



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8536th meeting
Thursday, 30 May 2019, 10 a.m.
New York

Provisional

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| <i>President:</i> | Mr. Djani | (Indonesia) |
| <i>Members:</i> | Belgium | Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve |
| | China | Mr. Yao Shaojun |
| | Côte d'Ivoire | Mr. Adom |
| | Dominican Republic | Mr. Singer Weisinger |
| | Equatorial Guinea | Mr. Ndong Mba |
| | France | Mrs. Gueguen |
| | Germany | Mr. Heusgen |
| | Kuwait | Mr. Albanai |
| | Peru | Mr. Meza-Cuadra |
| | Poland | Ms. Wronecka |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Polyanskiy |
| | South Africa | Mr. Matjila |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Hickey |
| | United States of America | Mr. Cohen |

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President: Members of the Council have before them document S/2019/441, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Russian Federation, South Africa

The President: The draft resolution received 10 votes in favour, with five abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2471 (2019).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): The United States welcomes the Security Council's support for renewing the South Sudan sanctions regime, including the arms embargo. If there is to be any chance for lasting peace in South Sudan, we must stop the flow of weapons used to fuel the conflict and terrorize civilians and take action against those responsible for undermining the peace.

We are disappointed that resolution 2471 (2019) did not receive the support of the three African members of the Security Council. Just three months ago, the Council adopted resolution 2457 (2019) to silence the guns in Africa, with strong support from the African

Union. Today we regret that three of the abstentions show an unwillingness to stop the flow of weapons to one of the continent's deadliest civil conflicts. The measures renewed in the resolution are designed to protect civilians and reduce violence in a country that has borne witness to unspeakable atrocities. The United States wants to support Africa's regional and subregional bodies to take leading roles in resolving disputes and conflict on the continent. However, support for that expanded role is difficult to envision if countries in the region are unwilling to support measures that incentivize warring parties to choose peace over war.

Ten months ago, when the Council adopted the sanctions regime that we renewed today, we were told that additional sanctions would undermine the peace process (see S/PV.8310). We were also told that the time was not right for an arms embargo to prevent the flow of weapons to a country that had seen an estimated 400,000 conflict-related deaths in the past five years.

Since strengthening the sanctions regime and imposing an arms embargo, the warring parties signed the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, and there has been widespread adherence to the ceasefire. While the United States remains concerned about delays in implementing key provisions of the peace agreement and ongoing violence against civilians, it cannot be denied that some initial progress towards peace took place immediately following the Council's action on sanctions 10 months ago.

There are undoubtedly many factors besides a strengthened sanctions regime that contributed to that turn of events. Not least, we are encouraged that regional actors have taken more of a leadership role to encourage and support peace in South Sudan. We are counting on the region to maintain pressure on the parties to implement the peace agreement and to uphold the United Nations arms embargo to prevent the flow of weapons into South Sudan, which would further destabilize the country and the region.

The United States remains ready to consider adjustments to the sanctions regime, including strengthening it with additional measures or suspending existing measures, in the light of progress or lack thereof. We note that, under the existing sanctions regime, the parties may request exemptions that would

allow them to successfully implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

In conclusion, the United States will support measures that help to protect civilians in South Sudan against the horrific violence that has become routine in their daily lives. In doing so, the United States supports the people of South Sudan and their aspirations for freedom, peace and prosperity.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): South Africa abstained in today's voting on resolution 2471 (2019) in the firm view that the sanctions imposed on South Sudan at this time are not helpful to the current complex political process. The region, through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), continues to assert that sanctions are not useful to the political process.

South Africa appeals to the Council to heed and support the efforts of IGAD and the African Union, which have been seized of the issue of the peace process in South Sudan. South Africa firmly believes that sanctions should be seen as a tool to encourage continued cooperation and progress towards a political process and not as a punitive measure. Furthermore, they should be used as an incentive to improve stability and build an environment that is conducive to reaching a political agreement in support of lasting and durable peace. In that regard, the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan is setting a positive trajectory for the country's future. We have seen progress in that regard, such as a reduction in political violence and the development of confidence-building measures among the signatories, even if progress in implementing the Agreement has been slow. South Africa encourages the Government of South Sudan and other parties to do everything in their power to implement the Revitalized Agreement.

