

Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. in South Sudan condemns the killing of two aid workers in Jonglei and calls for an immediate end to the violence

(Juba, 16 July 2020) The Humanitarian Coordinator *ad interim* in South Sudan, Dr. Mohamed Ag Ayoya, has strongly condemned the killing of two aid workers and four community members in Duk County, Jonglei, and called for swift action by authorities to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel in the country.

On 13 July, international NGO staff were providing healthcare and nutrition services to community members, mostly women and children, in Pajut town center, Duk County, when the area was attacked by an unknown armed group. Upon hearing gunfire, the women and children fled in fear and the armed group opened fire on them, killing two aid workers and four members of the community. The two deceased aid workers are South Sudanese nationals.

“I strongly condemn the killing of civilians and aid workers and ask for those responsible to be brought to justice. I call upon the Government and all parties to step up efforts to protect humanitarians who are taking significant risks to provide much-needed assistance to people who are living in a State where armed violence is on the rise and the threat of COVID-19 is ever present. Civilians also need to be able to access the much-needed assistance. These terrible acts cannot continue,” said Dr. Ag Ayoya. “Our deepest condolences go to the family of the victims and to the affected organization,” he added.

Although the fear of further attacks is palpable in the town, the NGO will continue to provide healthcare and nutrition services in Pajut town. The incident is the sixth and seventh aid worker death in South Sudan in 2020 and brings the number of humanitarians killed since 2013 to 122. Most have been South Sudanese nationals.

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