



# PRESS RELEASE

## **Thousands of families flee fresh violence in Jonglei and seek sanctuary at UN base**

**Juba, 23 July 2020:** A fresh outbreak of fighting in the troubled Jonglei region of South Sudan has forced thousands of families to flee their homes and seek sanctuary next to the United Nations base in Pibor.

The sudden influx of 6000 displaced people came after the village of Likuangole, about 30 kilometers north of Pibor town, was attacked by armed groups last night. Tensions remain high in Pibor today with the prospect of many more families seeking protection from the violence.

“We are deeply concerned by these continued attacks and the impact on civilians who are being forced to flee their homes in fear for their lives and to seek sanctuary beside our base where conditions are dire because of recent flooding,” said the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, David Shearer.

“Parties must immediately stop fighting, pull back and return to their home areas. Buffer zones need to be established to protect people and enable reconciliation to safely take place.”

“This conflict is not simply intercommunal between ethnic groups. Other political figures are at work. External actors need to stop deliberately stoking the conflict for the sake of local communities.”

Unless the fighting stops, the cost will be even higher for those who are affected, said David Shearer.

“This area has already been badly hit by displacement, flooding, hunger, and COVID-19. Humanitarian agencies are stretched and working at their maximum limit to support vulnerable people. There are simply no reserves to meet the needs of thousands of civilians suffering further harm as a direct result of this violence,” he said.

“Too often, it is expected that humanitarians will pick up the pieces but, in this case, resources are so thinly stretched.”

UNMISS has been engaging with community leaders on the ground as well as at the national level to stop the violence since the attacks began in December 2019. It also recently transported members of the Government’s High-Level Committee, including Vice President Wani Igga, to meet with the groups in Bor to find a solution.

“We welcome the efforts of the Government committee to mediate and urge it to ensure the process is inclusive and representative of all those involved, including Nuer, Murle and Dinka,” he said.

“All of these groups are directly responsible for the violence. The solution lies with them. There are no innocent parties here except for the civilians affected.”