

**SOUTH SUDAN: HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR CONDEMNS  
GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR CIVILIANS OF FIGHTING IN WAU**

(Juba, 2 July 2016): Following a one-day visit to Wau, the Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan has expressed shock and outrage regarding the loss of life, displacement, and suffering that civilians have endured as a result of the fighting.

“In Wau, as in so many other locations across this country, it is civilians who have borne the brunt of conflict,” said Mr. Eugene Owusu, Humanitarian Coordinator. “This is entirely unacceptable. All armed actors must immediately uphold their obligations to protect civilians and ensure that the guns remain silent in Wau.”

Fierce fighting erupted in Wau town on 24 June, after several days of tensions, displacing tens of thousands of people both within Wau town and to surrounding areas, including more than 12,000 who are seeking shelter at a protected site near the UNMISS base. During his mission on 30 June, the Humanitarian Coordinator visited the Catholic Church and UNMISS protected site, where he spoke with people displaced by the fighting, drove through abandoned areas in Wau town, and met local authorities.

“People told us they were forced to flee their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs, and many reported witnessing horrendous acts of violence against family and friends,” said Mr. Owusu. “No one should be forced to suffer what these people have been through. The violence must stop and the parties to the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan must stand true to their word.”

Humanitarian partners have sent in additional teams and supplies to bolster the response throughout the affected area and have set up mobile health clinics, established temporary water systems, distributed food, nutritional supplements and high energy biscuits, and provided vital non-food items, including blankets, mosquito nets, and kitchen sets. Protection help desks have been established to help reunify families separated during the fighting and to identify the most vulnerable people.

“The humanitarian community has responded rapidly to this crisis and the team on the ground is working around the clock to assist people in dire need,” said Mr. Owusu. “With the rainy season upon us, we are in a race against time and additional funds are urgently required. Our overall response in South Sudan is just 39 per cent funded.”

Prior to this latest round of fighting, there were already an estimated 100,000 people displaced in and around Wau town from previous incidents, including fighting in February. Many people have now been displaced multiple times and their coping capacities are exhausted. Sexual violence is a particular concern in and around Wau, where large numbers of cases were reported during the February fighting.

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