to and respect the Permanent Ceasefire, and prioritize and expedite the implementation of Transitional Security Arrangements. It also called for the release of senior SPLM/A-IO officials and directed CTSAMVM to undertake an investigation into the Nasir clashes and the attack on the UN helicopter to ascertain the facts and ensure accountability for any violations.
16. Furthermore, the Summit constituted an IGAD Ministerial-level sub-committee on South Sudan to effectively engage and monitor the restoration of calm and engagement on the R-ARCSS with regard to the implementation timeline essential tasks including the necessary unification of forces, drafting of the constitution, and preparations for the elections. The IGAD Ministerial Sub-Committee on South Sudan were scheduled to travel to Juba for an assessment on modalities of initiating an inclusive dialogue building on the status of the R-ARCSS but were unable to do so.
17. In the last week of March 2025, H.E. William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya appointed R.H. Raila A. Odinga as Kenya's Special Envoy to South Sudan to engage on the situation and support de-escalation efforts. R.H. Odinga travelled to South Sudan and met with H.E. President Salva Kiir on 28 March 2025 towards de-escalating the tensions in the country. Thereafter, he met with H.E. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda on the situation in South Sudan. During his Mission to Juba, Mr. Odinga was unfortunately unable to meet H.E. Riek Machar First Vice President.
18. The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) held its 1265th meeting on 18 March 2025 on the Situation in South Sudan. The Council indicated deep concern on the escalation of tensions and clashes in Nasir County, Western Equatoria, and Western Bahr el-Ghazal States, resulting in loss of lives, property, and displacement, all of which threatened the peace process. Further, the Council strongly condemned violations committed against civilians and called on authorities to investigate and hold the perpetrators to account. In addition, it appealed for restraint, an immediate end to hostilities and adherence to the ceasefire arrangements. As an outcome of the meeting, the Chairperson of the AU Commission deployed a High-Level delegation in South Sudan (the Panel of the Wise) to engage the Parties on the ground to address the evolving situation.
19. The Panel of the Wise, led by former Burundian President Domitien Ndayizeye, undertook its mission in South Sudan in early April 2025 where it met with H.E. President Salva Kiir and other stakeholders. The delegation also engaged with the RJMEC, IGAD South Sudan Liaison, AUMISS and UNMISS who briefed on the evolving situation in the country and ongoing efforts towards stabilizing the country and restoring the Permanent

Ceasefire. The delegation was unfortunately unable to meet First Vice President Dr. Riek Machar.

Political Violations of the R-ARCSS

20. During the quarter, there have been serious political violations requiring redress, including the following:
- arrest and detention of SPLM/A-IO senior political and military leaders, including H.E. Dr. Riek Macher Teny, First Vice President of the Republic of South Sudan and Chairperson and Commander-in-Chief of SPLM/A-IO;
 - dismissal of the SPLM/A-IO's nominated national Minister of Health without consultation with and concurrence of the SPLM/A-IO;
 - dismissal of the SPLM/A-IO's nominated Governor of Western Equatoria State without consultation with and concurrence of the SPLM/A-IO;
 - dismissal of the SSOA's nominated Governor of Jonglei and the replacement with an ITGoNU nominee without consultation with and concurrence of the SSOA; and
 - acceptance of deployment of foreign troops into the territory of the Republic of South Sudan without consultation with and concurrence within the RTGoNU Presidency; and
 - dismissal of the SPLM/A-IO's nominated Governor of Upper Nile State and replacement with an ITGoNU nominee without consultation with and concurrence of the SPLM/A-IO.

