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PRESS RELEASE

United Nations for the people of South Sudan- UN celebrates 71st anniversary

To commemorate UN Day in South Sudan, the United Nations family together with communities of South Sudan, government counterparts, civil society organizations, and development partners marked the 71st anniversary of the UN under the theme: **“UN for the people of South Sudan.”**

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ellen Margrethe Løj urged South Sudanese leaders to recommit to peace, inclusive dialogue, reconciliation and justice.

“As we come together here today, to celebrate UN Day, we must be steadfast in our faith that South Sudanese can put aside their differences and unite for peace. The Peace Agreement remains the most credible vehicle to revive the peace process and should be fully implemented in an inclusive manner, for all the people of this country to achieve their dreams and aspirations.” said SRSG Løj, “To achieve this aim, there must be an end to the fighting.”

SRSG Løj also urged the Transitional Government of National Unity and the parties to the conflict in South Sudan to put the interests of their people first.

SRSG Løj read the UN Secretary- General Ban Ki Moon’s message which included: “Together, we have put in place some solid foundations for shared progress – which we must build on by working even harder to empower women, engage youth and uphold human rights for all. But we have also suffered enormous heartbreak -including unresolved conflicts causing immense suffering throughout the troubled Middle East, South Sudan, the Sahel and beyond.”

Representing the Government of South Sudan, Minister of Federal Affairs Dr. Richard Mulla thanked the United Nations for providing Humanitarian assistance and supporting in the area of capacity building in the country. He also said that though the peace agreement that was signed in August 2015 had some implementation problems, it is now successfully moving in the right direction. “Of recent President Salva Kiir has issued a number of decrees and a number of decisions have been made to facilitate the implementation of the peace agreement, humanitarian access will now be granted and has been granted to UNMISS and all agencies and all involved in the humanitarian assistance in the country.”

The UN Day activities in Juba included exhibitions by UNMISS and the various UN agencies funds and programmes, while UNFPA and WHO carried HIV counselling sessions and general immunization package (polio, tetanus, etc.), diagnostic malaria test, screening for malnutrition activities respectively. The South Sudanese middle-distance runner Santino Kenyi also participated in the activities for the day. Likewise students from Saint Thomas Primary School and Boy Scouts and Girl Guides took part in the day’s events.

The UN Day was also celebrated in other locations throughout the country including Torit, Aweil, Yambio, Bentiu, Malakal, Wau, Bor, Rumbek ,Kuajok and Warrap with a number of activities such as peace walks, cultural dances, interschool debates and sporting activities.

Early this month on 6 October 2016, the United Nations Country Team launched their two year strategy which details their road map for South Sudan as the country struggles from the shocks of wide spread insecurity and humanitarian crisis. This short-term overarching plan will guide the UN in responding to the needs and aspirations of the country as it forges a way towards recovery during the interim period, 2016-2017.

UN Day was established in 1971 by the United Nations General Assembly adopting resolution (2782) and is celebrated every year to acknowledge the contribution of the UN to all member states.

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