

CTSAMM Headquarters

CEASEFIRE AND TRANSITIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS MONITORING MECHANISM



TO: The Chairman, JMEC

FROM: The Chairman, CTSAMM

DATE: 28 March 2017

SUBJECT: CTSAMM REPORT 034 - MONITORING REPORT FEBRUARY 2017

Your Excellency,

Please find attached a CTSAMM JTC report on the findings of monitoring activity within the legacy states of Central Equatoria, (specifically the Kajo-Keji and Yei areas) and Western Equatoria (Mundri, Rimenze and Ezo). This report was discussed with members of CTSAMM at the meeting which took place on 8 March 2017.


Major General Molla Hailemariam
Chairman

Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism



CTSAMM MONITORING REPORT FEBRUARY 2017

Executive Summary

CTSAMM continues to monitor the parties' compliance with the PCTSA by conducting routine and long range patrols.

This report covers the findings of patrols conducted in Western and Central Equatoria to Kajo-Keji, Mundri, Rimenze and Ezo/Tambura. There are consistent and widespread violations of the PCTSA committed by both parties. The impact of this insecurity falls almost entirely on the civilian population with regular occurrences of rape, looting, shooting and destruction of property. In response to the violence the civilian population has been forced to leave villages to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, the bush and IDP camps. The inability to farm and harvest crops has added to the overall level of food insecurity.

There is a grassroots desire for effective peace and reconciliation action which is more inclusive and allows community participation. CTSAMM patrols are welcomed into communities but it is apparent that relatively few stakeholders understand the role of CTSAMM or the provisions and responsibilities of the ARCSS.

More effort must be made by both parties to seek local solutions to the conflict. Those who perpetrate abuses upon the civilian population must be brought to account.

CTSAMM will continue to conduct patrols to monitor compliance with the PCTSA and to assess the security situation.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background:

- According to its mandate, CTSAMM is required to monitor the parties' compliance with the PCTSA. At the CTSAMM meeting of 25 January 2017 JTC presented the findings of monitoring patrols carried out in the previous month.
- Since the last board CTSAMM continue to monitor the situation through routine activity and targeted patrols to areas of interest. Over the period since the last board meeting patrols in Western and Central Equatoria have been conducted to Kajo-Keji, Mundri, Rimenze and Ezo.

1.2 Aim: The purpose of this report is to present to CTSAMM members a summary of monitoring activities and findings, and to make recommendations.

1.3 Information Sources: This report uses information gathered by MVTs and presented in routine reports (daily and weekly) as well as specific patrol reports. The MVTs involved comprise Yambio, Juba, and Yei team.

1.4 MVT Patrol Activity

Serial	Location	MVT	Dates
1	Kajo-Keji	Juba	16-20 January 2017
2	Mundri County	Composite	19-22 January 2017
3	Rimenze	Yambio	9 Feb 2017
4	Ezo/Tambura County	Yambio	12-17 Feb 2017

1.5 Patrol Tasks. The patrol tasks were to:

- Monitor the overall situation in the areas visited, with a particular focus on knowledge of and compliance with of all aspects the PCTSA.
- Identify any potential or alleged PCTSA violations.

- Establish or maintain contact with all relevant stakeholders.
- Where necessary, explain the role and mandate of CTSAMM.

1.6 Patrol Methodology

- **Planning:** CTSAMM identifies areas of interest for patrolling. All MVT Long Range Patrols are then planned in detail well in advance of the expected timeframe. The plans are notified to the appropriate bodies through the Government and IO Liaison Officers
- **Composition:** The MVT component of patrols is formed from International Observers, SPLM/A and SPLA/A-IO liaison officers as well as locally employed Community Liaison Officers.
- **UNMISS Involvement:** MVT patrols are conducted jointly with UNMISS. UNMISS provide force protection and often support the patrol with subject matter expertise.
- **Interaction with stakeholders:** The patrol gathers critical information by interacting with all stakeholders. Formal meetings are arranged with State/County/Town tiers of government, civil society organisations, faith groups and security forces. There are also informal meetings with the civilian population during foot patrols through markets and talking to road users, schools and businesses. The wider the cross section of the community that can be reached then the better the quality of information is collected. Unfortunately for this reporting period the patrols were unable to have meaningful dialogue with representatives from SPLM/A-IO.
- **Assessment Criteria:** Following patrols the teams prepare formal reports with findings and recommendations which are submitted to CTSAMM HQ. The reports are assessed and the information is used to prepare the CTSAMM Monitoring Report. Only verifiable information is extracted from MVT patrol reports, the reliability of stakeholders is considered and multiple sources are required to substantiate allegations of violations.

