



PRESS RELEASE

UNMISS calls on political and security leaders to act urgently to quell fighting in Tambura

Juba, 7 September 2021: The United Nations Mission in South Sudan is appealing to national and local leaders to resolve tensions in Tambura and the wider Western Equatorial region after a fresh outbreak of fighting.

Yesterday, there were reports of sporadic shooting between groups in Tambura, endangering the lives of civilians, creating the risk of further displacement, and increasing humanitarian needs. The latest incident follows rising tension and violence over the past few months.

“We are urging those engaged in the conflict to end the fighting so that security can be restored,” said the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Nicholas Haysom. “It is also vital that political leaders at the national and local level take urgent action to resolve tensions and bring communities together to avoid further loss of life, homes, and livelihoods.”

“The insecurity is having a significant impact on civilians, with over 40,000 people forced to flee their homes,” said Mr. Haysom. “This is increasing demand for humanitarian assistance at a time when resources are already stretched. Aid workers are also finding themselves caught in the crossfire while trying to carry out their critical tasks. Authorities must do more to ensure that humanitarians have safe and unhindered access to those in need.”

Primary responsibility for protecting civilians lies with national and state governments. However, UNMISS is doing all it can, within its capabilities, to help deter violence and build peace in the affected areas of Western Equatoria.

The Mission has extended the duration of the temporary base that it established in Tambura several weeks ago when fighting first broke out. This has enabled peacekeepers to carry out day and night patrols and to provide a protective presence for civilians, including displaced families. On the justice front, UNMISS is providing technical support and capacity building for rule of law institutions and is liaising closely with the Chief Justice on plans to deploy judges and mobile courts to the areas affected by violence

UNMISS will continue supporting various reconciliation and peacebuilding activities, bringing together political and security actors, civil society, traditional and faith-based leaders, and community members. To reduce incidents of hate speech and support the spreading of peace messages, transmission of UN-operated Radio Miraya has also been established in the area.

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