When a volatile political process is on the table, it should be safeguarded and free from external pressure, which could aggravate the situation. Nevertheless, the process of making peace never has been or will be an easy task, as it is a many-layered process, not a linear one.

Lastly, like many delegations, including that of the United States, we remain concerned about the continuing precarious humanitarian situation in South Sudan. We call on all the parties to redouble their efforts to improve the humanitarian situation in the country and protect those who are vulnerable.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the holding of this meeting on the renewal of the sanctions regime for South Sudan. My delegation decided to abstain in the voting on resolution 2471 (2019) for the following reasons. On 12 September 2018, after several years of conflict, the warring parties in South Sudan signed the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. That important step was made possible by the continued engagement of various actors in South Sudan, particularly the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), through the mediation efforts of the Presidents of the Sudan and Uganda.

Now that several months have passed since the signing of the Agreement, Côte d'Ivoire has noted an improvement in the overall security situation and the fact that the signatories have largely respected the cessation of hostilities agreement. We also welcome the signatories' commitment to the comprehensive implementation of the Revitalized Agreement, to which they have freely subscribed.

As the political process continues, Côte d'Ivoire supports the African Union's recommendation in which it encourages all the parties to refrain from any measures that could weaken the political process and thereby jeopardize the gains achieved, however small they may be. The fact is that the Council's role should not be limited to the constant imposition of sanctions. We should also be able to assess advances and direct our efforts to ensure dynamic progress. Our friends and brothers in South Sudan need our united and constructive action today more than ever, and our encouragement in their difficult quest for peace.

We all know that the route to peace is not a long, quiet river. The history of every people has taught us that. We therefore consider it essential that the Security Council, the African Union, IGAD and all the actors involved in South Sudan give it helpful support in order to preserve and strengthen the positive momentum we have seen on the ground. We must therefore redouble our efforts and show patience and common sense in bringing the parties that are still reluctant to join the peace and thereby help the South Sudanese parties to fully implement the Revitalized Agreement, which is the only way to bring lasting peace back to South Sudan.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation was not able to support the technical resolution 2471 (2019) proposed by the

United States delegation, which extends the sanctions regime for South Sudan in an unchanged form. We are against the automatic extension of sanctions and urge for basing decisions on the situation on the ground in every such case. The situation in South Sudan is steadily stabilizing.

We welcome the agreement on extending the pre-transition period in South Sudan. We know that a number of objective circumstances prevented it from being concluded by 12 May, but a significant part of the agreements reached in Khartoum in September 2018 have nevertheless been implemented. In that regard, we note that the structures and mechanisms provided for in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan have been formulated and have begun to be operationalized. We are pleased that there has been a significant reduction in the level of violence and numbers of human rights violations since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement. An increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons have expressed their willingness to return to their permanent homes. Confidence-building measures are being implemented on the ground and opposition politicians are returning to the capital.

We do not share the view that the progress we have seen in the settlement in South Sudan was promoted by the strengthening of the sanctions pressure and the introduction of an arms embargo in July. It was not the sanctions but the regional mediators who played a role in it. On top of that, at a particular stage the arms embargo prevented the region from giving flexible support to the settlement with the help of its own security initiatives.

Lastly, taking into account the fact that today is the last public meeting of the Council in the Chamber for this month, I would like to thank the Indonesian presidency for its outstanding work and to wish our Kuwaiti colleagues every success.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Poland welcomes the adoption of resolution 2471 (2019), renewing the sanctions regime on South Sudan for another year. We regret that the Council was unable to reach consensus on it, however. We would like to thank the United States for its efficient conduct of the negotiations on the document.

As Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan, we support the resolution because we believe that at this stage it is important to maintain the sanctions regime.

