



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

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UNMISS condemns violence in protection sites in Juba

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) strongly condemns the fighting that erupted among internally displaced persons (IDPs) last weekend at its protection-of-civilians (PoC) sites in Juba. One person was killed during the violence on Sunday and about 60 more were injured in the disturbances, which triggered the departure of an estimated 3,500 IDPs from the protection sites.

A domestic dispute appears to have sparked the fighting, which began in the late afternoon of Friday 8 May in PoC site 1. The initial disturbances involved an estimated 350 IDPs from the Unity State counties of Mayom and Mayendit armed with machetes, sticks and metal bars.

UNMISS military and police peacekeepers intervened and managed to contain the violence, but the clashes resumed on the morning of Saturday, 9 May inside PoC site 3. UNMISS personnel again brought the situation under control until the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, 10 May when fighting again broke out in PoC site 3 involving about 400 IDPs.

Up to 3,500 IDPs gathered outside PoC site 3 during the course of Sunday, many of whom left the area while under vehicle escort including military vehicles.

UNMISS has sought assurances from South Sudanese authorities about the safety and well-being of the IDPs who left the Mission's protection sites earlier this week. The primary responsibility for the protection of civilians continues to lie with the government of the Republic of South Sudan.

UNMISS received a letter from the community leaders of Mayom IDPs asking for the release of their children who have remained inside the Mission's protection sites. UNMISS has responded that while it continues to provide protection to the IDPs in the POC sites, in line with its mandate, it will not hinder the voluntary movement of any IDPs.

It is a long-standing policy that all departures from UNMISS protection sites are done so on a strictly voluntary basis, and the Mission does not prevent IDPs from leaving its premises if that is their preference. In the meantime, the Mission is engaging with community leaders in the Juba PoC sites to defuse the situation and avert a recurrence of the disturbances of this past weekend.

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