National Elections

21. The extension of the Transitional Period of the R-ARCSS commenced during the quarter on 22 February 2025 and is expected to end on 22 February 2027, for 24 months, to be preceded by elections in December 2026. In preparation for implementation of key priority tasks of the extension, the elections-related institutions continued to strengthen their internal capacities with support from various partners. It was therefore expected that enhanced synergies, cooperation and alignment of workplans and priorities between these institutions would continue uninterrupted during the reporting period, which turned out not to be the case.
22. Pursuant to Article 1.20.5 of the R-ARCSS, the elections are required to be conducted under the provisions of the permanent constitution. A lot more work is required to deliver the permanent constitution in time for the elections, and time is of the essence. There are also delays in publishing the detailed elections roadmap, establishing the procedures for voter registry and targeted voter registration, and for commencing civic and voter education as provided for in Articles 1.20.8 of the R-ARCSS, among others. Considering the interlinkages between the electoral process and the unification of forces, political participation of the displaced South Sudanese population and the permanent constitution-making process, concerns surround the RTGoNU's strategy to support the security and elections-related institutions and mechanisms to enable them to urgently expedite the completion of their pending mandates.

23. During the quarter, the National Elections Commission (NEC), the Political Parties Council (PPC) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) awaited funding disbursement from the RTGoNU's Ministry of Finance and Planning to enable them to perform their respective functions, following the approval of their respective budgets by the TNLA. Without the requisite funding disbursement, these institutions are unable to fully discharge their mandates. The resource constraints notwithstanding, the NEC, PPC and NBS have continued to execute some of their functions pursuant to their respective mandates and with support from partners. For example, the NEC has continued with its engagements with various stakeholders, including with Civil Society Organisations, most recently in Bentiu, Unity State and Malakal, Upper Nile State.
24. Regarding progress in the implementation of the mandate of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the NBS reported that its budget which was presented to the RTGoNU was duly approved and awaited funding. In the meantime, the NBS has accomplished some milestones, including conducting its readiness assessment; developing its activity map phased over time; exploration of options in support of elections in the event the national population and housing census cannot be conducted on time and presenting the same to the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs; and, instituting additional statistical offices in all the Administrative Areas in readiness for the census. Furthermore, the NBS, in partnership with partners, undertook the mapping and listing of households across the country, and planned to conduct field training and subsequent activities in the next quarter.
25. Meanwhile, the Political Parties Council (PPC) developed its key priority areas which include, *inter-alia*, the following: continuous registration of political parties; vetting of registered political parties to ensure compliance with the law; updating records and particulars of registered political parties; capacity building on laws governing registration and management of political parties; dialogue with political parties on the Council's operations, decision-making and information sharing; and building institutional and personnel capacity. Furthermore, the PPC planned to sensitize and train political parties on the Political Parties Act, 2012 (as Amended), 2022 and all newly enacted regulations; finalize draft internal policies and Terms of Reference for recruitment of its workforce; establish its branch offices in all the states and Administrative Areas; validate and map gender inclusion in all political parties system and structures; train on advanced political party registration system and undertake experiential benchmarking visit to the region.

Legislative and Judicial Reforms

26. In terms of the National Constitutional Amendment Committee (NCAC) amended laws, the National Security Service (NSS) Act appears to be technically in force with its controversial provisions Sections 54 and 55 intact despite an initial indication that the Presidency had agreed to return the same to the Cabinet to be re-enacted. Also, the two Petroleum laws and the NGO Act 2016 (Amendment) Bills are all still pending various stages of enactment. The Petroleum Bills are still with the Cabinet and the NGO Bill is before the TNLA Specialised Committee.
27. In terms of the judicial reforms process, there has been no significant progress in terms of implementation of the Judicial Reform Committee (JRC) report and its recommendations. The JRC completed its work and submitted its final report and recommendations to the RTGoNU. The report was further endorsed by the President on 20th December 2024,

however, no progress has since been made to review the Judiciary Act and reconstitute the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to implement the requisite judicial reforms.

Gender Considerations

28. During the reporting period, Hon Josephine Lagu who held the position of Minister of Agriculture was appointed to the position of Vice President increasing the percentage representation of women at the executive level to 33.3 percent.³ However, since the position she vacated at the Ministerial level was filled by a man, this reduced the number and percentage representation of women at the ministerial level.
29. A number of women in decision making positions have been relieved of their positions and replaced by men further reducing women's representation and participation in governance and decision making. Through presidential decrees, the Minister for Education Hon. Awut Deng Acuil was replaced by Hon. Kuyok Abol Kuyok while the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health Hon. Harriet Pasquale Akello was replaced by Hon. Aniin Ngot Mou. The continued replacement of women by men in key political and technical positions continues to undermine efforts towards achieving the 35 percent minimum representation quota in governance and decision making as stipulated by the agreement. Continued advocacy is needed to ensure that female officeholders are replaced by females to maintain and grow the number of women holding decision making positions within the RTGoNU. On a positive note, on 13 January 2025, Mary James Anjith was appointed undersecretary at the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs replacing Hon. Dr Gabriel Isaac Awow.

