

Statement by the President of the Security Council on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)

The Security Council welcomes improvements in the security situation as well as the ongoing absence of armed clashes between government forces and the armed opposition, in addition to the extension of unilateral cessations of hostilities by both sides. The Security Council also welcomes improvements in the humanitarian situation, including increased humanitarian access throughout Darfur and the return from Chad and the Central African Republic of more than 5,000 refugees in recent months.

The Security Council remains concerned about the considerable challenges that remain, particularly the challenge of ensuring sustainable solutions for Darfur's 2.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), while taking note that no additional displacements have taken place during the period of assessment in the vicinity of the closed team sites. The Security Council reiterates its demand that all parties to the conflict in Darfur create the conditions conducive to allowing the voluntary, informed, safe, dignified and sustainable return of refugees and IDPs. The Security Council recognises the Government of Sudan's stated desire and plan to sustainably address the challenge of IDPs; stresses that any returns should be safe, voluntary and in accordance with applicable international law and calls for enhanced cooperation between the Government and the international community in search of dignified and durable solutions for the IDPs.

The Security Council, notwithstanding the significant decrease in inter-communal conflicts, remains concerned that it is one of the sources of violence in Darfur and expresses concern that the improvement in the overall security situation has not translated into a commensurate reduction in the level of human rights violations and abuses, such as sexual and gender-based violence, and serious violations against children, perpetrated with impunity. The Council also notes a gradual increase in the number of investigations initiated by the judicial institutions.

The Security Council notes that six years after the adoption of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) the people of Darfur have yet to benefit fully from the political realities and the legislative space that the agreement created, as the implementation of its provisions remains uneven and unsustainable. The Security Council reiterates its support for the DDPD as a viable framework for the peace process in Darfur. The Council, while urging its accelerated implementation, particularly the implementation of the Land Act and provisions related to compensation and the creation of a conducive environment enabling the return of IDPs and refugees, demands that the non-signatory armed movements refrain from impeding the implementation of the DDPD and encourages UNAMID and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to continue to engage fully in support of the implementation of the DDPD. The Security Council also welcomes the signing of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AU-HIP) Roadmap by the Government of Sudan and the armed movements and urges all parties to make immediate progress on the implementation of the Roadmap, including the signing of cessation of hostilities and humanitarian assistance agreements among the parties consistent with the first phase of the Roadmap, and further urges the non-signatory armed groups to sign it without delay.

The Security Council recalls that it authorised in its resolution 2363 (2017) a two-phase reconfiguration of UNAMID in line with the Special Report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission of 18 May 2017 (S/2017/437), and commends UNAMID for the successful conclusion of phase one of the Mission's reconfiguration, in cooperation with the Government of Sudan. The Security Council while taking note that no adverse effects have been reported so far, recognises that it is still too early to reach conclusions on the full impact of UNAMID's reconfiguration. The Council notes the assessment's findings that the closure of team sites has created a gap in early warning systems designed to prevent human rights violations and abuses, has affected UNAMID's capacity-building work, and has limited UNAMID's capacity to verify allegations of human rights violations and abuses. The Security Council therefore requests UNAMID and the UNCT to continue to monitor closely the impact of the reconfiguration on the situation on the ground, including the effect on UNAMID's dialogue with parties to conflict, early warning capacity, human rights monitoring and reporting, and rule of law development and to report any adverse effects to the Security Council in a timely manner. The Security Council underscores the importance of building credible institutions and good governance, including through enhancing the capacity of the state authorities and other local actors to effectively protect civilians. The Security Council also stresses the importance of fully addressing the root causes of the conflict, including management of land, water and other resources, in the search for a sustainable peace, which should rapidly deliver real benefits for the people of Darfur. It further emphasises the importance of integrating a gender perspective, into all transition planning.

The Security Council calls on donors, the regional authorities in Darfur and the Government of Sudan to provide the financial resources necessary to reach those in need. The Council stresses that funding for consolidation of peacebuilding efforts in Darfur should be treated by Member States of the United Nations as a political issue of high priority to protect investments in peace and to avoid a relapse into conflict. The Council, while stressing the importance of adequate resourcing for the UNCT, welcomes that UNAMID and the UNCT are in the process of developing a joint fundraising strategy for the implementation of the Integrated Strategic Framework (2017-2019) that identifies common priorities for sustainable peace in Darfur. The Council also urges the Government of Sudan and the local authorities to ensure there is an environment conducive to the provision of such activities, including improving access for development actors.

The Security Council welcomes the Government of Sudan's written consent on 8 January to the opening of a temporary UNAMID base in Golo, Jebel Marra, to support life-saving humanitarian efforts and protection of civilians. The Security Council, however, regrets that the late consent of the Government of Sudan has caused delays in the implementation of the timetable for the opening of this base as it was outlined in the Special Report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission of 18 May 2017 (S/2017/437) and supported by its resolution 2363 (2017). The Council welcomes the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNAMID and the Government of Sudan on the opening of a temporary operating base in Golo and the transfer of the required land and calls upon the Government of Sudan to build upon its expressed consent, the MoU and this

land transfer to provide cooperation to ensure there are no further delays to UNAMID establishing and operationalising this base.

The Security Council notes the finding in the assessment report that the weapons-collection programme launched by the Government is reportedly creating conditions to further improve the security in Darfur beyond the state capitals and stresses the importance of the Government of Sudan's coordination with UNAMID and IDP representatives on this programme; welcomes the establishment of a tripartite committee for the collection of weapons inside Kalma camp; and strongly encourages them to expand cooperation as they proceed with the weapons collection throughout Darfur. It also emphasises the necessity to accompany the weapons-collection campaign with comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and with full adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law and with full attention to the needs of women and children.

As UNAMID approaches phase two (31 January - 30 June 2018) of its reconfiguration, the Security Council supports the recommendation in the assessment report that due to the security situation in Kalma camp and the resulting operational requirements, some adjustments in the reconfiguration for phase two will be made to enable continued military presence at Kalma camp until the end of phase two and the handover of Kalma to UNAMID Formed Police Units (FPU) will be conducted by the end of phase two of the reconfiguration. The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide updates in his regular 60-day reports on the situation in Kalma camp, and on overall developments in humanitarian access, human rights situation, and rule of law.

The Security Council further supports the recommendation by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General to conduct a review before the renewal of the UNAMID Mandate in June 2018 to consider a new mission concept with adjusted priorities. The Council requests a written report of this review to be provided by 1 June 2018, and further requests it to include: an evaluation of the progress in implementing phase two, in particular the impact of this phase in the areas of UNAMID military handover to FPUs; an update on the situation in the areas from which UNAMID withdrew during phase one, including on protection needs and human rights violations and abuses; the Government of Sudan's cooperation with UNAMID, including on the establishment and operationalisation of the temporary operating base in Golo; UNAMID's freedom of movement; and consideration of a new mission concept with adjusted priorities which is reflective of recent trends and the situation on the ground. It should also provide an assessment of UNAMID's fulfilment of its mandate and strategic priorities as set out in its resolution 2363 (2017), as well as an evaluation of the progress made in addressing the root causes of the conflict.