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TO: The Chairman, JMEC

FROM: The Chairman, CTSAMM

DATE: 3 November 2017

**SUBJECT: CTSAMM REPORT 055 – INITIAL REPORT ON FIGHTING IN WAAT,
JONGLEI STATE**

Your Excellency,

Please find attached an initial CTSAMM report on alleged 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) that took place and are ongoing in the Waat area of Jonglei State.

This report was discussed at the 14th CTSAMM member's meeting on 24 October 2017 and again at the follow-up CTSAMM member's meeting of 30 October 2017.

A written response dated 2 November 2017 by the Government members of CTSAMM is attached.


Major General Molla Hailemariam
Chairman

Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism



CTSAMM REPORT NUMBER 055
INITIAL REPORT ON FIGHTING IN WAAT, JONGLEI STATE

Executive Summary

Fighting broke out in WAAT in mid-August between the SPLA and the SPLA-IO (RM). Since then there has been sporadic conflict with further outbreaks of fighting starting in early October with casualties reported on both sides. The airstrip is some distance from the town and the proximity of opposition apparently prevented the evacuation of government casualties.

Due to the situation on the ground CTSAMM has so far been unable to deploy an MVT to WAAT to investigate and report on the cause and course of the conflict there. However, CTSAMM has been able to access sufficient information from local and open sources to be able to confirm that fighting has taken place, and that this constitutes a serious violation of the PCTSA.

CTSAMM hopes to be able to visit WAAT once the situation stabilises and then submit a full report attributing responsibility for violations of the PCTSA.

FIGHTING IN WAAT, JONGLEI STATE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background:

- There have been reports of fighting around WAAT since the middle of August. WAAT is the capital of what is known as Biech State; some county commissioners from Biech state are based either in Juba or in WAAT because much of the state is under the control of SPLA-IO (RM).
- The appointed Governor of what is known as Akobo State was also in WAAT at the time. This was because AKOBO remains under the control of the SPLA-IO (RM) and he has been unable to deploy there. Sources suggest that opposition elements do not agree with the creation of what is known as Akobo State, and that this is the cause of the conflict.
- Government and SPLA-IO (RM) spokesmen have provided conflicting accounts of the conflict.

1.2 Aim: The purpose of this initial report is to outline what information CTSAMM has been able to collect about the recent fighting in the WAAT, and to make recommendations for future action.

1.3 Methodology:

- The situation in WAAT has meant that CTSAMM has been unable to visit and undertake an assessment of the cause and course of the ongoing conflict in the area. However, the AYOD MVT was able to contact a range of local sources and also speak with Juba-based officials, particularly the Governor of what is known as Biech State.

- Open sources have also been used to provide information for this initial report.

2.0 Findings

- 2.1 Fighting started in the WAAT area on 13 August 2017. Government Sources claimed that WAAT was attacked by SPLA-IO (RM) forces who were repulsed with losses of 3 or 4 killed on both sides. Local sources indicated that the attack was directed at the appointed Governor of what is called Akobo State who was resident in WAAT at the time.
- 2.2 Reports of sporadic fighting in the WAAT area continued during September.
- 2.2 On 2 October 2017 reports were received of more serious fighting in the WAAT area with significant casualties on both sides – unconfirmed reports suggested at least 4 SPLA soldiers were killed and 20-30 wounded, and 80 “White Army” fighters killed and many more wounded. Government officials claimed this was another attack by the SPLA-IO (RM), and some sources suggested that the SPLA had deployed heavy artillery during the engagement which resulted in civilian casualties. The fighting has continued.
- 2.3 It has also been reported that the SPLA has been unable to evacuate casualties as the airstrip is some distance from their positions and close to SPLA-IO (RM) forces. On 8 October 2017 the SPLA-IO (RM) spokesman claimed in a press statement that the SPLA had used artillery and aircraft in attacks against SPLM-IO (RM) positions in and around WAAT. In the statement he also claimed that the SPLM-IO (RM) controlled “90%” of WAAT. There were further reports of fighting on 15 October suggesting 10 SPLA soldiers were killed.

