

**CTSAMM/JMEC CONFIDENTIAL**  
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TO: The Chairman, JMEC

FROM: The Chairman, CTSAMM

DATE: 3 November 2017


**SUBJECT: CTSAMM REPORT 056 – FIGHTING IN ABUROC**

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) involving fighting in the ABUROC area, Upper Nile State on 8 - 12 September 2017.

This report was discussed at the 14<sup>th</sup> 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 056**

### **FIGHTING IN ABUROK**

#### **Executive Summary**

On 12 September 2017 ABUROK in Upper Nile State changed hands following fighting on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The SPLA-IO (RM) forces under Lt Gen Onony who controlled ABUROK were ejected by troops from KODOK. This incident constitutes a violation of the PCTSA.

ABUROK is in what is known as Fashoda State and has an IDP camp which is full mainly of IDPs who fled WAU SHILLUK when that was taken by the SPLA earlier in the year. The fighting resulted in the relocation of humanitarian staff and displacement of IDP's.

The situation in this part of Upper Nile State is complex. Some troops from Lt Gen Onony's SPLA-IO (RM) changed allegiance to the SPLA-IO (TD), and it was these forces which took ABUROK. A visit to ABUROK by Malakal MVT in early October in order to investigate the fighting confirmed that SPLA-IO (TD) forces control ABUROK, and after much discussion at the CTSAMM member's meetings of 24 and 30 October 2017 it is the clear opinion of CTSAMM that by taking ABUROK by force SPLA-IO (TD) forces were in clear violation of the PCTSA.

## FIGHTING IN ABUROC

### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background:

- The situation in the Shilluk areas north of Malakal is complex. This year has seen mass displacement resulting from SPLA offensive operations, and many of the remaining civilians are in IDP camps dependent on humanitarian aid.
- The conflict has been between the SPLA and the forces of Lt Gen Johnson Olony which remain loyal to Riek Machar. However, in recent months the dynamic has changed with some of Lt Gen Onony's forces changing their allegiance to SPLA-IO (TD).
- On 8 September 2017 it was reported the barrack area of the SPLA-IO (RM) at in Adout Nyiworo village (which is east of ABUROC) was attacked. The attack was repulsed, and the attackers returned to KODOK from whence they came. On 11 September 2017 the same forces attacked again.

1.2 Aim: The aim of the report is to describe what is known about the fighting around ABUROC on 8-12 September 2017, and attribute responsibility for violations of the PCTSA.

#### 1.3 Methodology:

- The MVT based in Malakal were able to monitor events through established contacts and sources, including information from the SPLA 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Headquarters in Malakal.
- On 3 October 2017 the MVT visited ABUROC where they were able to interview a wide range of people including a senior officer claiming to be with



the SPLA-IO (TD), representatives from INGOs and UN agencies supporting the IDP camp and civilian IDPs.

## **2.0 Findings**

- 2.1 ABUROC changed hands on 12 September 2017. Following an unsuccessful attack against SPLA-IO (RM) forces in Adout Nyiworo on 8 September the attack was renewed on 11 September when the attacking forces took Adout Nyiworo and the SPLA-IO (RM) forces of Johnson Olony withdrew to ATAR. On the morning of 12 September the attacking forces reportedly shelled positions around ABUROC to find that the SPLA-IO (RM) had gone, and ABUROC was taken.
- 2.2 There were reports of victorious soldiers looting property as they returned to KODOK.
- 2.3 The fighting resulted in 30-35 humanitarian staff being relocated, although they were able to return soon after. A large number of IDPs were displaced by the fighting: there were about 20,000 before 11 September and when the CTSAMM visited on 3 October there were about 11,500; the others had fled.
- 2.4 The MVT found the situation in ABUROC IDP camp is calm but tense. Many people fled during the fighting but have been returning. Some of the camp accommodation is occupied by military forces.
- 2.5 There was some initial confusion as to whether the attacking forces included SPLA elements. They reportedly came from KODOK which is held by the SPLA, but a senior officer at ABUROC confirmed that it was SPLA-IO (TD) forces that had taken and hold ABUROC. Information suggests they were former SPLA-IO (RM) soldiers who had recently changed their allegiance to SPLA-IO (TD); at the CTSAMM member's meeting of 30 October 2017 the SPLA-IO (TD)

representative confirmed that this was the case and that the SPLA-IO (TD) control ABUROC.

### **3.0 Assessment:**

3.1 This is a complex incident. It concerns fighting between Shilluk SPLA-IO (RM) forces under Lt Gen Olony and SPLA-IO (TD) forces recently defected from the SPLA-IO (RM). It has not been possible for the MVT to confirm whether or not SPLA forces were directly or indirectly involved with the attack. Government CTSAMM members deny any involvement.

3.2 ABUROC changed hands as the result of offensive military operations, from the SPLA-IO (RM) to the SPLA-IO (TD) and this has to be seen as a clear breach of the PCTSA whatever local political manoeuvrings were involved.

4.0 **Conclusion:** It is concluded that SPLA-IO (TD) forces attacked and wrested control of ABUROC from the SPLA-IO (RM), and in doing so clearly violated the PCTSA, specifically:

- Article 1.3: "The permanent Ceasefire shall apply to all forces of the warring parties, armed groups and all other forces and militias allied to either Party....."
- Article 1.7: The warring parties shall refrain from prohibited actions outlined in the COHA...."

## **5.0 Observations and Recommendations:**

- 5.1 Although the situation in and around ABUROC appears to have stabilised, the attacks of 8-12 September resulted in yet more fear and displacement for the civilian population.
- 5.2 Members of CTSAMM from both the Government and the SPLA-IO (TD) were very helpful in providing information about the incident. The Government denied any involvement, but the SPLA-IO (TD) stated clearly that their forces had taken and now control ABUROC.
- 5.3 The focus of all parties should now be on the revitalisation of the peace process. CTSAMM calls on JMEC to condemn this and any other offensive operations which could damage the peace process.
- 5.4 A written response to this report by Government members of CTSAMM is attached.



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

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

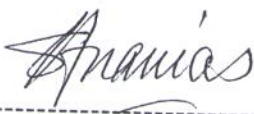
## 3. Report 055 Fighting in WAAT, JONGLEI STATE


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

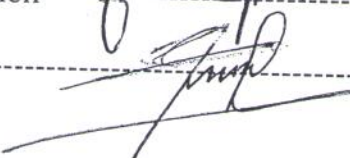
## 4. Report # 056 FIGHTING IN ABOROC

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