



Briefing on UNMISS (South Sudan), 14 December 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President. I also thank SRSB Haysom for his briefing, and welcome the representative of South Sudan to the Chamber.

Malta takes note of the recent political developments in South Sudan. This includes the adoption of the National Elections Act Bill, as well as the reconstitution of the National Constitutional Review Committee, the National Elections Commission, and the Political Parties Council. We regret, however, that only the Political Parties Council met the 35% quota for women members.

Furthermore, an acceleration in the pace of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement is clearly needed. Political leaders must demonstrate tangible progress in completing critical pending tasks without any further delays.

Malta encourages the implementation of transitional security arrangements, operationalisation of the electoral institutions, and determination on the precise type of elections. On the latter, we support addressing relevant issues. These include an agreed political code of conduct, voter registration, and the urgent drafting of a permanent constitution.

The WPS Informal Expert Group visit to South Sudan has informed us about the need for measures to make sure that women can participate safely in the



election as candidates, voters, and observers. Civic and voter education, and protection against harassment should be given priority within the framework established to support civil society's role in the peace process.

These are important elements to make sure that elections will be held within the timelines set out in the Roadmap.

We remain gravely concerned by the incidents of conflict related sexual violence. We echo SRSG Patten's call for preventive and restorative interventions, mental health support, and rehabilitation for survivors.

Gross human rights violations and abuses, and serious violations of international humanitarian law by armed groups in Greater Upper Nile, are also deeply worrying. Both parties recruited and used children as fighters. As we condemn these acts, we continue to advocate for human rights reporting and analysis, as well as support to national authorities in conducting independent and transparent investigations.

On top of the spillover from the conflict in Sudan and the increasing numbers of refugees and returnees crossing the border, South Sudan's also faces severe climate-related risks. Climate-induced disasters will further fuel inter-communal violence, leading to more displacement and preventing returns.

President



Malta commends the remarkable work carried out by UNMISS, particularly in its protection of civilians mandate and its continued dynamic posture. Its good offices, training, capacity-building and conciliatory measures are crucial in laying down the foundations for sustainable peace. We also recall UNMISS' significant logistics support that facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance across the country.

To conclude, President, Malta strongly believes in the pursuit of peace and security in South Sudan. We reiterate our call for the end of inter-communal violence which disrupts this collective pursuit. We look forward to further efforts in maintaining this objective, to make sure that the people of South Sudan can turn their hopes into reality.

I thank you.