

**Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. in South Sudan condemns attack on aid workers and assets in Tonj North, Warrap**

(Juba, 14 July 2021) The Humanitarian Coordinator *ad interim* in South Sudan, Mr. Arafat Jamal, strongly condemns the latest unprovoked attack on aid workers and assets in Tonj North, Warrap, and calls on authorities to make every effort to protect communities, humanitarian personnel and assets across the country.

“Humanitarian workers strive to deliver life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable people in South Sudan, including women, children and older persons. Attacking them, looting assets and forcing humanitarian organizations to suspend activities is unacceptable and has to stop,” said Mr. Jamal.

Fighting broke out between youth groups in Marial Lou, Tonj North, Warrap State on 8 July and continued into the next day. According to initial reports, more than 5,000 people were displaced; hundreds of shelters were burnt down; health centers, schools and churches were vandalized, and a WFP warehouse was looted. The warehouse stored assorted critical food items destined for people who are highly food insecure in the area. Tonj North is one of six counties in South Sudan where families risk facing catastrophic levels of hunger at the height of the lean season. Since early 2021, more than 911 metric tons of food items and nutrition supplements have been looted or destroyed during sub-national violence across the country. These supplies were enough to feed more than 41,000 food-insecure people for up to four months.

Since March, there has been a rise in the number of attacks against aid workers, people serving the community, and assets across South Sudan. Recently, aid workers have been attacked and assets looted in the Greater Tonj area and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA). In May, more than one million dollars’ worth of humanitarian supplies and assets were looted and destroyed during armed attacks in Gumuruk, GPAA, impacting the delivery of assistance to an estimated 130,000 people. The attacks led to the suspension of humanitarian activities and the relocation of workers.

“National and local authorities must strengthen law enforcement and ensure the safety of communities and humanitarian organizations. The trend of increased violence against humanitarians and humanitarian assets cannot continue. We must be able to safely reach people in remote and highly food-insecure areas without the threat of attack. Acts of criminality must stop, and the perpetrators of the violence and looting brought to justice,” the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. concluded. “Those people who commit these crimes are punishing the most vulnerable people in their own communities.”

Note to editors

To learn more about humanitarian access in South Sudan, see the second quarterly access snapshot of 2021 here: <https://bit.ly/3hBasNB>, see the first quarterly access snapshot here: <https://bit.ly/3dZQtGw>

For further information, please contact:  
Anthony Burke, Public Information Officer, +211 92 240 6014 and [burkea@un.org](mailto:burkea@un.org)  
Htet Htet Oo, Reporting Officer, [ooh@un.org](mailto:ooh@un.org)  
OCHA press releases are available at [www.unocha.org/south-sudan](http://www.unocha.org/south-sudan) or [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int).