



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit

Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

Juba, 25 June 2014

HEAD OF UNMISS, SRSG JOHNSON VISITS BENTIU

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Ms. Hilde F. Johnson traveled yesterday to Bentiu.

During her visit, she went to UNMISS protection of civilians' sites where she met some of the displaced persons. UNMISS protection sites in Bentiu are currently hosting close to 45,000 civilians with a steady stream of individuals still arriving on a daily basis. Bentiu repeatedly changed hands during the past months, leading to severe insecurity for the population.

“People are voting with their feet. Many do not feel safe” the SRSG stated. “But this is also reflecting a terrible consequence of the fighting, which is food insecurity. People are hungry, there is severe malnutrition and civilians are also coming to the UNMISS base for food,” the Head of UNMISS added, acknowledging the dire living conditions in the protection sites.

SRSG Johnson also met with the Deputy-Governor of Unity state to discuss the ongoing crisis, and the deteriorating humanitarian situation, as well as UN staff to thank them for their dedication and service as they continue to protect thousands of civilians on the Mission's compound and work to improve their living conditions.

UNMISS opened its gates to all unarmed civilians facing an imminent threat of physical violence when the crisis in South Sudan erupted in December 2013. Close to 100,000 civilians are currently protected by UNMISS in ten of the Mission's sites nationwide, the largest number of displaced persons being in Bentiu.

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