Although we welcome the steps taken by the South Sudanese parties, we are still not in a position to say that we are seeing tangible results of the peace process in South Sudan, including the implementation of the fundamental provisions of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. What we can see, however, is a significant reduction of violence across the country, especially violence against civilians, which we believe is a direct effect of the arms embargo.

Nevertheless, South Sudan continues to experience a major protection crisis. The pervasive culture of violence continues in a context of impunity. We stress the critical importance of effectively implementing the sanctions regime and the key role that the neighbouring States, as well as regional and subregional organizations, can play in that regard. We call on all parties to demonstrate good faith and to implement the sanctions. We believe that it is the Council's responsibility to continue to stem and control the flow of arms into the territory of South Sudan, and by doing so steadily reduce the violence and brutality against innocent civilians. For that reason, and as we did last year, Poland voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Yao Shaojun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The political process towards peace in South Sudan has made significant progress since the end of last year. At present, with the joint support of the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), countries of the regional and the international community at large, the South Sudanese Government and major political parties are demonstrating unprecedented resolve and good will in implementing the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, as a result of which the security situation in South Sudan has greatly improved.

As the primary body for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should send positive messages, adjust its South Sudanese-related measures in a timely manner, fully support the mediation efforts of the AU, IGAD and countries of the region and encourage the parties in South Sudan to pursue their active engagement in the political process in order to maintain the current positive momentum.

Last July, the Security Council adopted resolution 2428 (2018), which imposed some measures, including

an arms embargo, on South Sudan. China abstained in the voting on that resolution. China still does not support an arms embargo on South Sudan and therefore abstained in the voting on resolution 2471 (2019), which was just adopted by the Council. China hopes that the Council will make timely adjustments to the relevant measures in the light of the changes on the ground in South Sudan and help the South Sudanese parties to implement the revitalized agreement and promote governance and security capacity-building in South Sudan.

Last but not least, I also wish to thank the Indonesian presidency of the Council for its excellent work during the month of May.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium welcomes the extension of the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo, and the extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan. The sanctions regime continues to be part of the measures that are needed to contribute to the stabilization of South Sudan. We appreciate the progress made by the parties in the peace process. However, a great deal of work remains to be done during the extended pretransitional phase, including with respect to security provisions and internal borders. The parties must continue to work together to find consensus-based solutions. Prematurely lifting the arms embargo could have negative consequences, in particular for the protection of civilians. We do not want to have to shoulder such a responsibility.

Lastly, we commend the work done by the Panel of Experts, which provides the Council with valuable input on the situation on the ground.

I would also like to join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for the work done by the Indonesian presidency this month.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): I will start where my Belgian colleague left off and thank you, Mr. President, for presiding very successfully over the Security Council during the month of May. I have my batik shirt ready for the party tonight.

Last month, Germany kept the curtains open throughout its Council presidency last month. We see that there has been some pushback. We hope that under the Kuwaiti presidency, there will be pushback against that pushback.

Turning to the matter of this meeting, we first welcome the extension of the sanctions regime in South Sudan. I listened very carefully to what was said by our African friends and by the representatives of Russia and China with respect to the current situation, and I must admit that I do not quite follow their logic. The security situation has improved. In the face of such improvement, what effect would the lifting of the sanctions and the shipment of weapons have? As our South African friend remarked, there is a volatile political process. In that context, what effect would the shipment of additional arms have? We know that the parties have failed to adhere to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. One month ago (S/PV.8519), I expressed my doubts that the deadline in mid-May would be met, and it was not met. Why then should additional arms be sent? I think the one thing the country does not need is additional arms. We have also seen a reduction in human rights violations. Our Polish colleague linked that to the fact that there are fewer arms available there.

That notwithstanding, in our view the human rights situation remains very dire. The issue of sexual and gender-based violence remains. I would very much appreciate it if, during the next debate on this item, we could have a briefing on the human rights situation. Germany is of the view that the money saved on weapons would be much better spent on improving the justice system so that the perpetrators of sexual crimes there could be brought to justice. The Ambassador of South Africa also mentioned the dire humanitarian situation. Why not have those who want to buy arms spend the money on humanitarian resources instead?

