**Background to Cammaert Report**

**South Sudan – Juba, July 2016**

In December 2013 conflict erupted between soldiers from rival factions within the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Army (SPLA) and the country soon descended into civil war. The SPLA split into two groups, the SPLA, led by President Kiir and the SPLA-In-Opposition (SPLA-IO) led by Riek Machar. Over the following 18 months, severe armed clashes continued to take place between ethnic Dinka and Nuer soldiers loyal to President Kiir and Machar, respectively.

In August 2015, Kiir and Machar agreed to end the country's civil war by signing the "Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan." The power-sharing agreement called for a permanent ceasefire, as well as the establishment of an independent Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS) to investigate mass atrocities committed during the conflict.[[1]](#footnote-1)

In the beginning of 2016, the parties made some progress towards implementing the agreement. Machar returned to Juba on 26 April to be sworn in as First Vice President, and the Transitional Government was formed on 29 April.

The headquarters for the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is located in the capital, Juba. Two Protection of Civilians (POC) sites were located adjacent to the headquarters and housed more than 27,000 people who had been internally displaced during the civil war.[[2]](#footnote-2)

When he returned to Juba, Machar brought more than 1,200 armed fighters who, despite security risks and strong objections of the Special representative of the Secretary General, international security advisors and generals in the Government army, were placed less than a kilometer from UN House and the POC sites.[[3]](#footnote-3) The SPLA also had significant troops in Juba, including ground forces reinforced by armored units and 24 attack helicopters.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Despite steps towards implementing the 2015 peace agreement, the root causes of the conflict were not adequately addressed and ethnic tensions continued to be exacerbated by officials using hate speech to incite violence and routine violations of the ceasefire.[[5]](#footnote-5) The UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General, African Union and various international partners warned that President Kiir and Machar were failing to genuinely commit to implementation of the peace agreement.[[6]](#footnote-6) Rising perceptions among Dinka political and military elites, including President Kiir, that their people were being unfairly targeted and threatened contributed to a cycle of mutual resentment and revenge.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Violence between elements of the SPLA and the SPLA in Opposition (SPLA-IO) reignited in Juba on 7 July, two days before South Sudan observed the fifth anniversary of its independence. Heavy fighting, including tanks and helicopter gunships, was reported in Juba, particularly in the Jebel area near the UN’s POC sites. During the crisis, SPLA and SPLA-IO forces fired indiscriminately, striking UN facilities and POC sites, and attacked civilians.[[8]](#footnote-8)

According to the South Sudan Protection Cluster analysis, the SPLA deliberately targeted civilians from the Nuer ethnic group and those perceived as ‘anti-government,’ perpetrating unlawful killings, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and sexual violence. House-to-house searches were conducted and there was widespread sexual violence, in particular rapes and gang-rapes of Nuer women and girls.[[9]](#footnote-9) UNMISS received deeply disturbing reports of widespread sexual violence perpetrated by both soldiers in uniform and also by unidentified armed groups of men in plainclothes.

Hundreds of people, including civilians and two UN peacekeepers, were reportedly killed during five days of fighting. Approximately 42,000 people were displaced in Juba. Many civilians attempting to flee to UN bases were reportedly prevented from doing so and some were allegedly subjected to targeted killings.[[10]](#footnote-10)

By the afternoon of 11 July, large-scale fighting in Juba had mostly concluded and the SPLA had taken control of the opposition sites, as most surviving opposition forces had fled the city.[[11]](#footnote-11)

During the violence, UNMISS struggled to establish Mission-wide coordination and clear leadership, resulting in multiple and sometimes conflicting orders being issued to to different troops contingents. During the aftermath of the outbreak of violence, the Mission failed to respond to incidents of sexual violence. Furthermore, the Mission did not provide adequate protection to the World Food Program warehouse and food, equipment and supplies USD 29 million were looted. weeks.[[12]](#footnote-12)

1. [(GCR2P Monitor, March 2016)](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/r2p-monitor-march-2016-final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Executive Summary of the Independent Special Investigation into the violence which occurred in Juba in 2016 and UNMISS response, <http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/sudan/Public_Executive_Summary_on_the_Special_Investigation_Report_1_Nov_2016.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Independent Special Investigation; above no. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Panel of Experts Report <http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/793> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [(GCR2P Monitor, July 2016)](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/r2p_monitor_july2016_final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [(GCR2P Monitor, March 2016)](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/r2p-monitor-march-2016-final.pdf) [(GCR2P Monitor, July 2016)](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/r2p_monitor_july2016_final.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Panel of Experts Report <http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/793> p7. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Independent Special Investigation; above no. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Panel of Experts Report <http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/793> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [(GCR2P Monitor July 2016)](http://www.globalr2p.org/media/files/r2p_monitor_july2016_final.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Panel of Experts Report <http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/793> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Independent Special Investigation; above no. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)