



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Spokesperson & Media Relations Unit
Communications & Public Information Section

PRESS RELEASE

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UNMISS reminds all parties to respect the civilian nature of the POC sites

UNMISS is concerned about recent claims that it is harbouring criminals in its Protection of Civilian (POC) sites. Such statements only serve to discredit the impartial nature of the Mission's operations and are regrettable.

Over the period of the establishment of these protection sites, UNMISS has engaged regularly and transparently in search and seizure operations, designed to maintain the arms free civilian nature of these sites.

Working with the Ministry of Interior, SSNPS, SPLA and NSS, the Mission has recently established a weapons-free zone surrounding the POC sites in Juba. Visibility is being enhanced and regular patrols are being conducted to deter, search and apprehend armed individuals. The arms and individuals apprehended within the area are managed in cooperation with the South Sudanese authorities.

UNMISS has always worked in all impartiality with the community representatives within the POC sites, as well as with the South Sudanese authorities, to maintain the civilian nature of the sites, including through weapons search and seizure operations, screening those who enter the sites, and forbidding any political activities being carried out on the premises.

UNMISS wishes to emphasize that it is engaged in the protection of those South Sudanese residing in its POC sites, and elsewhere, in strict accordance with the terms of its mandate to protect civilians in imminent danger, and to provide these vulnerable populations with life-saving services in close partnership with humanitarian and protection partners.

In protecting civilians, UNMISS calls upon the cooperation of local communities and the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) which bears the primary responsibility for protecting all South Sudanese citizens.

UNMISS encourages all partners to continue working with the Mission to enhance security, and to desist from statements or activities that may incite violence and endanger civilians.

As of 13 October 2016, a total of 202,701 internally displaced persons (IDPs) are provided protection in UNMISS POC sites across South Sudan. UNMISS reiterates its commitment to aiding the people of South Sudan as its partner for peace.

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