



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit, Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Stability in Jonglei at Stake

Juba, 22 February 2013: The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to South Sudan, Ms. Hilde F. Johnson, is deeply concerned about recent developments in Jonglei. “Unless community leaders and government authorities take decisive action to stop the violence, stability in the whole of Jonglei state will be at stake,” she said, following a two-day visit to the areas hardest hit by recent instability and cattle raiding.

“These reoccurring spates of violence are extremely serious and can jeopardize everything that has been achieved so far for peace and reconciliation in Jonglei. I am very worried, and strongly urge immediate action to be taken by government and community leaders to ensure stability. The cycle of violence must stop,” said Johnson.

During her visit earlier this week to Walgak, in Akobo County, she met with local authorities, chiefs, community leaders and survivors of the most recent serious attack of 8 February in Wangar, and expressed her condolences to the families of the many civilians who lost their lives. The majority of the victims were women and children. She called for restraint and urged communities to refrain from retaliation. If not heeded, the cycle of violence would continue and everyone would lose, their own community included, she said.

The Special Representative also reiterated the condemnation by the United Nations of the deadly attack in Wangar. UNMISS is now conducting an investigation into the incident. A human rights investigation team walked for two days to reach the site, and have now compiled forensic evidence from the attack. Interviews are being conducted with survivors, both civilians and military. The report will be made public when completed.

Ms. Johnson also visited Pibor where she met with chiefs, community leaders, the Murle peace delegation and local authorities. She called for renewed efforts to protect all civilians while containing the threat from David Yau Yau. She called on him and armed youth aligned with him to halt all attacks. Ms. Johnson also expressed her condolences to the community of Pibor for the suffering caused by the violence on 27 January, where many tukkuls were burnt, livelihoods lost and people killed.

Ms. Johnson was accompanied by UNMISS Force Commander Major General Delali Johnson Sakyi, as well as the Directors of Civil Affairs and Human Rights, who met with the Governor of Jonglei State Kuol Manyang Juuk and other local government representatives in Bor, Walgak and Pibor.

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