



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Violence in South Sudan dropped slightly but sexual violence cases surge, says latest UNMISS report**

**Juba, 2 August 2022:** The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is very concerned that cases of conflict-related sexual violence are surging, despite an overall decrease in the number of civilians affected by violence across the country. The latest Human Rights report released by UNMISS, covering the second quarter of this year recorded 922 civilian casualties, which is a 15 per cent decrease in victims compared with the same period in 2021.

Of particular concern is the 218 per cent increase in conflict-related sexual violence – rape and gang-rape, among other forms of sexual violence linked to conflict – during this quarter.

“The exponential surge in sexual and gender-based violence is completely unacceptable, impacting most severely on the women and girls. This violence that divides communities and hampers reconciliation needs to end,” said Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Nicholas Haysom.

UNMISS is supporting the authorities to ensure accountability and access to justice for survivors and victims, through a range of special and mobile courts such as the adjudication of rape trials through a General Court Martial process in Yei, Central Equatoria State.

As was the case in the first quarter of 2022, intercommunal conflict continued to be the primary source of civilian harm accounting for 60 per cent of civilian casualties, while 38 per cent of casualties were caused by Government forces and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army – In Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) who are increasingly relying on allied militias engage in conflict. One clear example is the case in southern Unity State, where violence resulted in about a third of civilian casualties in the reporting period.

UNMISS urges the Government of South Sudan to swiftly investigate human rights violations and abuses and to hold perpetrators to account. With just few months remaining in the transition, the Mission calls for the full implementation of the revitalized peace agreement to enable the security sector to carry out the Government’s primary responsibility to protect civilians.

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