The President: I thank the representative of Germany for his reference to the curtains. There was no pushback; it was a precautionary measure.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): As the representative of Germany said, the situation is being brought under control. Why make a change now, rather than waiting for it be further consolidated?

The Dominican Republic voted in favour of resolution 2471 (2019). We are of the view that although it is true that there is an atmosphere of relative calm, with a significant decrease in incidents of violence, and although there has been progress in terms of confidence-building and the resumption of political dialogue, it is no less true that the process

of implementing the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan still faces significant challenges that will determine the success of the Agreement in the medium and long terms.

The setting on 3 May, in Addis Ababa, of a six-month period to establish a Government of National Unity opens a new window of opportunity for the parties to make crucial decisions and to complete two of the fundamental tasks that have not yet been implemented: military reform and the resolution of matters related to internal borders. It is time to reach a definitive political solution. We are hopeful that this period of calm will bring the process of political negotiation back on track, that the parties will assume their responsibilities and break with the trend towards inaction that we have seen over the past eight months.

The humanitarian needs and food insecurity in South Sudan are serious; sexual and gender-based violence is a constant threat, as are human rights violations and the illicit exploitation of natural resources. Also of concern is the presence of armed groups, limitations on information on weapons, possible violations of the assets freeze and proven breaches of the travel ban.

To improve the situation caused by the crisis, both parties must focus on preserving the ceasefire and working together towards the realization of a comprehensive and sustainable peace. We in the Council must harness the momentum gained to move that process forward in the shortest possible time.

It is imperative that tangible progress be made to improve the lives of the civilians of South Sudan, many of whom continue to be internally displaced, with little hope of returning to their places of origin. The time is now. The situation is critical and unacceptable.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Indonesia on its presidency, as well as you, Mr. President, and your team for your great work.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the adoption of resolution 2471 (2019), which extends the sanctions regime against South Sudan, a country with a civilian population that has been tragically tried and tested by violence. France shares the opinion expressed by the other European members of the Security Council. The sanctions regime continues to be an especially important tool that contributes to stabilizing South Sudan. It is a tool to support the

implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and deprive the parties to the conflict of the means to commit violence.

The spread of weapons in the country constitutes a genuine scourge. France calls on the South Sudanese authorities, as well as the countries of the region, to fully implement the arms embargo. We also recall that individual sanctions, in order to be effectively applied, require the mobilization and engagement of all regional and international actors. France remains extremely concerned about the level of human rights violations, including the level of sexual violence. We call for an end to all forms of violence and for ensuring that those responsible are brought to justice.

Lastly, France would like to express its hope that the Security Council will systematically use sanctions to punish and bring pressure to bear on those who commit sexual violence, especially since it is now an independent criterion for sanctions designation.

I would like to conclude by congratulating you, Mr. President, and your team on your successful presidency of the Council this month.

Mr. Albanai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Kuwait voted in favour of resolution 2471 (2019), on extending the sanctions regime as provided for in resolution 2206 (2015), although we would have liked to see its unanimous adoption.

We call upon South Sudan to continue the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and to expedite it. We also call upon the signatory parties to work together so that the pre-transitional process will be successful in leading to the establishment of the Government of national unity. We call as well upon non-signatory parties to sign the Agreement as soon as possible.

It is necessary that the provisions of today's resolution be implemented by all States, regardless of any differences in their positions, as the resolution is binding under the Charter of the United Nations. We hope to arrive at a time when we will no longer need to extend that sanctions regime, which is a means to reach our objective of lasting peace in South Sudan.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely congratulate you, Mr. President, as well as your team and friendly

country, for conducting the work of the Council wisely and with distinction during this month.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes today's adoption of resolution 2471 (2019). As a member of the troika, we stand firm in our support for peace in South Sudan and for the progress made to date, especially efforts from the region led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to ensure that the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan continues to reduce violence. There is still, however, work to do, and we urge the parties to work together for the sake of their people.