2. FINDINGS

- 2.1 Overall Security Assessment In Western and Central Equatoria there are frequent and persistent outbreaks of violence in breach of the ARCSS. Both parties commit infringements with the impact falling on civilians, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children and the elderly. There is insufficient evidence to identify trends which show whether violence is increasing, levelling or diminishing. There has been extensive civilian displacement and evidence of the dispersal of males of fighting age into the bush to join the SPLM/A I-O or Other Armed Groups (OAG). What is certain is that the security situation remains extremely tense with the remaining civilian population is living in an environment of fear and distrust.
- 2.2 Cessation of Hostilities Violations are persistent, some county commissioners and Government Forces Commanders claim that there is no SPLM/A-IO activity in their area and that outbreaks of violence are attributable to OAGs and criminality. Consequently any Government Forces response to violent attacks is deemed to be a legitimate action and not a violation of the ceasefire. There are other government representatives who acknowledge the presence of SPLM/A-IO in their area and seek to conduct low level reconciliation talks. In informal meetings with civilian groups the presence of the SPLM/A-IO is much more readily acknowledged. The civilian population fears both parties with good reason. The SPLM/A-IO is perceived to be a threat because they commit violations in particular the looting of food supplies and abducting of males of fighting age. The SPLA is perceived to be a threat because of the collateral damage it causes to civilians by its heavy handed reaction to SPLM/A-IO activity.
- 2.3 Attitudes to ARCSS There is evidence that civilian officials and local SPLA commanders have divergent views towards the ceasefire mechanism. Generally civilian officials and civil societies welcome the presence of CTSAMM and UNMISS patrols and wish to see more of them. On the other hand there are instances of relatively junior SPLA commanders stating that any

CTSAMM/UNMISS presence is unnecessary and that security needs will be met by the SPLA. It is unfortunate that information on ARCSS and the roles and responsibilities of all parties has not been passed down to community groups.

2.4 Protection of Civilians There is evidence of widespread abuses especially in Rimenze and Kajo-Keje. During formal briefings monitors are frequently informed by government officials and security forces that local communities are safe and protected from harassment. When monitors talk to civilians separately a very different picture emerges. It is apparent that civilian communities are not reporting abuses to local authorities. Monitors received multiple first-hand accounts of rape, looting, abduction, destruction of homes, medical facilities and murder. Where MVTs have been entering town for the first time civilians have been very willing to talk to monitors and the accounts of multiple abuses indicate that the situation has been serious from July 2016 until the present. There is little evidence to indicate whether perpetrators of abuse are being held accountable. Both parties are accused of committing violations but monitors have been presented with more evidence of abuses by the SPLA and allied militia. The most serious allegations of SPLA abuses are:

- The killing of 8 men and destruction of dwellings between 1-3 Jan in the Rimenze area.
- The rape of 6 women in Lobo Village/Kanapo county
- In September 2016 the detainment and torture of youth in the Kajo-Keje area suspected of being children of SPLA/M-IO soldiers.

2.5 Displacement of the civilian population Given the frequent outbreaks of fighting and the level of abuses inflicted on the civilian population it is hardly surprising that many people have left their home villages to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, in the bush or in IDP camps. The visible population in some areas comprises old people, women and small children. Many villages are either sparsely populated or empty. On major routes and especially at check points villages are becoming militarised with dense populations of soldiers and heavy weapons (artillery and tanks) stationed amongst houses. Some villages have been completely occupied by the military. The displacement is ongoing and MVTs witnessed vehicles heavily loaded with civilians heading towards Uganda.

The MVTs visited IDP camps in Logo (Liwolo County) and Rimenze which had estimated populations of 18000 and 5000 respectively. Discussions with IDP occupants clearly indicated that they felt safer in the camps and felt less threatened by both Government and SPLA/M-IO forces.

- 2.6 Humanitarian Access One of the main drivers for civilian displacement is concern over food security. Greater Equatoria has the most fertile land in the country and when conditions are favourable grow much of the food the local population requires. There were many accounts from farmers that they no longer feel safe going about routine activity, they feel intimidated travelling to their fields and then returning to heavily protected towns. In extreme incidents SPLM/A-IO have seized their crops and on returning to their villages farm workers have been accused of providing support to the same by security forces. Traditional routes and markets in neighbouring countries have been disrupted by insecurity problems. Access to schools, markets and healthcare have been impeded by the sustained harassment of civilians. The insecurity is such that people are confined to the immediate vicinity of villages for fear of being attacked and abused.

2.7 Scope for reconciliation Despite the dire security situation there are encouraging signs that there is a grassroots desire to end the conflict and to begin reconciliation and peacebuilding. While there are isolated proponents of a military solution there is widespread support at state and county level for peace and reconciliation. Women's groups in particular have had enough of the violence and want to see an energised peace process which is inclusive of all factions and allows full participation from the communities affected by the violence.

3.0 Conclusions:

- 3.1 There is overwhelming evidence that in large parts of Western and Central Equatoria both parties are failing to comply with the PCTSA.
- 3.2 Outbreaks of violence in Western and Central Equatoria continue and it is not

possible to determine whether the security situation is escalating, declining or levelling.

- 3.3 The failure to adhere to the COHA and PCTSA is resulting in widespread human rights abuses being perpetrated on civilians who are weak, vulnerable and powerless to respond. Those who commit crimes appear to act with impunity and are unlikely to be held to account.
- 3.4 The displacement of civilians from border areas and deeper into the country is continuing unabated. The drivers are food insecurity, fear of violence and a loss of confidence in the peace process.
- 3.5 Despite all the privations endured by the civilian population there is compelling evidence of a desire at grass roots and local administration level for a reconciliation and peacebuilding process which is inclusive and community driven.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 There should be political dialogue to stop the fighting and to stop the impact upon civilians.
- 4.2 Local opportunities to initiate peacebuilding and reconciliation should be identified and supported by all parties.
- 4.3 Clear channels of communication should be opened and maintained with all factions of the SPLM/A-IO.
- 4.4 Commanders of both parties should demonstrate a commitment to the protection of civilians by dealing firmly with perpetrators of abuse and holding them to

account.

- 4.5 CTSAMM and UNMISS should continue to be supported by parties in the conduct of routine and long duration patrols especially by ensuring freedom of movement.