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TO: The Chairman, JMEC

FROM: The Chairman, CTSAMM

DATE: 27 July 2017

**SUBJECT: CTSAMM REPORT 043 – FIGHTING IN YEI AREA**

Your Excellency,

Please find attached a CTSAMM report on violations of the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements (Chapter II of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 26 August 2015), specifically fighting in the YEI area which took place between 16-22 May 2017.

This report was discussed at the CTSAMM meeting of 20 July 2017.

  
Major General Molla Hailemariam  
Chairman

**Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism**



## **CTSAMM REPORT NUMBER 043**

### **FIGHTING IN THE YEI AREA**

#### **Executive Summary**

There was fighting in the YEI area on 16 and 22 May 2017. SPLA-IO (RM) confirmed that they conducted an attack on the SPLA-IG checkpoint at KERGULU on 16 May. An attack on the SPLA-IG checkpoint at KIMBA on 22 May is very likely to have also been conducted by SPLM-IO (RM).

Over the same period there was another ambush which reportedly resulted in casualties, but the CTSAMM MVT was unable to verify this

The attacks constitute a clear violation of the PCTSA by SPLA-IO (RM) forces.

## FIGHTING IN THE YEI AREA

### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background:

- The YEI area has seen sporadic outbreaks of violence between SPLA-IG, SPLA-IO (RM) and Unknown Armed Groups for some time.
- The area has been of particular concern to CTSAMM, with continual reports of violations of the PCTSA. There has been mass civilian displacement, and those citizens remaining face food insecurity in what has always been one of the most fertile and productive areas in the country.
- The last CTSAMM violation report on violations in the Yei area was number 38 published in May 2017.

1.2 Incidents: A clash between SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (RM) forces at KERGULU on which was 16 May 2017. Further clashes took place at KIMBA on 22 May.

1.3 Aim: The purpose of this report is to describe what happened and to attribute responsibility for violations of the PCTSA where appropriate.

#### 1.4 Methodology:

- CTSAMM YEI MVT conducted a patrol to the area from 22 to 28 May 2017 in order to investigate the KERGULU incident. The MVT conducted interviews with witnesses and representatives from SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (RM) and visited a number of villages in the area.
- The KIMBA incident took place when the MVT were in the general area, and it was able to follow up and investigate what happened.

## **2.0 Investigation – findings**

- 2.1 On 16 May 2017 there was a clash between the SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (RM), when the latter attacked the SPLA-IG checkpoint at KERGULU 5 km from YEI town. It was reported that there were casualties on both sides. The checkpoint was seized by SPLA-IO (RM) and held for some time until retaken by SPLA-IG.
- 2.2 The circumstances of the clash were confirmed by the MVT after speaking to both SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (RM). The MVT met with SPLA-IG on the ground and spoke with the SPLA-IO (RM) by telephone while the team were on the patrol. The number of military casualties could not be verified. On 22 May the team interviewed a civilian who stated that his relative had been killed in KERGULU on the 16<sup>th</sup> May in the crossfire between the forces.
- 2.3 On 22 May the MVT were informed of an attack on a SPLA-IG checkpoint at KIMBA which took place at 0500 that day. Three soldiers were killed on the spot and one died later that day. The MVT saw the scene of the ambush and the pools of blood and were then taken to see the bodies of those killed. The police and SPLA-IG claim that the attack was carried out by SPLM-IO (RM). The MVT was unable to confirm this with the SPLA –IO (RM), but all the evidence pointed to their involvement.

## **3.0 Assessment:**

- 3.1 It is the opinion of CTSAMM that the attack on the checkpoint on 16 May was conducted by SPLM-IO (RM), and that in addition to military casualties a civilian was probably also killed.
- 3.2 It is the opinion of the CTSAMM that because there is an active SPLA-IO (RM) presence in YEI area which conducted a similar attack on 16 May it is very likely



that they are responsible for the attack on the KIMBA checkpoint on 22 May.

#### **4.0 Conclusion:**

- 4.1 It is the opinion of CTSAMM that the attacks which took place at KERGULU and KIMBA were unprovoked and are a clear violation of the PCTSA by SPLA-IO (RM), particularly:

Article 1.1 of the COHA: “The parties shall cease all military operations.....”

Article 1.7.5 of the PCTSA: “Acts of hostility, intimidation, violence or attacks against the civilian population....”

#### **5.0 Observations and Recommendations:**

- 5.1 It is recommended that all Parties observe the requirements of the permanent ceasefire in full, and specifically desist from any offensive military operations.