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TO: The Chairman, JMEC  
FROM: The Chairman, CTSAMM  
DATE: 4 September 2017

**SUBJECT: CTSAMM REPORT 048 – OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN  
UPPER NILE STATE**

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) that took place in Upper Nile State during July and August 2017. This report was discussed at the CTSAMM meeting of 23 August 2017.

Signed:

Major General Molla Hailemariam  
Chairman  
**CTSAMM**

CTSAMM REPORT NUMBER 048  
OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN UPPER NILE STATE

**Executive Summary**

Throughout July SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) forces advanced towards Pagak from the direction of Adar. On 3 July these forces took Mathiang, although they subsequently left it on 25 July and took Maiwut on 27 July. Pagak was taken by SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) forces on 6 August 2017

Pagak has been the headquarters of the SPLA-IO (RM) since the start of the current conflict. Mathiang and Maiwut have also been under the control of the SPLA-IO (RM).

It is the clear opinion of CTSAMM that the advance to and taking of Pagak was a deliberate, pre-planned military operation and as such constitutes a blatant violation of the PCTSA by SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) forces.

## OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN UPPER NILE STATE

### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background:

- Apart from frequent clashes in Nassir, the situation in eastern Upper Nile state has been relatively stable. SPLA-IO (RM) have since the start of the conflict occupied Pagak, Maiwut and Mathiang. Pagak has been the HQ of SPLA-IO (RM), and Maiwut the HQ of SPLA-IO (RM) 5<sup>th</sup> Division.
- Starting in June 2017 SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) advanced towards Pagak on the Adar-Gagok-Mathiang-Maiwut axis. This was a deliberate operation.

1.2 Aim: The purpose of this report is to outline and assess recent military operations in eastern Upper Nile State and attribute responsibility for violations of the PCTSA.

#### 1.3 Methodology:

- The MVT based in Nassir were able to monitor the situation closely through established contacts. Repeated attempts to visit PAGAK (specifically on 28 July and 2 August) were thwarted by a refusal by the Parties to agree FSA's.
- However, the MVT was able to visit MATHIANG on 9 August 2017. Meetings were held with the local SPLA-IO (RM) civilian authorities.
- Statements by the Parties have also been used in the preparation of this report.
- A patrol to Pagak was planned for 21 August. Had this been possible we would be able to give you an up-to-date picture of the situation on the ground, but this has been postponed until 25 August.

## 2.0 Findings

- 2.1 The area has remained loyal to SPLA-IO (RM) throughout the current conflict. Major General Bol Ruach Rom - SPLA-IO (TD) – was appointed by the President to be governor of what is known as Maiwut State, which was created in January 2017 when the Government increased the number of states from 28 to 32. Operations against SPLA-IO (RM) in the area have been conducted by SPLA-IG together with SPLA-IO (TD). It is apparent that these operations have been taking place as a result of government policy.
- 2.2 On 5 July the MVT in Nassir attended a meeting with the governor of what is known as Latjor State. He said that the whole area would be coming under Government control, and Government-appointed governors have “been ordered by the President to take up their posts”.
- 2.3 According to first-hand accounts Mathiang was taken by SPLA-IG forces on 3 July, but was then re-occupied by SPLA-IO (RM) on 25 July. There were civilian casualties during the fighting. The school, clinic and other buildings were looted as the town changed hands.
- 2.4 On 27 July the MVT in Nassir received reports from multiple sources there was fighting in Maiwut. On 28 July the spokesman of the SPLA-IO (TD) claimed that Maiwut had fallen. This was reported in the press. Other reports suggested that large numbers of civilians had fled the fighting. The SPLA-IG commander in Nassir confirmed to the MVT that Maiwut had been taken and was now under the control of SPLA-IG forces.
- 2.5 On 6 August SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) took Pagak. Since then have been reports of fighting in the area, with reported attempts by SPLA-IO (RM) to re-take the town.

**2.0 Assessment:**

- 3.1 It is apparent that military operations mounted by SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO (TD) against the forces of SPLA-IO (RM) in what is known as Maiwut State were the result of government policy.
- 3.2 The area has been under the control of SPLA-IO (RM) since the beginning of the current conflict, with Pagak being their HQ. This military advance to and occupation of strongholds under the clear and long-term control of the SPLA-IO (RM) can only be seen as a blatant violation of the PCTSA.

**4.0 Conclusion:**

- 4.1 It is the clear opinion of CTSAMM that by mounting deliberate offensive operations with the aim of taking areas that had for a long time been under the control of the SPLA-IO (RM), SPLA-IG together with SPLA-IO (TD) forces were in clear violation of the PCTSA.

**5.0 Observations and Recommendations:**

- 5.1 There is supposed to be a ceasefires in place. By mounting such a deliberate offensive operation the Government has completely ignored these agreements by trying to achieve a political objective through the use of military force.
- 5.2 We are supposed to be revitalising the peace process. For this to happen there must be a meaningful ceasefire with military forces frozen in place.

- 5.3 The offensive has resulted in yet more mass displacement of civilians, with all that this implies in terms of humanitarian issues, food insecurity and misery for the citizens of South Sudan.