Chapter 2: Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements

30. During the period of reporting there have been gross violations of the Permanent Ceasefire on a scale not seen since the signing of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Civilian Protection and Humanitarian Access (CoHA) in December 2017. Violations of the Agreement have reportedly been made by both the South Sudan Peoples Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army – In Opposition (SPLA --IO), which now threatens the peace and stability of South Sudan. To date, some of the violations have been investigated, and others are either in process or are yet to be started by the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM).
31. Major violations of the ceasefire already investigated by CTSAMVM include clashes between elements of the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO at Bo Bridge on the border of Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal. The clashes occurred on 11, 12, 13, 16 and 22 January 2025 and the CTSAMVM Violation Report 2025/02 holds the SSPDF responsible for the attacks. The same report also holds the SPLA-IO responsible for ambushing and attacking SSPDF logistical elements on 14 January and 3 February 2025. On 12 February 2025, the SSPDF attacked and dislodged SPLA-IO forces stationed at Ri Rangu Assembly Area in Western Equatoria State. CTSAMVM Violation Report 2025/03 holds the SSPDF responsible for the violation.

³ H.E Josephine Lagu replaced H.E Hussein Abdelbagi who held the position from February 2020. They both represent the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA) the third largest party within RTGoNU.

32. Violations that are yet to be investigated by CTSAMVM are: i) the alleged bombing in Ulang County by the SSPDF in February 2025; ii) the fighting in Nasir that led to the dislodging of the SSPDF and the subsequent death of Maj Gen. Majur Dak, UN staff and several soldiers in March 2025; iii) the alleged attack on the SPLA-IO Wunaliet Cantonment Site in March 2025; iv) alleged SSPDF attack on the Rambur Training Centre in March 2025; and v) SSPDF attack on the Rajaf Training Centre in March 2025. In addition, allegations that led to the arrest of some members of the SPLM/A-IO, including H.E. Dr. Riek Machar Teny, First Vice President of the Republic of South Sudan by the security agencies are yet to be investigated.
33. Additionally, there are other potential serious violations of the Permanent Ceasefire by armed forces which require comprehensive investigation. These include alleged SSPDF helicopter gunship attacks on civilians in Ulang County, Upper Nile State and skirmishes between the SSPDF and armed youth of Ulang County; and reported armed clashes involving SSPDF and SPLA-IO and allied forces in Western Equatoria, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Central Equatoria and Upper Nile States.

Transitional Security Arrangements

34. There has been no progress regarding the unification and deployment of forces, which under the R-ARCSS was intended to bring the former warring parties together under one unified command of the President and Commander-in-Chief. Phase I deployment has not been completed and Phase II training has not yet started. The Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process remained stalled. The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) process has not progressed since the completion of the validation process in December 2024. Security and political incidents that took place in February and March 2025 led to a crisis which took away the Parties' attention from the implementation of the R-ARCSS. Trust, which is the most important factor for the unification of forces, has also been seriously dented by recent clashes and arrests.

Chapter 3: Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction

35. During this quarter, South Sudan continued to face a severe humanitarian crisis, which has been further escalated by widespread violence, intercommunal clashes, land disputes, insecurity, natural disasters, cholera outbreak and cross-border movements. The widespread violence led to increased numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. Between 1 to 28 February 2025, a total of 21,013⁴ individuals, 64 percent of whom were women and girls, were displaced in Upper Nile and Jonglei States. Upper Nile State experienced the largest share of displacements with 18,430 individuals affected, while Jonglei State accounted for 2,583 displacements.
36. The fighting in Upper Nile State affected the populations by putting already vulnerable communities at greater risk and disrupting humanitarian operations through the suspension of life-saving services targeting especially women, children, and the elderly. The insecurity also led to the relocation of humanitarian workers and closure of the cholera treatment unit in Nasir, worsening the ongoing outbreak even among the thousands that

⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), Apr 04, 2025. DTM South Sudan — Event Tracking Report – Nasir County Crisis #79 (19-31 March 2025). IOM, South Sudan.

were displaced into Ethiopia. The situation will be further worsened by the imminent rains and floods.

