

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
11 February 2025

Original: English

Letter dated 11 February 2025 from the Chair of the Military Staff Committee addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to inform you that the members of the Military Staff Committee have agreed to undertake a one-week assessment mission to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan in April 2025.

The provisional terms of reference are provided in the annex to the present letter.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Carl **Harris**
Colonel (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Chair, Military Staff Committee



Annex to the letter dated 11 February 2025 from the Chair of the Military Staff Committee addressed to the President of the Security Council

Military Staff Committee mission to South Sudan

Terms of reference

I. Introduction

1. At the direction of the permanent members of the Security Council, the members of the Military Staff Committee will undertake a one-week assessment mission to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), tentatively during the period from 31 March to 4 April 2025 (exact dates to be confirmed). A delegation of the military representatives of the African Union Peace and Security Council Military Staff Committee will also be invited to join the mission.

II. Objectives of the mission

2. The primary objectives of the field mission are as follows:

- To assess the extent to which UNMISS is fulfilling its mandate to protect civilians, including maintaining the public safety of and within existing protection-of-civilian sites and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence
- To understand how UNMISS works to create conditions conducive to humanitarian assistance and to facilitate humanitarian access, as well as its role in ensuring adherence to international humanitarian law
- To ascertain the Mission's military challenges with regard to the climatic and environmental constraints
- To assess the impact of persistent violations of the status-of-forces agreement by local security forces on the Mission's ability to implement its mandate
- To better understand the current threats against peacekeepers
- To examine the Mission's endeavours to improve coordination and integration between its civilian and uniformed components and to improve coordination with the host nation's security forces to facilitate mandate implementation
- To determine whether any lessons can be learned from the force generation process, including the statement of unit requirement design, given the impacts of environmental conditions on mobility
- To better understand the operational readiness of the troop-contributing countries, specifically whether predeployment training, mindset, language skills and equipment are appropriate to the operating environment, mission and assignment
- To determine any impact of changes to mission financing
- To ascertain the Mission's ability to counter misinformation/disinformation and hate speech
- To gain an understanding of how UNMISS is preparing for potential elections, including how it will mitigate any potential pre-election violence and how

messaging to the Government of South Sudan on insufficient election planning is being delivered

- To understand how and to what degree UNMISS is positioning itself for eventual transition, including through joined-up working on durable solutions

III. Methodology and output of the visit

3. The Committee requests that copies of the concept of operations, standard operating procedures and any other documents relevant to UNMISS be made available to the Committee no later than three weeks prior to the proposed visit dates.

4. The Committee requests that a briefing from the Mission be given via videoconference, to address the security situation and a finalized itinerary.

5. The Committee will conduct the mission over a period of approximately one full week, including travel days.

IV. Visit programme and coordination of meetings in the mission area

6. A detailed visit programme to support the Committee's visit shall be developed jointly by UNMISS, the Department of Peace Operations and the Committee. The programme will cover all in-mission meetings and briefings, as well as visits to selected operating bases. It is proposed that the visit programme commence with meetings with UNMISS leadership and accommodate meetings with key stakeholders in the mission area.

V. Reporting and follow-up

7. Before leaving the Mission, the Committee will provide an initial out-brief with the Mission's leaders to share observations and recommendations. The Committee will also submit, no later than 30 days after returning to New York, a report on its observations and recommendations for consideration by the Security Council.

VI. Logistical and administrative support

8. UNMISS is requested to provide logistical and administrative support for the Committee's visit, including the development of a visit programme. All costs will be met by the respective offices. In line with the procedure of Security Council visits, it is expected that the UNMISS budget will fund the travel and expenses of the Military Staff Committee liaison officer.