



Statement by Toby Lanzer, Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan

Aid reaches thousands affected by armed violence in Juba and Bentiu; needs elsewhere expanding

Juba, 23 December 2013: “Aid agencies are now responding to the needs of thousands of civilians affected by the recent armed violence affecting South Sudan – including an estimated 20,000 people in two UN peacekeeping compounds in Juba.

Non-governmental organizations and UN agencies are providing life-saving services in the two bases, including water and sanitation, shelter and emergency healthcare to people displaced by the armed violence. Emergency latrines are being dug, high-energy biscuits provided to meet urgent nutritional needs of children and other vulnerable people, and emergency surgical supplies, drugs, and reproductive health kits delivered to hospitals around Juba. Aid agencies have also been able to deliver food to some 7,000 people who have sought shelter in the UN peacekeeping base in Bentiu, Unity State.

While assistance is underway in these two cities, I am also concerned about thousands of people affected by the past week’s violence in other parts of the country. The situation is particularly bad in Jonglei and Unity states, where fighting has displaced thousands of civilians. I just returned from Bor, where an estimated 17,000 people have sought protection in the UN peacekeeping base. While there, I witnessed firsthand the harrowing results of the intense violence that has swept the area. I heard heartbreaking accounts of people’s suffering, including tales of children separated from their parents. Aid workers are also under intense pressure, with humanitarian compounds looted in several locations.

We are looking at a massive increase in need and I am engaging all parties to ensure that civilians are protected and that aid workers are able to access people who need our help. Humanitarians will continue to stand by the people of South Sudan at this extremely difficult time and provide impartial and neutral aid to save lives and alleviate suffering. I call on donors to make resources available so that agencies can bring in managers, specialists and supplies without delay.”

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