Humanitarian Access

37. Bureaucratic challenges and escalating security concerns continued to hinder humanitarian efforts, delaying the delivery of essential aid to those in need and the prepositioning of humanitarian supplies to ensure continuity of services ahead of the imminent rains and floods. In February alone, humanitarian partners in South Sudan faced 25 reported access challenges. These issues encompassed active hostilities between armed factions, bureaucratic obstacles, and violence directed at humanitarian staff, facilities, and resources.
38. Twenty-three humanitarian staff were relocated from Upper Nile State in February 2025, leading to the disruption of humanitarian services. Humanitarian personnel, facilities, and assets were also targeted in Jonglei, Central Equatoria, and Western Equatoria States where aid workers faced ambushes, attacks, intrusions, looting, and armed robberies. These led to delayed delivery of humanitarian supplies and disruptions in service delivery. By the end of the quarter, over 1,100,000 returnees and refugees had crossed into South Sudan the majority of whom were women and children. Return, resettlement and reintegration continued to be challenged by limited funding for the relocation and resettlement programs, insecurity and lack of services at the points of final return.
39. During the quarter, the *South Sudan Action Plan on Return Reintegration and Recovery: Achieving Durable Solutions 2024 - 2028* was launched. This national policy aims to provide a framework for long-term solutions for displaced populations, including refugees, returnees and host communities with priority actions including, creating a secure and safe environment for the provision of durable solutions, provision of basic services, support integration of refugees, returnees and host communities to improve livelihoods and strengthening government institutional capacity, and coordination mechanisms to ensure effective implementation of interventions. Recognising the timeliness of this intervention, given the current and growing humanitarian needs, RJMEC urged the RTGoNU to expeditiously operationalise this action plan in order to deliver peace dividends to the citizens of South Sudan as envisaged in chapter III of the R-ARCSS.

Chapter 4: Resource Economic and Financial Management

40. On the implementation of Chapter IV, regarding Resource Economic and Financial Management, there is very little progress to report during this period. The efforts made previously to legislate the draft Bills in this chapter are commended, but further commitment is required to enact the *Revised Petroleum Revenue Management Act 2012* and the *Revised Petroleum Act 2012*, which were both reviewed by the NCAC and submitted to the RTGoNU since 2022. These laws are intended to strengthen the management of both natural and financial resources in the oil sector, which remains the country's main source of revenue.
41. The *Land Act 2008* and the *South Sudan Water Bill 2015* are yet to be reviewed. Policies to regulate the management of these sectors have been developed but the comprehensive policy for the use and management of South Sudan's water bodies, including but not limited to the River Nile, as required by the R-ARCSS should be formulated. The

establishment of a Women Enterprise Development Fund for the provision of subsidized credit for women-based enterprise development and capacity building of women entrepreneurs and the Youth Enterprise Development Fund are both still at the stage of developing the legal instruments to operationalize them.

42. Though there are ongoing interventions by development partners in providing credit to vulnerable women and youth there is a need to legislate and create these institutions to ensure sustainability. The enactment of these laws is merely the first stage of the process of achieving fully functional policies and procedures. Strengthening these institutions, to enable them to perform the mandates of these laws is important. The RTGoNU should therefore improve the workforce's abilities to implement laws effectively during this extension period.

