



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN NEW YORK



Malta
2023-2024

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL

Security Council Briefing on UNMISS, 5 March 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

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

Thank you, President, and thank you USG Lacroix for your comprehensive insights. We also welcome the Representative of South Sudan to this briefing.

South Sudan will soon reach a pivotal moment, with the country envisaged to hold elections in less than nine months. Malta supports all ongoing efforts towards maintaining this objective.

We welcome the recent developments in the National Constitutional Review Commission, the Political Parties Council, and National Election Commission. We remain concerned, however, that these three bodies are yet to be adequately funded and resourced. Malta reiterates the centrality of the Revitalized Agreement, and we call for progress on the roadmap and accompanying benchmarks.



Safe and inclusive civic and political spaces are essential components to ensure that the people of South Sudan can participate in an environment that is conducive for fair, credible, and peaceful elections.

We welcome support by UNMISS to these electoral endeavours, including on the draft Code-of-Conduct for political parties in partnership with the AU and IGAD, as well as induction workshops for new members serving in these bodies.

While we acknowledge the increased participation of women in constitutional and electoral processes, we urge all political parties to ensure their full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation. Regional and sub-regional mechanisms and networks, such as the African Women Leaders Network, can play an important role in supporting South Sudanese women in these processes.

As the gradual deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces continues, we further underline the necessity that the second batch of cohorts is deployed in a timely manner, with sufficient food, water, medicine, and shelter.



President

Malta remains gravely concerned by the security situation in South Sudan. This is further exacerbated by the conflict in Sudan, severe climate-related risks that threaten grazing lands and water resources, and persistent inter-communal violence.

We are also concerned about the recent armed mobilisations in Jonglei and Warrap States, which could result in acts of violence and lives lost. We support engagements, facilitated by UNMISS, to de-escalate tensions and to promote reconciliation.

Malta strongly condemns all human rights violations and abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law. These include sexual- and gender-based violence, and the six grave violations committed against children.

Impunity for sexual violence cannot be tolerated. In this regard, we commend the recent work by the mobile court in Unity State. On this note, we call on the South Sudanese Government to update the country's legal framework on conflict-related sexual violence.



We also recall the importance of child protection focal points from parties to conflict and support the UN and National Technical Committee's commitment towards capacity-building.

With an estimated 5.78 million people projected to be at risk of acute food insecurity, South Sudan's already dire humanitarian needs are further compromised by more than a half million people arriving from Sudan and risks associated with climate change. Diversified funding needs to reach those most in need, and to this end, the European Union has contributed with 82 million euros in 2023.

President

Malta strongly supports the valuable role played by UNMISS in engendering trust among and within communities. Freedom of movement is not negotiable when responding to incidents, and to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance.



We therefore commend the swift response by peacekeepers to a recent incident on UNMISS grounds. We use this occasion to also condemn any attacks on UN premises and personnel, including humanitarian personnel.

To conclude, President, it is only with political will and commitment that the pursuit of peace and security in South Sudan can be achieved. Malta stands by this pursuit, and by the people of South Sudan.

I thank you.