Official celebration in Juba a symbol of progress towards peace in South Sudan

An official ceremony held in Juba today celebrates the signing of the revitalized peace agreement and provides a fresh opportunity for all parties to demonstrate their commitment to ending the conflict and building durable peace in South Sudan, says the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

Speaking at the peace celebration, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, David Shearer, acknowledged the efforts of the Government of South Sudan and other parties to work together in the pursuit of peace.

“I am very pleased that the parties who have been divided by the violent struggle for power have come together today in a sign of unity. This sends a strong message to the citizens of South Sudan that they are genuinely committed to the peace agreement and ending the suffering,” said David Shearer.

“The signing of the agreement laid the foundations for peace. Significant progress has been made but there is still much to be agreed on and achieved. Building trust and confidence between the parties as well as with the people of South Sudan is the biggest challenge ahead,” he said.

“The United Nations is committed to working as a partner in that process by using our resources across the country to assist with reconciliation and peacebuilding.”

David Shearer also paid tribute to regional leaders, particularly the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) who played a crucial role in securing the peace agreement and continue to champion its full implementation.

“In 2011, the citizens of South Sudan celebrated their historic achievement of independence and recognition as the world’s newest nation. The hopes and dreams of that moment were lost in the outbreak of civil war which has plagued the country for five years. Today’s ceremony is a chance for the leaders of South Sudan to restore hope in their country and their future,” he said.