During her visit to Pibor Town on 28 April, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) for South Sudan and head of the UN Mission in South Sudan, Ellen Margrethe Loej, met with senior local officials, recently released child soldiers and UNMISS staff members assigned to the Mission’s county support base.

SRSG Loej visit met with David Yau Yau, the chief administrator of the Greater Pibor Administrative Area and former commander of the South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army’s Cobra Faction. The head of UNMISS welcomed the release of 1,757 child soldiers who were once associated with Mr. Yau Yau’s militia and urged him to continue supporting efforts to secure the release of other child soldiers who are still associated with his Cobra Faction. The SRSG met with a group of former child soldiers who are among the more than 1,000 who have been reunited with their families in Pibor Town.

“I am very encouraged by the success achieved by UNICEF and partners thus far in helping to obtain the release of these children, about a third of whom are 13 years old or younger,” said the SRSG. “But our work has only just begun. In conjunction with local authorities, we must ensure that these children have access to educational and health facilities and are protected from any future attempt to enlist them again in any military organization.”

During her visit, SRSG Loej also toured Pibor Town and received a briefing from UNMISS colleagues on the security and humanitarian situation in the greater Pibor area.
On 22 April, members of a delegation from the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict that included representatives of UN Women, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the governments of the United Kingdom and Sweden met with local journalists and undertook a communication activity using UN Action’s Stop Rape Now advocacy platform. The purpose of their visit was to provide technical support to the finalization and implementation of the joint communique signed between the Government of South Sudan and the United Nations in October 2014 aimed at addressing conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan. The main objectives of their mission were to familiarize delegation members with the political, security and operational context of the conflict in South Sudan as well as the programmatic and operational responses that have been undertaken by the UN system including UNMISS, UN agencies and the Humanitarian Cluster system.

During the visit, members of the delegation also met with local civil society representatives, including women’s groups, faith-based organization, and international non-governmental organizations to obtain an overview of the situation related to sexual violence. They also assessed the possible needs of these organizations in providing essential services to victims of sexual violence.

The importance of providing force protection to such barge convoys was highlighted by an attack on UNMISS-contracted barges in late April 2014 by an unknown armed group in the vicinity of Tonga in Upper Nile State. Two UNMISS peacekeepers and two crew members were wounded in that incident.

The fifth in a series of supply barge convoys recently travelled the 1,700-kilometre distance from Juba to destinations in Upper Nile State on the White Nile River. Dubbed Operation Lifeline 5, the convoy delivered fuel, food rations and contingency-owned equipment to UNMISS installations in Malakal and Melut.

For the first time, 11 female peacekeepers belonging to the Nepalese Battalion Two (NEPBATT 2) joined 40 male colleagues in providing force protection to the barges.
Mongolian peacekeepers rehabilitate Pariang primary school

On 24 April the Mongolian Battalion (MONBATT) of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan began rehabilitation work at a primary school in Pariang County, Unity State through the implementation of an UNMISS Quick Impact Project. The rehabilitation of the primary school will accommodate larger numbers of students and provide a more conducive learning environment in Unity State for the benefit of 120 pupils.

Current plans call for the improvement of fencing, lighting and toilet facilities within a period of one month.

During a ceremony, Acting UNMISS Unity State Coordinator Alain Sitchet said, “that is part of the programmes aimed at consolidating peace and building confidence in Pariang County where we have operated since the inception of the Mission”. Cultural performances were conducted by students from the primary school and the Mongolian peacekeepers. A medical outreach was also conducted in the community and free health care services and essential medicines were provided to the local hospital.

The programme was led by Mr. Sitchet, the MONBATT commanding officer Col. Batchuluun Mishka and Pariang County Commissioner Mr. Monylang Minyiel.

Rival communities in Torit County agree to end conflict

Two rival communities in Eastern Equatoria’s Torit County recently reached a peace deal that is expected to end two years of conflict that has claimed many lives.

Members of the Bari and Omwor communities met in Loudo on 25 April at a peace conference organized by local authorities with support from UNMISS and committed to ending the long-running tensions and violence.

UNMISS Civil Affairs Officer Ann-Mary Alobo said it was important that it was the communities who have called for dialogue and peace.

Leaders from the rival communities appreciated the efforts of the state government and UNMISS in reconciling the neighbours.

“We cannot even farm because of the insecurity, and this means we cannot get food,” said sub-chief Charles Oliha.

Conflict resolution roundtable at cattle camp

With support from UNMISS Lakes State Coordinator’s Office, the Relief, Reintegration and Protection Section, Public Information and the Nepalese battalion, UNMISS Civil Affairs Division led a conflict resolution roundtable on 21 April at a cattle camp in Marial-bek, Lakes state.

The team met with the Ruop sub-clan of the Agar clan of the Dinka ethnic group, who have been in conflict with the neighbouring Kuei sub-clan since 2007. This was the third visit to the cattle camp by UNMISS staff members and aimed to provide feedback from previous visits in the wake of a major clash on 15 March that left over 100 people dead. That was followed by a nighttime killing within the cattle camp.

The continuing incidence of violence has forced students to stay out of school in Pachong since last August. The UNMISS Civil Affairs Division team in Lakes State and the Ruop and Kuei communities have undertaken seven peace initiatives with the various groups to hear their grievances and explore possible solutions to end the cycle of violence.
More than 280 former child soldiers who have been returned to their families in Pibor, South Sudan have started taking part in educational, leisure and social activities to promote good life skills, the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan said Tuesday. UNMISS

SOUTH SUDAN / WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

The Human Rights Division of the UN Mission in South Sudan helped organize a four-day training in Juba ahead of commemorations of World Press Freedom Day, which is observed on 3 May, UNMISS

PRESS STATEMENT

Statement by Toby Lanzer, Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan— Saving lives in South Sudan requires freedom of movement for aid workers.

VIDEO

SOUTH SUDAN / CHILD SOLDIERS - More than 280 former child soldiers who have been returned to their families in Pibor, South Sudan have started taking part in educational, leisure and social activities to promote good life skills, the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan said Tuesday. UNMISS

SOUTH SUDAN / WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY - The Human Rights Division of the UN Mission in South Sudan helped organize a four-day training in Juba ahead of commemorations of World Press Freedom Day, which is observed on 3 May, UNMISS

WEBSITE

UNMISS conducts patrols in Lakes State

SRSG Loej meets former child soldiers in Pibor town

Rival communities in Torit County agree to end conflict

Adult literacy programme launched in Torit

Mongolian peacekeepers rehabilitate school in Pariang County, Unity State

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We Are on Radio! Radio Africa 105 FM. We Are on the Web! www.unmiss.unmissions.org

UNMISS Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) *Figures cited below as of April 10, 2015

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SRSG Loej with women representatives in Pibor

SRSG Loej with women representatives in Pibor

UNMISS Photo / Isaac Alebe Avoro

UNMISS Police *Figures cited below as of April 17, 2015

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