Public Finance Management

43. The Public Financial Management Oversight Committee (PFM OC), which comprises the RTGoNU and its development partners identified eleven plus two priorities in their mid-term strategy. Of these nine are contained in the provisions of the R-ARCSS and the assessment focuses on the implementation of these provisions. Though faced with challenges the Committee has made gains. The implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA), which is a bank account or a set of linked bank accounts through which the government maintains its receipts and payments and obtains a consolidated view of its cash position at the end of each day, is progressing with support from the World Bank.
44. To ensure the effectiveness of this system, the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) application has been deployed. This system aims to produce timely financial reports and enhance transparency and accountability in government operations. Its implementation has encountered challenges due to discrepancies between the IFMIS reports and bank statements. However, there is a need to correct these anomalies and expedite the production of Government Financial Statements from 2015 to the end of the last financial year. The statements of 2011 to 2014 were produced and submitted to the Audit Chamber. These Audited Financial statements should be tabled at the TNLA as required in the R-ARCSS.
45. The R-ARCSS requires the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP) to release petroleum revenue records within six weeks following each quarter, per section six (6) of the Petroleum Revenue Act. These records need to be published in an official gazette, on a website, and in two national newspapers and conveyed to the legislature. The Bank of South Sudan should provide quarterly reports on inflows and outflows of petroleum revenue and savings accounts six (6) weeks after the end of each quarter. Annual reports are to be sent to the legislature for discussion and subsequent action. These processes are currently not being followed.
46. The PFM OC through support from development partners facilitated the ongoing strengthening of the oversight institutions of the Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Audit Chamber. These include national sensitization on the amended Anti-Corruption Act targeting public officials, institutions, civil society, youth and women, and local and external training for auditors. The recently established Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority has also conducted training sessions for accounting officers in the states and administrative areas.

47. The Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development completed negotiations with FreeBalance (a software company that provides solutions for government resource planning, public financial management and civil service management) on the support needed for the setting up of a biometric Payroll System. The effectiveness of the system is compromised due to expenditures being processed via payment instruction letters, bypassing the software system.

Non-Oil Revenue

48. Non-oil revenue collection has continued to improve due to the implementation of the e-tax system, policy and administrative frameworks, and strategic initiatives. Between July 2024 and January 2025, gross revenue collection increased by 107.4 percent, rising from SSP 187.42 billion (US \$37.4 million) to SSP 388.86 billion (US \$77.8 million) when compared to the same period in FY2023-24. Although this is a significant improvement from the previous fiscal year, the cumulative revenue for the first half of FY2024-25 remains below the estimated target of SSP 559.5 billion (US \$111.9 million), which averages SSP 94 billion (US \$18.8 million) monthly. This accounts for 52.7 percent of revenue performance.
49. The delayed enactment of the Finance Act and resistance to new rates affected revenue targets during the first seven months of FY2024-2025. The South Sudan Revenue Authority is actively implementing its five-year strategic plan (2022-27). Key initiatives include the cancellation of all non-statutory exemptions, complete integration of the Customs Division, improvement of the collection process through the acquisition of cargo inspection equipment (scanners), installation of ICT equipment at 10 sites nationwide, and enhanced recruitment and training programs.
50. Some of the provisions not yet addressed are the creation of New Institutions in Article 4.6 of the R-ARCSS, namely the Salaries and Remuneration Commission, Environment Management Authority and Health Care Support Fund. Also required within this chapter is the review and transformation of the national oil company - Nile Petroleum Corporation (NPC) - and the National Petroleum and Gas Commission (NPGC) according to the Amended Constitution and law.

Chapter 5: Transitional Justice Accountability Reconciliation and Healing

51. During this period, very little progress was registered in the implementation of tasks associated with Transitional Justice, Accountability, Reconciliation and Healing. The line Ministry designated to lead implementation of Chapter V of the R-ARCSS, i.e., the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs experienced some changes in its leadership following the removal of Hon. Justice Ruben Arol Madol and appointment of Hon. Wek Mamer Kuol on 11 March 2025. Further, on 13 January 2025 Hon. Dr Gabriel Isaac Awow was removed as Undersecretary and Hon. Mary James Anjith was appointed in his place.
52. Other developments during this reporting period include the approval by the Council of Ministers of a Memorandum on the implementation of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) and Compensation and Reparation Authority (CRA) Acts presented by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA). This

Cabinet Memorandum was endorsed by the RTGoNU Governance Cluster in mid-January 2025 and thereafter approved by the Council of Ministers on 24 January 2025.

