



PRESS RELEASE

More South Sudanese civilian victims recorded in 2022 compared to 2021, though killings, violent incidents show decrease – UN report

Juba, 17 March 2023 – The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has released the human rights Annual Brief on Violence Affecting Civilians that shows a two percent increase in the number of civilians harmed across South Sudan in 2022, despite a 27 percent decrease in the overall number of documented violent incidents compared to the previous year (714 in 2022 and 982 in 2021).

The brief covering the period from January to December 2022, registered at least 3,469 civilian victims affected mostly by killing, injury, abduction, and conflict-related sexual violence.

The brief reveals that while the number of violent incidents attributed to the parties to the conflict declined by 37 per cent in comparison to 2021, the number of victims increased by 58 per cent (from 1,057 in 2021 to 1,674 in 2022). As for the violent incidents attributed to community-based militias and/or civil-defense groups, the number declined by 27 per cent (from 531 to 387) and the number of victims decreased by 28 per cent (from 2,279 to 1,642) in comparison to 2021.

2022 was marked by three distinct surges of violence: between April and May, in southern Unity State; between July and September, in Warrap State; and between August and December, in the Greater Upper Nile region.

Geographically, 42 percent of South Sudanese who suffered from violent conflict were located in Upper Nile and Warrap states, while Jonglei, Unity, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria states collectively accounted for approximately 50 percent of victims.

According to the brief, Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei and Warrap states were mostly affected by violence involving community-based militias and/or civil defense groups. Upper Nile and Unity States, for their part, were impacted by parties to the conflict and their proxy elements and/or affiliated militia groups. Central Equatoria state suffered from both intercommunal violence in Juba and Terekeka counties, and by the parties to the conflict in Yei, Morobo, and Lainya.

Of particular concern is the 96 percent spike in conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls as compared to 2021.

“UNMISS calls on the Government of South Sudan to demonstrate political will and step up efforts against impunity, investigate human rights violations and abuses and hold perpetrators accountable, particularly as deadly violence remains an issue of grave concern in parts of the country,” says Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS.

The UN Peacekeeping mission also urges all South Sudanese parties to focus on the prospects for sustainable peace, security, and peaceful, fair and inclusive elections.

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