3.0 Assessment:

- 3.1 Fighting has taken place in and around WAAT over the past two months. Some of the fighting has been serious with casualties on both sides. This much is clear from statements from both Parties, and corroborated reports from a variety of sources.
- 3.2 CTSAMM has so far not been able to visit WAAT, although 3 attempts have been made to do so but were prevented by UNMISS being unable to get Flight Safety Assurances. CTSAMM is therefore unable to present a first-hand account of the situation or make any sort of assessment about which Party is responsible for the fighting.
- 3.1 However, any sort of deliberate fighting represents a clear violation of the PCTSA, and whichever of the Parties is responsible for the conflict in the WAAT area is responsible for a significant breach of the ceasefire at a time when efforts are being made to revitalise the peace process.

4.0 Observations and Recommendations:

- 5.1 CTSAMM will continue to try and visit WAAT in order to investigate and report on the conflict in the area as soon as the security situation allows.
- 5.2 It is recommended that representation be made at the political level for the forces of both sides to separate in order that further conflict can be avoided. The causes of the conflict can be addressed as the revitalisation process moves forward.
- 5.3 Government members of CTSAMM claim that WAAT was attacked by SPLA-IO (RM) forces, and that the SPLA has been on the defensive throughout the

fighting. A written response to this report by the Government members of CTSAMM is attached.

**Sudan People's Liberation Movement
Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLA GHQ'S – Bilpam
Juba, South Sudan**

Date: 2nd November 2017

Government CTSAMM representatives

To: Maj. Gen. Molla Hailemariam Chairman
Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism

Subject: Government Response to the CTSAMM Draft Report #053 – 056 alleged violations of the PCTSA

Honorable members of the CTSAMM

The Government response to the CTSAMM Draft Report 053-056 alleged violations of PCTSA are as follows;

1. Report 053 KASIA and RINEZE areas

The SPLA regrets the incident, which occurred in KASIA, RIMENZE, MAKPANDU and KAPANGARIOKPO villages, which resulted into the displacement of 162 families totaling 833 individuals. The SPLA command has taken corrective measure to improving friendly coexistence between the civil population and the military unit deployed in the area. The SPLA force deployed in the area is only one platoon and the area is so big that a platoon cannot be enough to cover it. There is also presence of many rebel groups operating in the area such as LRA and the rebel groups of the Central African Republic and that is the reason for which the area has experienced a lot of criminal activities.

Right now the security situation has improved as the coordination between the civil authority and the local military command are now managing the security issues jointly.

The SPLA forces in the area have been ordered to abide by the agreement on cessation of Hostilities and protection of civilians as well as giving free access to the humanitarian deliveries. Currently, there is a better co-ordination and regular security meetings between the Security forces and civil authorities are being held.

2. Report 054 Flight safety

- a. Flight Safety: With regards to the security clearance the flight safety assurance is always granted when requested by the CTSAMM especially in the areas under the SPLA control, but in the areas controlled by the rebels we always grant permission to go at their own risk.
- b. The SPLA is in full control of Pagak and is abided by COHA. However, the SPLA can only fight on self-defense. There are reasons which compelled the government to go to Pagak and are mainly three; 1) Protection of vital national installation of oil fields that are constantly coming under attacks planned from Pagak; 2) Protection of foreign workers operating in the area from Pagak terrorist group who in one incident took two foreign workers as hostages and asked a ransom for their release and; 3) The government wanted to install a responsible civil administration in Maiwut State to provide services and development in the area.


3. Report 055 Fighting in WAAT, JONGLEI STATE


In Waat area the IO (RM) rebels attacked the positions of our forces and the SPLA has only acted in self-defense.

4. Report # 056 FIGHTING IN ABOROC

The SPLA is not in control of Aboroc. The fighting, which occurred in Aboroc is an internal rivalry of power between the rebel Commander GEN. OLONY and his Late Deputy GEN. YUANIS UKIEC. However, the fragmentation of "IO" leadership brought about a difficulty of control of their forces on the ground and also some of rebel groups do not abide by the ARCISS and COHA.

Regards,

Maj. Gen. Simon Ananias ----------CTSAMM Government Representative

Maj. Gen. Marshal Stephen Babanen----------CTSAMM member

Maj. Gen Samson Mabior Lual ----------CTSAMM member

CC: JMCC

CC: File