53. Critical next steps that are underway towards the establishment of the CTRH involve the appointment of its seven-member Commission, three of whom non-South Sudanese to be recruited by the Chair of the African Union Commission (AUC) from the continent. The other four South Sudanese members are to be independently and competitively recruited by a nine-member Selection Panel composed of stakeholders representing civil society, religious leaders, women, youth, persons with disability and academia.
54. During the quarter, armed clashes erupted in Nasir County, Upper Nile State during the attempted rescue of Maj. Gen. Major Dak and resulted in his death, several soldiers and that of a UNMISS personnel. These actions could amount to war crimes under the R-ARCSS. The Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS) when established will have jurisdiction over crimes of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious crimes under international law and relevant laws of South Sudan. The Court is mandated to investigate, and where necessary, prosecute individuals bearing the greatest responsibility for violations of international law and applicable South Sudanese law committed from 15 December 2013 to the end of the Transitional Period.
55. During its 1265th meeting held on 18 March 2025, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) reiterated its past calls on the RTGoNU to work with the AU Commission - Office of the Legal Counsel (OLC) - to develop the Guidelines for the establishment of the Hybrid Court of South Sudan (HCSS), and the modalities for the truth, reconciliation, compensation and reparation processes.

Chapter 6: Parameters of Permanent Constitution

56. In terms of the permanent constitution-making process, some progress was made during this reporting period. The reconstituted National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC) continued its proactive approach in executing its mandate.
57. First, on 6 March 2025, it convened a high-level event for the RTGoNU and partners to assess the NCRC's substantive and procedural preparedness for the execution of its mandate. The event, hosted by the NCRC at its Secretariat, was organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, and was attended by Ministers of Cabinet Affairs, Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Finance and Economic Planning, and Federal Affairs as well as representatives of regional and international partners, among others. The event afforded the NCRC the opportunity to provide updates on the internal capacity-building progress and readiness to embark on the constitution-making process and to appeal for financial support. The RTGoNU reiterated its commitment to oversee the making of a permanent constitution before elections are conducted and pledged to prioritize funding for the constitution-making process going forward.
58. Second, on 27 March 2025, the NCRC publicly launched its civic education and public consultation process. The event held at the symbolic Freedom Hall unveiled to the public the ongoing permanent constitution-making process and indicated the NCRC's readiness to embark on a planned nationwide civic education and public consultation. The national launch of civic education and public consultation further underscored the critical importance of public participation and ownership in the making of a people-led and people-owned permanent constitution.

59. Third, the NCRC in partnership with UNMISS has been convening a series of partner meetings to mobilise resources to facilitate the launch of civic education and public consultation at the national levels, as well as in other parts of the country. The engagements have yielded dividends and contributed to the successful national launch of civic education and public consultation campaigns on 27 March 2027. Such engagements should be continued and the RTGoNU should avail funding to the NCRC to enable donor partners to complement its efforts.

Chapter 7: Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

60. In view of the fast-evolving prevailing political and security situation in the country over the last few weeks, RJMEC increased its diplomatic engagements and consultations both in Juba and beyond in response to the crisis. These included engagements with various key personalities, Parties to the R-ARCSS, Stakeholders and Adherents, Regional Guarantors, and International Partners and Friends of South Sudan. All these different layers of engagements were aimed at holding discussions with various players in the South Sudan peace process, with the aim of de-escalating tensions and promoting dialogue among the Parties.
61. Through IGAD, RJMEC invoked the involvements of the IGAD Heads of State and Government, the African Union, the United Nations and key international players. Among the outcomes were the holding of an Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government, the convening of the AU Peace and Security Council, shuttle diplomacy by various regional Special Envoys to Juba, the AU Panel of the Wise and a two-day visit by H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, an IGAD member Head of State and regional guarantor to the R-ARCSS.
62. All these engagements underscored the importance of the Revitalised Peace Agreement as the most viable path to stability and that the most important step now was to encourage political dialogue between the South Sudanese leaders, especially between the President and First Vice President based on consensus and compromise and within the framework of the Revitalized Peace Agreement. Further, the general consensus was that the political and security situation in South Sudan cannot be delinked, and therefore, efforts to stabilise the current political situation is the path to restoring the permanent ceasefire and the security situation in the country.
63. RJMEC held its 39th regular ordinary monthly meeting on 20 February 2025 during which it had warned of the imminent danger posed by the clashes in Nasir County in Upper Nile State, as well as in Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal States. RJMEC was of the view that these were ‘very serious setbacks’ which needed to be urgently addressed through dialogue. Unfortunately, the warning was not heeded by the RTGoNU and regrettably, violence resulted and subsequently spread to other parts of the country. The RJMEC members also took note of the progress registered by the SDSR Board towards the finalization of the five policy security documents, which were validated and encouraged the SDSR Board to urgently submit these to the Executive for consideration and adoption.

