



# PRESS RELEASE

## UNMISS strongly condemns deadly violence in Kajo-Keji Central Equatoria State

**Juba, 5 February 2023:** The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was shocked to receive initial reports of the deadly violence in Kajo-Keji County (Central Equatoria State) that claimed the lives of at least 27 people and left many others injured on 2 February. At least 2000 people, mainly women and children have become internally displaced, including 30 unaccompanied children.

“This violence is unacceptable and was in sharp contrast to the message of the Ecumenical Peace Pilgrimage to South Sudan, which called for peace and reconciliation. UNMISS calls on the authorities to heed the Ecumenical messages, urgently launch an investigation and hold perpetrators to account,” said Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative in South Sudan.

The Mission welcomes the Government’s deployment of troops to the area to quell tensions and protect internally displaced persons. UNMISS is increasing patrols to the affected areas, and engaging the authorities as well as community leaders, to bring an end to these hostilities and seek peaceful solutions.

UNMISS is gravely concerned about the resurgence of killings and violence stemming from long-standing tensions between cattle keepers and host communities in Central Equatoria State and in other parts of the country. Over the past two weeks, escalating violence has resulted in, at least, 45 deaths among unarmed civilians in Kajo-Keji and Mangalla Payam, among other areas in Central Equatoria.

“We urge South Sudanese leaders to encourage restraint and avoid fueling any conflict,” SRSG Haysom added.

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