

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
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**REMARKS TO HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN
SOUTH SUDAN**
New York, 22 September 2016

[as delivered]

Thank you for being here today to discuss the critical situation in South Sudan.

For years, South Sudan struggled to gain their independence.

Now it is struggling for survival.

Rarely have such high hopes been squandered so quickly.

Time and again, the country's leaders have resorted to weapons and identity politics to resolve their differences. The children, women and men of South Sudan are paying with their lives.

Violent attacks have killed tens of thousands of people and forced some 2.6 million to flee their homes. This includes more than one million people who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Six million people are in need of aid – half of the population.

One million children are missing out on education because their schools have been destroyed, damaged, occupied or closed.

4.8 million people are facing severe food shortages.

Earlier this year, I saw for myself the fear and despair of some of the 200,000 men, women, boys and girls who are sheltering in UN protection sites.

Hundreds of thousands of others are destitute, roaming the bush, or sheltering with extended family, friends or strangers.

Unbelievably, the situation has deteriorated since my visit in February. Violence has erupted again in many parts of the country, forcing people from their homes.

Rape is being perpetrated on a mass scale. Over a two-week period in July, at least 217 cases of sexual violence were documented in Juba alone.

Sixty-three aid workers have been killed since the beginning of the crisis. Many others have been harassed, abused, detained and arrested.

In one heinous attack on the Terrain Hotel in July, a humanitarian worker was killed and others

were raped, sexually assaulted and beaten.

I have launched a special investigation into the response by United Nations peacekeeping troops to the violence in July. But the full responsibility for these crimes lies with the perpetrators.

Humanitarian agencies have provided life-saving assistance and protection to more than 3 million people so far this year, despite the difficulties.

But they now face a severe funding shortage. The South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan is only 54 per cent funded, leaving a shortfall of nearly \$700 million.

We have received less than 20 per cent of the \$702 million we need to support South Sudanese refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries.

Humanitarians can only fulfil their mandate if parties to the conflict respect their independence, and if donors step up their support.

There is no military solution to this conflict. Only greater misery and suffering for the many, at the hands of the few.

I urge everyone in this room with influence to use every opportunity to exert pressure on the parties and their leaders to reverse the slide into deeper violence and more desperate need.

The parties must uphold the peace agreement they signed more than a year ago, and move towards rebuilding this fractured young nation.

In the meantime, we cannot stand by as the people of South Sudan suffer.

Thank you for your support and commitment. Thank you very much.