III. Key Observations and Recommendations

Observations

64. There is no doubt that the R-ARCSS remains the most viable framework to steer South Sudan towards the path of stability and prosperity. However, the current political and security situation is fragile and highly volatile, posing a serious threat to the survivability of the R-ARCSS. This is due to various factors, including:
- several weeks of armed violent clashes between forces of the parties to the Revitalized Peace Agreement on the one hand and armed groups attacking regular forces and civilian populations on the other. These clashes are now spreading to several areas across the country, including reported attacks on some cantonment sites and training centres such as Luri, Rajaf, and Panyume, among others;
 - arrest and continuous detention of some senior SPLM/A-IO political and military leaders who are integral to the implementation of the R-ARCSS;
 - removal and replacement of some opposition leaders from various portfolios at the national and state levels without consultation, consensus and compromise with the concerned Parties, as provided for in the R-ARCSS;
 - abandonment of official portfolios, including that of Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms by some opposition leaders and officials out of fear of being targeted for arrest and/or detention; and
 - the inability of the leadership of the parties to dialogue and resolve the emerging security and political challenges within the framework of the Revitalized Peace Agreement.
65. The aforementioned factors have contributed to heightening of political tensions, and undermining of trust and confidence built between the peace partners over the years, thereby potentially eroding all possibilities of implementing the R-ARCSS, especially at this critical time. It is worth noting that in this two-year extension of the Agreement, there are less than 20 months left to elections in December 2026.
66. The ongoing political conflicts are also eroding opportunities the extension provided to enhance the integration of gender equality perspectives into the peace process and better prepare women for meaningful participation in the transitional Justice, constitution-making and political processes ahead of the anticipated elections in December 2026. The continued insecurity also fuelled displacement among the general population, which disproportionately affected women and children. IDPs faced heightened protection risks, limited access to services such as food, health and education and disruptions to their livelihoods as a result of destroyed and abandoned business or farming activities. These further undermined the women's possibilities and access to opportunities to participate in the peace process.
67. Finally, no substantive progress was made towards achieving the critical pending benchmarks needed for the conduct of elections, including adhering to the responsibility sharing arrangements among the Parties to the Agreement. The lack of progress coupled

with the recent political developments has raised concerns regarding the RTGoNU's commitment to accomplish the remaining critical tasks of the R-ARCSS within the limited time left to the end of the extended transitional period and its willingness to resolve heightened inter-party and intra-party tensions which emerged as well as serious violations which occurred during the reporting period.

Recommendations

68. The recommendations that follow, if acted upon, including to the Parties to the Agreement, RTGoNU, TNL, IGAD, the African Union, and the International Partners, are geared towards putting an end to the deteriorating security and political situation as well as to encourage a faster pace of implementation of the R-ARCSS.

a. To the Parties to the Agreement and Relevant Stakeholders:

- Cease all forms of hostilities and restore adherence to the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements;
- act on CTSAMVM violations reports and collaborate with CTSAMVM to enable it to investigate, verify and report findings on pending allegations of violations of the provisions of the permanent ceasefire;
- urgently engage in continuous dialogue at all levels, de-escalate tensions, and resolve issues in a collegial manner, embracing understanding and compromise;
- in particular the ITGoNU and SPLM-IO are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment not to return the country to war through concrete actions and fidelity to the Agreement;
- participate fully in the various Agreement institutions and mechanisms, which are geared towards safeguarding the R-ARCSS;
- desist from actions that may escalate tensions by demonstrating leadership in guiding South Sudan towards the path of stability and prosperity; and
- adhere to the protocols of the unification of forces, dialogue on a viable way forward and embrace preparatory arrangements underway in this regard.

