



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit

Communications & Public Information Office

PRESS RELEASE

10 March 2015

SRSG Loej and US Charge D’Affaires Twining visit Malakal

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Loej, and the U.S. Charge D’Affaires, Charles Twining, visited Malakal today. The visit featured a walking tour of the devastated center of the Upper Nile state capital, which has changed hands six times since the current conflict in South Sudan erupted in December 2013.

During their stay in Malakal, SRSG Loej and Ambassador Twining met with the Upper Nile Deputy Governor Gwinye Philip Chan and ministers of the state government to discuss reports of the continuing recruitment of child soldiers in the state and other issues of concern. The SRSG also addressed the proposed establishment of a forward operating base in Malakal Town manned by UNMISS peacekeepers to promote a more secure and safe environment for internally displaced persons (IDPs) wishing to return to their homes on a voluntary basis.

“I expressed my grave concerns about the forcible recruitment of boys recently at the Wau Shilluk village near Malakal and elsewhere in Upper Nile State,” said Ms. Loej. “I stressed the importance of holding accountable all those who engage in this unacceptable practice, and I shared with the Deputy Governor the assurances given by President Salva Kiir Mayardit to me last month that the boys would be rescued.”

The SRSG said she was “appalled” by the extent of the damage inflicted on the main market and teaching hospital of Malakal, a once thriving river port that was reduced to a ghost town during the intense fighting that engulfed the city in the initial three months of the conflict.

Ms. Loej and Ambassador Twining were briefed on security and humanitarian conditions in Upper Nile by the Mission’s State Coordinator Deborah Schein, representatives of UN agencies and Brig. Gen. Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, the Mongolian commander of UNMISS peacekeepers in Sector North which encompasses Upper Nile and Unity states and northern Jonglei state.

The SRSG and the U.S. envoy also visited the UNMISS protection-of-civilians site and met with community leaders of the IDP population, which is estimated to exceed 21,000. They were briefed on the progress of ongoing construction work to expand the area of the existing protection site before the onset of the rainy season later this year.

For further information or media enquiries,

Spokesperson: Ariane Quentier - quentier@un.org +211 912 177770

Find us on Social Media



Facebook



Twitter



YouTube

United Nations Mission in South Sudan – Communications & Public Information Office

www.unmiss.unmissions.org

UN House P.O. Box 29, Juba, South Sudan

UNMISS opened its gates to all unarmed civilians facing a threat of physical violence from the onset of the crisis 14 months ago. An estimated 112,000 IDPs are currently sheltered at six protection sites nationwide.

#