



UNMISS PRESS STATEMENT

United Nations Mission In South Sudan
Working for the people of South Sudan

Monday, 26 December, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNMISS URGES GOVERNMENT TO ACT NOW TO PROTECT CIVILIANS IN JONGLEI STATE

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) today urged the Government of the Republic of South Sudan to take all measures necessary to protect civilians in Jonglei state. Over the weekend UNMISS air patrols identified thousands of armed Lou Nuer youth preparing to attack Murle communities near Likuangole in Jonglei State.

UNMISS calls on all communities in Jonglei State to put an end to the inter-communal violence that has afflicted so many civilians, and to actively and immediately engage in a reconciliatory peace process.

The **Special Representative for the Secretary General to South Sudan, Hilde F. Johnson** "I am deeply concerned to learn of reports of this imminent large scale attack on civilians in Jonglei State. The Government must act now if we are to avert a major tragedy."

"The primary responsibility for protecting civilians lies with the Government of South Sudan. In support, UNMISS has reinforced our own presence of peacekeepers in key areas of Jonglei State and is conducting continuous air patrols to deter potential violence. We are doing what we can within our mandate and capabilities, but our resources and capacity are limited. We remain firmly committed to acting with neutrality, impartiality and integrity for the safety of all communities."

Over recent months UNMISS has consistently deployed its limited resources to reinforce efforts to prevent and mitigate conflict in Jonglei State, including to Lou Nuer, Murle and Dinka communities. The Mission also continues to support and promote reconciliation between the various communities, and in particular the inclusive peace process led by the Sudan Council of Churches.

SRSJ Johnson pointed out that "Time is now running out and the Government needs to redouble its efforts to prevent a tragedy and avert large-scale violence. All South Sudanese people must now put peace and stability in their new and independent country above any other concerns and interests", Johnson said.