b. To the RTGoNU:

- Pursuant to the *Communiqué of the 43rd Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government on the Situation in the Republic of South Sudan*, immediately release the SPLM/A-IO leaders and military officials currently in detention, unless credible evidence warrants legal proceedings conducted transparently and in accordance with due process;
- reactivate and re-energise the functionality of all the Agreement implementation institutions and mechanisms, especially the Transitional Security Mechanisms;
- rebuild trust and confidence in the peace process and prioritise completion of the critical pending tasks of the R-ARCSS;

- encourage diplomatic and political support from the Regional Guarantors and International Partners that serve to deescalate tensions and support dialogue among the leaders of the Parties to the Agreement;
- prioritise the unification of all forces, deploy the Necessary unified Forces (NUF) to maintain peace throughout the country, and implement comprehensive DDR;
- expedite implementation of the Judicial Reform Committee's report and its recommendation, especially the review and amendment of the Judiciary Act and reconstitution of the Judicial Service Commission to implement the reforms;
- expedite the return of the controversial National Security Services Act to the TNLA for reconsideration;
- provide the necessary guidance through the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to stakeholders to enable them to establish a selection panel that will recruit members to the CTRH; and
- avail sufficient funding to the NCRC in a timely manner to enable it to roll out civic education and public consultation campaigns to all parts of the country.

c. To the TNLA:

- Expedite the enactment of all the pending bills, including the NGO Amendment Bill to create the necessary civic and political space needed for the conduct of elections.

d. To IGAD:

- Continue to strengthen IGAD member states' oversight engagement in the South Sudan peace process, meet regularly to take stock and pronounce themselves on the progress being made in the implementation of the R-ARCSS;
- the IGAD Council of Ministers to undertake a joint Ministerial visit to South Sudan to review the current status of the R-ARCSS, or to arrange bilateral visits; and
- mobilize regional and international in-kind and financial support for RJMEC, CTSAMVM and the overall Peace Agreement.

e. To the African Union:

- Continue to play an active role in ensuring the success of the Agreement and in helping to maintain lasting peace and stability in South Sudan;
- complete recruitment of the three non-South Sudanese members to the CTRH and present them to the Executive for appointment and
- Given the possibility that serious crimes under domestic and international law might have been committed in Nasir and other parts of the country, establish the Hybrid Court for South Sudan.

f. International Partners:

- Support the NCRC and the constitution-making process, including by directly funding some of the critical mechanisms, and civic education, and providing technical and logistical support.

IV. Conclusion

69. The recent heightening of political and security tensions in South Sudan does not bode well for the sustaining of durable peace. Every effort must be made by the Parties to the Agreement to adhere strictly to the R-ARCSS and recommit themselves to the cause of peace. While the trust among the Parties has been seriously dented there remains some room for re-engagement and dialogue. It is important that Parties resort back to strict adherence to the CoHA and undertake an immediate cessation of hostilities on all fronts. Also, efforts must be stepped up to complete the unification of forces, free those detained, and move forward with the Constitution-making process. While it's true that there is a serious challenge to the Peace Agreement, the R-ARCSS remains ultimately the best path to lasting peace in South Sudan. Consequently, every effort must be made by all to rescue the R-ARCSS and ease the burden of the long-suffering people of South Sudan.
70. On its part and pursuant to its mandate as provided for in Chapter 7 of the R-ARCSS, RJMEC will continue to monitor, evaluate, and report on the status of implementation of the R-ARCSS, and as circumstances may demand, intervene to break any deadlock that may emerge in the course of implementation. RJMEC will regularly provide reports and briefings to the RTGoNU, the reconstituted TNLA, the Chairperson of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Chairperson of the IGAD Council of Ministers, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and to the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Security Council of the United Nations.

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