Delegation from the Republic of South Sudan
Position Paper for the General Assembly

The topics before the General Assembly (GA) are: I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament; II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the United Nations (UN) System; and III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women. As any form of violence against women poses a serious violation of human rights, a matter that is still considerable internationally, we would like to discuss the topics in the following order: First topic III, followed by topic I and finally topic II.

I. The Role of Emerging Technologies in International Security and Disarmament

The Republic of South Sudan views technological development as a chance to overcome worldwide development disparities, or as our Minister for Telecommunications and Postal Services, Rebecca Joshua Okwaci, puts it: "South Sudan's great demand for technology creates big opportunities." The *Secretary General Report 45/ 568 (1990)* on the Scientific and Technological Developments and Their Impact on International Security gives an overview of the discussed technologies and their role in disarmament and security. *GA Report 70/ 174* (2015) focuses on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), stating their potential, but also argues: "Different levels of capacity for ICT security among states can increase vulnerability in an interconnected world." The report further acknowledges that the given recommendations on ICT security are not yet achievable for all states and therefore provides initial hints on how to minder the gaps between countries. Our own country presents a vivid example, as we overcame the hardships of conflicts with help from the *World Food Programme* (WFP), supporting us in delivering communication opportunities with an Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC). This provided security communication, internet connectivity, user support and training as well as coordination and information management services for the humanitarian community. After the conflicts, an ICT Working Group was established, which met regularly and discussed humanitarian ICT in the country. By this, we managed the transition to a regular service and the ETC could be dismissed. But this is only one part of emerging technologies. In order to work properly on the topic, firstly, a definition of these technologies is needed, which should be revised regularly as the technologies continue to develop, too. Secondly, the international community as a whole has to find common ground on how to best use emerging technologies in order to develop all countries in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to prevent their excessive use for military purposes. Therefore, we propose that the *UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development* (UNCSTD) creates and reviews a definition of emerging technologies and to overlook technological development in Member States. On that basis, it could on the one hand provide reports and recommendations on the best use of these technologies for humanitarian and development aspects, and on the other hand give recommendations to the *UN Disarmament Commission* (UNDC) on emerging technologies in order to support their work in finding disarmament solutions. The UNCSTD would meet annually to discuss the latest developments and present an annual report. In addition, it could work out a legal framework taking all emerging technologies into consideration. We call upon all Member States to find a common basis on how to regulate the use of these technologies in situations of conflict. Looking forward, this could provide the opportunity for the GA to implement a convention on the use of emerging technology in any kind of armed conflict. This will have a larger grounding among Member States than bilateral agreements.

II. Improving Mechanisms for Accountability and Transparency within the UN System

Strengthening the accountability and transparency within the UN system is of utmost importance to improve its efficiency and also to enhance the UN's stance in public. The latest document on the topic is *GA resolution 71/ 283* (2017). This requests the Secretary-General to improve the protection of whistleblowers, to work on defining fraud as well as suspected fraud and finally keep the GA updated on policies with outside donors and vendors. Our nation strongly supports the protection of whistleblowers. Since we are working in close collaboration with the UN, especially through the *UN Mission in South Sudan* (UNMISS), the possibilities of misconduct by members of UNMISS has to be taken into account. If this occurs, whistleblowers are very important to report about inconsistencies within the UNMISS, or other UN entities. The protection of whistleblowers is very inadequate. There are bodies in place, especially the *Office of Internal Oversight Services* (OIOS) that deals with cases brought forward by whistleblowers and the *UN Ethics Office* that should protect whistleblowers from potential repercussions. Nevertheless, there are reports of whistleblowers who approached these entities, but the report by OIOS never was published and the respective whistleblower suffered from investigation

against himself. Thus, internal entities do not work adequately. As the *Joint Inspection Unit of the UN system* (JIU) is the only external mechanism of accountability, it should be strengthened by an enhancement of their mandate. This could include for JIU to assume the responsibility of protecting and helping whistleblowers to bring their cases forward. The investigation should stay in the hands of OIOS, but all the documents and reports that come from this have to be given to JIU which would thus control the internal offices. Furthermore, they can make a binding decision to OIOS requesting the extension of the investigation, if necessary. This ensures that every case brought forward is investigated in a proper way and does not get closed down due to any reason of confidentiality. The most important change will be about the immunity of UN officials before national law. When UN officials conducted serious crimes against any national law, the JIU could decide to abolish the immunity of respective officials and hand them over to national jurisdiction which would be obliged to conduct a fair trial within the national court system. These decisions cannot be overruled by the UN Secretary-General. All reports and investigations have to be handed over to national courts, so they can decide upon the case in the best way. The whistleblowers on the other hand are immune during investigation and their identity is not revealed to any other entity than OIOS and JIU. In case of false accusations, this immunity would be cancelled by JIU and investigations are put into place against the whistleblower. These measures strengthen the possibilities for whistleblowers to report any misbehaviour and thus support the accountability and transparency in an effective way.

III. Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women

In our 2011 written national anthem we express our hopes for the future: *"For justice, liberty and prosperity shall forever more reign!"* All forms of violence against women are obstacles in achieving this dream. This is highlighted by SDG 5, which is to achieve gender equality and to empower all women and girls, and also SDG 4, which calls for quality education, taking gender equality and inclusion in its focus. Within the *African Union* (AU), we committed through the adoption of the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa* (2003), to integrate gender equality into our legislative and to tackle gender-based violence (GBV) by educating the public about this important topic. A practice example of this is our establishment of the Ministries of Gender at the national as well as state levels. One implanted initiative resulted in the provision of small grants for girls at risk of dropping out of school due to economic reasons thereby directly addressing violence against girls. The Girls not Brides initiative estimated that each additional year a girl stays in school, her chances of getting married before reaching the age of 18, which is a discrimination of girls as stated in the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), decline by 5.6% or more. Taking our Comprehensive Country Gender Assessment into consideration, which revealed that the main causes for violence against women are alcoholism (31%), cultural practices (24%), poverty (24%) and conflict (19%), additional measures have to be focused upon. In our country there are a range of different safe spaces for women, for example the Women and Girls Friendly Spaces (WGFS) by the *UN International Children's Emergency Fund* (UNICEF). These provide holistic solutions to tackle violence against women. First of all, women are physically safe when going there and they receive medical help, like psychological assistance as well as assistance by midwifes. Further, they can provide education chances for girls and the possibility for women to build networks. The provision of grants to female entrepreneurs enables them to become economical independent, thus tackling poverty as a cause of violence. Finally, the WGFSs can act as an organizational entity for information campaigns, informing women and girls about their rights, so they do not take cultural practises as granted and become empowered to speak up. The protection of such entities is of utmost importance. Together with the *UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* (UN Women), the *UN High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) and the *UN Development Program* (UNDP) we already created Special Protection Units (SPUs) within the police. These are trained to understand the special needs of women who experienced violence and can effectively protect the WGFSs. Considering violence against women as a global problem, the question arises on how to make WGFSs available for all Member States. Firstly, a framework is needed for this. Within the existing WGFSs UNICEF can collect data on best practices and GBV in general. These have to be considered by the GA to create this global framework. For this, especially the aims of WGFSs, meaning what specific work they will undertake, the protection, meaning the creation of SPUs in all Member States, and considering the use of military forces to protect WGFSs in case of a conflict, as well as the funding need to be specified. For the funding we suggest a special funding channel through UNDP. Member States have the opportunity to apply for funding by this, which will be decided upon after taking into consideration the financial possibility of the Member State to fund these initiatives themselves.