



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN IN NORWAY

Date: 11th July 2016

**Press release: details of what happened leading to today's events
in Juba, South Sudan**

The Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan in Oslo, regrets the incident which has happened on the 8th of July where many army personnel and civilians lost their lives in and around J1 (The Presidential Palace).

Before the week of the incident, one of the officers of the SPLA in opposition was killed, this has triggered a revenge attack on the security officers of the government. On the 7th of July, the security force of the government was attacked around the Gudele areas, near the Lau Clinic, while conducting their normal duty of checking the vehicles which are passing-by to ensure safety. Unfortunately, around five officers were killed that night.

In the wake of the above mentioned incidents, the president of the Republic decided to call for a meeting to discuss the issue with the 1st vice president and the vice president and get to the bottom of what has happened and hold those responsible to account. In addition, the president wanted to discuss with his two vices the joint statement regarding the low key 5th anniversary celebrations. The meeting was also meant to reenergize the peace agreement which was overshadowed by the incidents.

During that meeting, the atmosphere was admittedly tensed. The 1st Vice President arrived to the place of meeting in more than 7 vehicles carrying his bodyguards to ensure his protection.

The presidential palace was heavily guarded and some of the presidential guards were sitting outside the walls of J1 building to ensure that the leaders are protected.

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The meeting lasted for about two hours before it was interrupted by the incident. Few minutes before the incident, around 10 army vehicles which belong to the SPLA IO arrived to the presidential palace and surrounded the nearby roads.

One of the officers then came to the gate of the J1 with his bodyguards and wanting to force their ways into the compound believing that their leader is being detained. When they were prevented, they decided to shoot at the bodyguards and the fighting ensued and many innocent lives were lost. **It is understood that, the forces were not given orders by Dr. Riek Machar.**

Another force came from the Jebel area heading to the National Security Headquarters and tried to force their way into Juba City, and towards J1. Fortunately, the army was able to prevent the force from entering the city.

It is not clear why the reinforcement happened, but there is a speculation that the leader of the SPLA IO was arrested, which was untrue. There is a believe that the information was wrongly conveyed by the spoke person of the SPLA IO.

Immediately after the shooting, the two leaders jointly offered a statement to calm the nation and inform the International community that the situation is under control.

After the meeting, the president instructed the presidential guards to safely escort the 1st vice president to his resident at Jebel area. Showing that, he is still committed to the peace agreement.

This morning, there is information that Dr. Riek Machar has ordered some of his force to lay down their arms, but some of them who were believed to have started the fighting at J1 refuse to lay down their arms and decided to fight which led to their split into two forces.

The Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan in Oslo, would like to assure the international community that the Transitional Government of National Unity of the Republic of South Sudan is committed to implement the peace agreement in letter and spirit and that:



1. This is an isolated incident engineered by the enemies of peace.
2. The interrupted meeting was meant to address some of misunderstandings and close the loopholes in the peace agreement.
3. The two leaders are both committed to restore calm and are determine to implement the peace agreement.
4. The president revisited his reservations regarding the signed peace agreement which was forced on the government under the threat of sanction. Particularly, the issue of having two armies in one Country which now proofs to be a mistake. The international community should be held accountable for the formulation of unworkable peace deal.

Never the less, the government is committed to make the Transitional Government of National Unity work and we will continue to work and pray for peace in our Country, Republic of South Sudan.

It must be understood that it is easy to start a war but difficult to work for peace. The government of the Republic of South Sudan is determined to make peace work to end the suffering of the people of South Sudan.

Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan

Oslo, Norway

To: Royal Norwegian MFA, Oslo

Danish MFA, Copenhagen

Swedish MFA, Stocholm

All Diplomatic Missions accredited to Oslo

All International Organizations

NGOs

