



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit, Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

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UNMISS CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTED MOBILIZATION OF ARMED YOUTH AND INTER-COMMUNAL CLASHES

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is deeply concerned about reports of a major mobilization of armed youth moving towards Pibor county in Jonglei State and reported clashes. UNMISS calls on the leaders of all Jonglei communities, their youth, as well as on national and state authorities to exercise maximum restraint and urgently engage in reconciliation efforts.

The Mission is doing its utmost to verify the information and assess the population movements, including through the use of aerial reconnaissance flights. The Mission's mobility continues to be hampered by inadequate air assets, which severely limit its capability to detect violence occurring in inaccessible rural areas. As a result, UNMISS is not in an immediate position to confirm details about numbers or locations of the mobilized youth and associated clashes.

In view of the ongoing insecurity, UNMISS is reinforcing its military presence in Gumuruk and Pibor. Contingency plans are in place should these towns be attacked and civilians seek protection at UNMISS bases. In addition, UNMISS is maintaining a regular civilian staff presence in Pibor and other areas it is able to access.

UNMISS is in constant contact with the Government of South Sudan and the SPLA as well as officials in Jonglei. UNMISS calls upon them to take urgent action to prevent an escalation of the violence. The Mission has reminded the Government and its national security forces that it is their primary responsibility to provide protection to civilian populations in particular if under imminent threat.

UNMISS has also urged prominent leaders of all communities to call for restraint and to do their utmost to stop the situation from deteriorating further. Once again, UNMISS appeals to all parties to commit to renewed dialogue and reconciliation, to reinitiate the Jonglei peace process and to fully implement the All Jonglei peace conference resolutions.

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