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TO: Special Envoys to South Sudan

FROM: Chairman, Joint Technical Committee, Monitoring and Verification Mechanism,
Juba, South Sudan

DATE: 24 March 2015

SUBJECT: Report on Violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement

Your Excellences,

Please find attached the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) report on violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (23 January 2014) in Manyo County, Upper Nile State.

Major General (Retired) Negash Dagne Ayele
Chairman, Joint Technical Committee



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JOINT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (JTC)

**INVESTIGATIONS INTO VIOLATIONS OF THE CESSATION OF
HOSTILITIES AGREEMENT IN MANYO COUNTY, UPPER NILE STATE
(V034)**

PRESENTED TO:

**THE SPECIAL ENVOYS TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD)
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

24 March 2015



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Executive Summary

Starting in mid to late February 2015 Government Forces were observed to be building up forces in Melut, which were then moved forward to Kaka.

On 7 March Government Forces attacked north from Kaka clearing northern Manyo County and taking the area of Wedakona from SPLM/A-IO Forces. This was widely reported: Government Forces claimed they had indeed taken Wedakona and the SPLM/A-IO admitted they had withdrawn from it. On 9 March Government Forces claimed to have taken Gabaat thus which reportedly changed hands again on 14 March following a counter-attack by SPLM/A-IO Forces before being secured by Government Forces on 16 March.

Wedakona was designated the only SPLM/A-IO Special Arrangement Area (SAA) during the IGAD Cessation of Hostilities Implementation Workshop of November 2014. As such it was agreed by both Parties to be under the control of the SPLM/A-IO. The advance into northern Manyo County and the taking of Wedakona by Government Forces constitutes a clear violation of the COHA.



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- On 25 February the MVT observed two barges full of soldiers arrived in Melut. These soldiers were for Kaka (south of Wedakona); the MVT had been told that about 1,500 recruits from the Shilluk had been despatched and this had been going on from about 9 February. Some of the Shilluk were allegedly child soldiers, but this was not verified.
- On 26 February another barge with about 200 Government soldiers arrived in Melut on their way to Kaka, and on 1 March a battalion-sized group of about 5-600 soldiers from 1st Division arrived together with about 33 vehicles many of which mounted heavy machine guns and 5 of which were armoured. They all moved north towards Kaka and Wedakona.

2.2 Government Forces attack against Wedakona: Reports received by the MVT in Melut stated that Wedakona was taken by Government Forces on 7 March. This was confirmed by UNMISS MLO in Renk and also by both Government and SPLM/A-IO statements in the media. Further reports suggested that Government Forces took Gabaat on 9 March which was then counter-attacked by the SPLM/A-IO on 14 March. By 16 March Gabaat was firmly back in the hands of Government Forces.

2.3 **Assessment:** There is no doubt that the advance by Government Forces through northern Manyo County which included the clearance of Wedakona (which was designated as an SAA) was a deliberate and well-planned operation. It is the opinion of the JTC that it constitutes a clear violation of the COHA.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 As a result of investigations, and the weight of evidence collated it is the opinion of the JTC that Government Forces violated the following articles of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA), 23 January 2014 in Manyo County on 7-16 March 2015:

- 1.1 The Parties hereby agree to cease all military actions aimed at each other

3.2 Recommendations:

- The JTC recommends that the Special Envoys put pressure on Government Forces to refrain from all offensive military action at this sensitive and difficult stage of the peace process.

