

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO THE EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT OF THE HEADS OF STATE  
AND GOVERNMENT OF THE IGAD PLUS**

**Addis Ababa, 5 August 2016**

*Delivered by Ellen Margrethe Løj Special Representative of the Secretary-General and  
Head of United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)*

I commend the collective resolve of the IGAD leaders to contribute to the resolution of the crisis in South Sudan. Since we met at the IGAD summit in Kigali, the security situation has deteriorated significantly. Reports of fighting over the past several days, coupled with other developments, have created political divisions within the Opposition and risk jeopardizing the entire peace process.

I am deeply concerned about the suffering of the people. Before violence that broke out in July 2016, some 6.1 million people – half of the population – were estimated to be in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. More than 2.3 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, including more than 1.6 million people displaced internally. More than 900,000 have fled to neighbouring countries.

I am especially alarmed by the reports of widespread sexual violence, including rape of women and young girls, being perpetrated by armed men in uniform. It is an outrage that those charged with the protection of civilians are the very ones raping and killing them. The government must hold all perpetrators to account for these sickening crimes.

The United Nations has also been caught in crossfire between the belligerent forces, sustaining mortar and small arms fire. I pay tribute to the memory of three United Nations personnel who were killed during the recent fighting in Juba, and I wish those who were injured a speedy recovery. United Nations personnel face increasing levels of harassment and restriction of movement, hampering their ability to perform their duties. This must stop. It is imperative that UNMISS and humanitarian actors be afforded full freedom of movement and access to people in desperate need of assistance.

It is critical that all political and military actors immediately de-escalate hostilities across the entire country and ensure that their respective forces return to their barracks. This is essential to end the suffering of the South Sudanese people. There must also be an immediate investigation into the recent violence to ensure accountability for anyone, regardless of political affiliation or military rank, found to be participating in or condoning mass atrocities, human rights violations and other abuses. Sustainable peace

can only be achieved if these crimes are addressed at all levels, making it crucial to implement the peace agreement's provisions on accountability.

I have repeatedly warned that South Sudan risks sinking further into conflict, and that the promises of independence have been squandered. I repeat again: the country's political leaders bear a huge moral and political responsibility to set their personal differences aside in the interests of the population. Only a political solution can end this crisis.

The United Nations fully supports the urgent steps taken by IGAD the African Union, the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), former President Festus Mogae, and the African Union High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konaré, to engage with the South Sudanese authorities on the implementation of the recommendations endorsed by the region. We stand ready to work closely with IGAD and the African Union on practical steps forward. At the same time, it is vital that steps to address security concerns proceed in tandem with efforts to revive the political process.

IGAD, the African Union and the United Nations Security Council must quickly unite for the sake of the South Sudanese people, the region and our collective future.