We in the Security Council have this morning demonstrated to the people of South Sudan that we are committed to bringing an end to their suffering. The Council will not allow those who seek to undermine peace to do so with impunity, nor will we support the free flow of weapons into the country while that peace remains so fragile.

We share the disappointments of others in the Council today that some members of the Council were not able to support the renewal of the sanctions and the arms embargo. Peace in South Sudan remains fragile. In the place of a complete judicial infrastructure, sanctions offer a form of accountability, and they send a message that heinous acts of violence will not be tolerated by the international community. On the arms embargo, with the peace deal only recently extended, for the Council to allow an unhindered flow of arms into the country right now would surely be irresponsible and risk fuelling further violence. It would send a terrible signal to people of South Sudan.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by extending our sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, for the successful way in which you have presided over the Security Council during the month of May.

We must all agree that since last year there has been an active effort made towards achieving peace in South Sudan through dialogue, the political will of the parties concerned and, above all, the intermediary efforts of Uganda, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and even His Holiness Pope Francis.

Given that effort, my delegation believes that extending the embargo and adopting further sanctions

are not the right steps to motivate those involved to continue their efforts towards achieving peace. That is why we abstained in the voting. Although we support the sanctions in some aspects, we must know when to impose them and when not to. We need to give the political stakeholders in South Sudan an opportunity to continue their efforts to achieve peace through peaceful means and dialogue.

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that arms embargoes are often to the detriment of Governments, and eventually lead to a situation in which the armed groups are better armed and equipped than the Government forces. We have concrete examples of that. We all know and understand that very well because armed groups illegally import weapons, while our focus is on controlling the Governments. They are therefore left without weapons, while the armed groups — the terrorists — prevail. The situation that we are experiencing is clear, and we know that today some armed groups are much better armed than Governments. We therefore need to pay close attention to that kind of situation.

The President: I shall make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

Indonesia acknowledges that the South Sudanese parties continue to make progress in their implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, including their adherence to a permanent ceasefire, the reconstitution of various key institutions and ongoing confidence-building measures. Indeed, there is still a great deal of work to be done, including on transitional security arrangements.

My delegation calls on all South Sudanese parties to direct their energy to ensure that all pending tasks are completed in a timely manner, making use of the six-month extension of the pre-transitional period. The pride of the civilian population should be reason enough for all South Sudanese parties to demonstrate their ultimate resolve. We stand by our conviction that the Revitalized Agreement is the best and only option the South Sudanese have right now. As we have said before in this very Chamber, there is no plan B. To that end, Indonesia fully supports the continued and proactive engagement of countries of the region, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and the United Nations to support the South Sudanese peace process.

My delegation has maintained a consistent view regarding the use of sanctions. Sanctions should be used only as a means to support a wider political strategy; they should not be an end in themselves. Sanctions must have a clear, transparent and measurable timetable. Their application must be periodically evaluated, including against the backdrop of the situation on the ground. As a matter of principle, we see the need to always be clear about key benchmarks that must be achieved to guide the Council in reviewing the measures it has imposed.

Indeed, the resolution could have been stronger had it contained the proper encouragement to South Sudanese parties to make further progress in the peace process. Having said that, our long-standing commitment to supporting peace and stability in South Sudan informed our decision to vote in favour of resolution 2471 (2019). We care for the safety and well-being of the people of South Sudan and that should always be the focus of attention of the Council.

My delegation hopes that the technical extension we have just adopted will provide a space for the South Sudanese parties to instil confidence and work together to fulfil the commitments they have undertaken.

I should like to close by commending the South Sudanese Government and people for their perseverance in their quest for peace and stability.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation on behalf of the delegation of Indonesia for all of the support and kind words that have been extended. However, Indonesia will continue its work until our last day, which is tomorrow. I will then be smiling and thanking the Kuwaiti President of the Council and our Kuwaiti brothers. We still have another day of interesting work to be done.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.