

## **Security Council Press Statement on the Ethnic Violence and the Situation in South Sudan**

The members of the Security Council were briefed by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ellen Løj, the United Nations Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide Adama Dieng, and the Chair of the South Sudan sanctions committee on the situation in South Sudan.

The members of the Security Council expressed deep alarm over the escalation of ethnic violence in South Sudan reportedly carried out by the SPLA, the SPLA in Opposition, as well as militias, and unidentified armed groups.

The members of the Security Council strongly condemned all instances of attacks against civilians, ethnically targeted killings, hate speech, and incitements to violence. The members of the Security Council agreed with Special Advisor Adama Dieng that what began as a political conflict has transformed into what could become an outright ethnic war, and it called on the Government of South Sudan to immediately address increasing hate speech and ethnic violence, and to promote reconciliation among its people, including through a process of justice and accountability.

The members of the Security Council underscored that the only way forward in South Sudan is through a genuine and inclusive political process, based on the framework provided by the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan which allows for all voices to participate in shaping the future of South Sudan. The members of the Security Council also underscored that all parties must commit themselves to peace and take meaningful steps to end violence and ceasefire violations. The members of the Security Council called upon the parties to immediately agree on implementation of an effective cessation of hostilities in order to avoid escalation of the conflict in the upcoming dry season and reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict.

While recalling Resolution 2304 (2016), the members of the Security Council expressed concern that while the Government of South Sudan has made further commitments since the 4 September 2016 Joint Communique with the Security Council, that progress was insufficient and has yet to translate into concrete improvements on the ground. They called on the Government of South Sudan to immediately uphold its commitments.

The members of the Security Council signaled their readiness to consider taking additional measures in order to prevent a further escalation of violence and conflict, including potential sanctions that may be appropriate to respond to the situation.

The members of the Security Council committed to work closely with the African Union High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konaré, the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission former President Festus Mogae, as well as other stakeholders, in the reinvigoration of the political process and the design of a clear political strategy for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in South Sudan.

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