



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

17 October 2014

UNMISS condemns abductions of UNMISS employee and WFP staff at Malakal airfield

On 10 October, three Individual Contractors employed by UNMISS, who were working at the airfield in Malakal, were seized by an unidentified armed group of 15 to 20 men in uniformed and civilian clothes and driven away in a pick-up truck. The following day, in the morning, one of the three workers was released and a second was also released later in the afternoon. The third worker is still missing.

On 16 October, a staff member of another UN agency, the World Food Programme (WFP), was similarly seized by a group of armed men at the same airfield while he was in the process of boarding a UN flight. The staff member is still missing.

UNMISS and the World Food Programme are actively engaging the national authorities in Juba, as well as the Upper Nile State authorities, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and militia groups in Malakal, in an effort to secure the release of the two abducted individuals. There is still a lack of clarity on the identity of the abductors. The State authorities, the Sector Commander of the SPLA, the militia commanders in Malakal, and the national and SPLA authorities in Juba have assured UNMISS and WFP that they are making all efforts to track down the abductors and secure the release of the two victims.

UNMISS strongly condemns these abductions and demands the safe release of the missing individuals. It also emphasizes the responsibility of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan under the Status of Forces Agreement, to protect UN personnel, irrespective of the identity of the abductors. The Mission urges the national and state authorities, and the SPLA and militia commanders on the ground, to redouble their efforts to locate and free the abducted individuals. In the meantime, the Mission has taken additional measures to enhance the security of its personnel and will continue to engage all relevant actors for the release of the abductees.

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