



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

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UNMISS Protection-of-Civilians site for Foreign Nationals to close on 7 September 2015

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is pleased to announce that 241 foreign nationals have been relocated from a protection-of-civilians (PoC) site at Mission headquarters since 27 August to locations in Juba Town, Yambio Town and the Makpandu refugee settlement in the Western Equatoria state capital.

All of the foreign nationals who registered voluntarily for the relocation programme received a relocation package to support their transition.

The outbreak of the conflict in South Sudan in December 2013 triggered an influx of hundreds of foreign nationals into UNMISS camps across the country. They were sheltered in the PoC sites established by UNMISS, including in Juba, in fulfilment of the Mission's mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical danger.

With the change in the security situation in Juba, the majority of the foreign nationals have since left UNMISS POC sites to return to their homes in the communities in Juba. However, a number of the foreign nationals, most of whom are from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, have remained in the UNMISS site even though there are no longer protection concerns to justify their continued stay in the Mission's camps.

UNMISS in collaboration with relevant UN agencies has since been working to provide the foreign nationals with alternative places to which they can relocate within South Sudan. All of the foreign nationals were given multiple opportunities to obtain asylum-seeking certificates from the Government of the Republic of South Sudan that would enable them to remain legally in the country while their applications for refugee status are reviewed.

To date, 241 of the foreign nationals have since taken up the offer and relocated voluntarily to Yambio and Juba. The remaining 233 foreign nationals refused to take up any of the relocation options prior to the expiry of the deadline on 1 September.

The Mission wishes to emphasize that the deadline to participate in the relocation process was 1 September and there will be no extension to allow the foreign nationals to stay any longer on UNMISS premises. The PoC site where the remaining 233 foreign nationals are staying will be closed on Monday 7 September.

UNMISS once again calls upon all the remaining foreign nationals in the PoC site to vacate the premises immediately and peacefully. Their continued stay beyond the deadline will not be condoned.

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