

Humanitarian Coordinator condemns attacks against humanitarian workers in Torit and Jamjang

(Juba, 29 April 2021) The Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan, Alain Noudéhou, has condemned recent violent attacks by youth groups against humanitarian workers and assets. The attacks come amidst high levels of youth unemployment in the country and demands by youth to be hired by humanitarian organizations.

On 28 April, staff from a United Nations agency and a national non-governmental organization (NGO) were physically assaulted by youth in separate incidents in Torit town, Eastern Equatoria. Some humanitarian organizations have relocated staff to safer areas and many humanitarian activities have been suspended, including critical assistance in the areas of health and nutrition. People's humanitarian needs will deepen if aid workers—many of them South Sudanese—are not able to safely resume their activities.

On 24 April, in Jamjang in Ruweng Administrative Area, youth entered an international NGO compound and physically attacked staff, resulting in multiple injuries. One staff member was seriously injured and airlifted to a hospital. UN peacekeepers were deployed to the area to protect humanitarian workers and prevent further violence.

“Humanitarian organizations are working across South Sudan to deliver much-needed assistance to vulnerable communities. Attacks against them are completely unacceptable and must stop,” the Humanitarian Coordinator said.

“I urge authorities and communities to guarantee the safety and security of aid workers, and the Government to enforce law and order. The perpetrators of these violent acts must be brought swiftly to justice and be held accountable for their actions,” he added.

Earlier this week, in a statement, the United Nations in South Sudan acknowledged the country's serious youth unemployment problem due to the dire economic situation and stated its full support to recruitment practices that are based on competence, professionalism, integrity and respect for diversity.

Note to editors: For the latest information on humanitarian access in South Sudan, see the first quarterly access snapshot of 2021 here: <https://bit.ly/3dZQtGw>

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