



**THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
HEADQUARTERS**

For immediate Release

Date: 30th March 2026

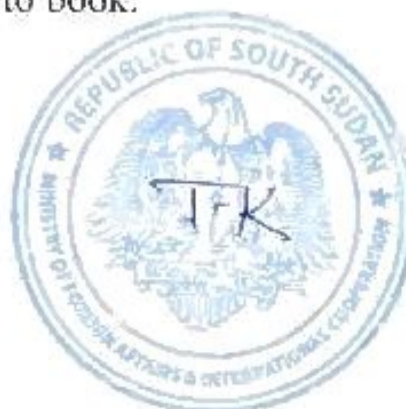
**Response of the Government of South Sudan to the News Release on the
Situation in South Sudan issued by Mr. Volker Turk,
The UN- High Commissioner for Human Rights.**

1. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan received with deep disappointment the News Release issued by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk on 10th March 2026.
2. What happened in the end of last year and the beginning of this year was that, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) and the White Army violated the Peace Agreement in Northern Jonglei State, by launching surprise military attacks using tanks, APCs, ammunition, fuel of UNMISS and the UN Agencies and NGOs vehicles, and overrunning Waat on 24th December 2025, Yuai on 2nd January 2026 and Pajut on 16th January 2026. Encouraged by the occupation of those towns, the SPLM/A-IO and the White Army (rebels) made advances towards the capital, Juba, ignoring the repeated appeals by the Government to halt the attacks and vacate the occupied towns.
3. Left with no option, the South Sudan people's Defence Forces (SSPDF) launched in self-defense and fulfillment of its constitutional mandate, the "Operation Enduring Peace" to counter rebels advancing to Juba. As a result, the SSPDF recaptured the occupied towns and reclaimed its military



equipment, the UN owned military equipment, APCs, ammunition, fuel and NGOs vehicles. Thereafter five recaptured vehicles that belong to the NGOs, were handed over by the Government to their respective organizations.

4. After the recapturing of those towns, law and order was restored and most of the inhabitants, who fled during the fight, voluntarily returned and resumed their normal lives in their areas.
5. The accusation that the SSPDF destroyed or intentionally contaminated or poisoned community water sources is a blatant lie. The SSPDF soldiers are sharing and drinking with civilians from the same water sources. No single water source is contaminated or poisoned as claimed by the Chief of Human Rights. Anyone doubting these facts is free to visit and test water in those places.
6. The High Commissioner is general in his statement and has not mentioned the specific areas where contamination or poisoning took place. He did not also verify whether or not the water sources are contaminated or poisoned. Mr. Volker just based his statement on hearsay. We challenged Mr. Volker to produce pieces of evidence of contamination or poisoning of water resources and the victims.
7. Though this situation was imposed on the Government as explained above, the Government and the SSPDF remain committed to the international rules of engagement enshrined in the four Geneva Protocols of 1949. The SSPDF is strictly under directives to adhere to, and abide by the provisions of the constitution, laws of the Republic of South Sudan, and the four Geneva Protocols of 1949, as well as the existing norms and practices. In this regard, the commanding officer and soldiers who are accused of involvement in killing of civilians in Ayod County in February 2026 have been arrested and will be brought to book.



8. With regard to the evacuation order issued by the army on 6th March 2026. This order was issued as a follow-up to the SSPDF previous orders on the situation. It was released when the SSPDF was engaging with the SPLM/A- IO and the White Army in kaikueny-village which were advancing toward Wichdeng village, a distance of 5Kms from Akobo County. In order to save life of civilians and humanitarian workers, the army issued the order and at same time halted the operation for three days to allow peaceful evacuation of the UN and NGOs staff. Based on the UNMISS Contingency Plan, the Mission was allowed to stay in Akobo and increased its forces there to protect equipment and staff till the time of their departure in accordance with that plan.
9. The killing of civilians in Abienhom was carried out by the SPLM/A-IO, White Army, the UPA of Stephen Buay, and some youth of Bul Nuer known as Terchuong. The Government was not party to that carnage.
10. On the alleged beheading of four civilians in Thiam Village of Wau Payam, Western Bahr El Ghazal State. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan has no report on this allegation.
11. Concerning airstrikes, the targets were the rebel barracks not civilians' places, to soften positions of enemy. Before doing so, the SSPDF gave three days warning to civilians to leave the areas to the safer locations. As a result, there were no civilians' casualties reported nor equipment damaged.
12. There are no displacements in Jonglei, Lakes and Upper Nile States as reported by Mr. Volker. Civilians voluntarily leave towns in those states for their villages and 280,000 reported in the News Release to have been displaced from those states is an old data as there was no fight in both Lakes and Upper Nile States. Those who left some areas in Northern Jonglei are SPLM/A-IO soldiers and supporters.



13. As the accusations are unsubstantiated allegations, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan calls upon the Human Rights Chief to gather accurate information from rightful sources not from the circles which intend to use the esteemed offices to tarnish the image of the country, the government and serve interest of others.
14. Despite the fact that the information in the News Release is unwarranted, the Government reiterates its commitment to fully cooperate and support the human rights bodies to discharge their duties effectively.

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