



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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South Sudan: Widespread impunity continues to fuel crimes under international law

Speaking at the UN Human Rights Council today, Amnesty International thanked the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan (the Commission) for their report, which again demonstrates the alarming scale of grave human rights violations and abuses, flagrant disregard for international humanitarian law by the government and armed actors, and continued failure of the authorities to investigate or prosecute crimes under international law.

Amnesty International documented how between June and October last year, local groups aligned with forces affiliated to the army and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition attacked civilians in Tambura county, Western Equatoria State. Politicians stoked ethnic tensions and fighting.¹

Witnesses described to Amnesty International how fighters from both sides summarily killed civilians by shooting them or slitting their throats and looted and burned homes.² According to the UN, at least 440 civilians were killed during this fighting between June and September.³ To date, not one person has been prosecuted for these potential war crimes.

This is just one example not only of the gravity of crimes that continue to be committed, but the total impunity that continues to fuel and normalise them.

Amnesty International said that the work of the Commission remains critical in the absence of any meaningful efforts to hold perpetrators to account at national level, or progress towards the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan. It is currently the only independent mechanism able to safeguard future accountability for crimes under international law.

The organization concluded its statement by urging the Human Rights Council to renew the mandate of the Commission in full, to allow them to continue their vital work to document these

¹ Amnesty International, "South Sudan: Survivors describe killings, mass displacement and terror amid fighting in Western Equatoria", 9 December 2021, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/12/south-sudan-survivors-describe-killings-mass-displacement-and-terror-amid-fighting-in-westernequatoria/

² Amnesty International, "South Sudan: Survivors describe killings, mass displacement and terror amid fighting in Western Equatoria", 9 December 2021, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/12/south-sudan-survivors-describe-killings-mass-displacement-and-terror-amid-fighting-in-westernequatoria/

³ UNMISS and OHCHR, Attacks on civilians in Tambura county June – September 2021, 1 March, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SS/Tambura-Report.pdf>

grave violations and collect and preserve the evidence given the lack of any tangible improvement to the human rights situation on the ground.

Background

This public statement is based on an oral statement Amnesty International delivered to the Human Rights Council on 18 March 2022, during the interactive dialogue with the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan.

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Amnesty International, Office for East Africa, the Horn and the Great Lakes, Riverside Studios,
Riverside Lane, Nairobi, Kenya
www.amnesty.org
