



## **Rally for Peace and Democracy (South Sudan)**

**REF: RPD/PR-10/14**

### **PRESS RELEASE ON IDPs**

The Rally for Peace and Democracy is profoundly appalled by the rapidly worsening status of the Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) in various United Nations camps. Children are dying daily of causes related to undernourishment, waterborne and airborne diseases. As the camps keep swelling up daily, due to continued targeted killing of citizens, cases of acute food shortage have persisted and the situation in the camps has become direr. As security in towns keeps crumbling, even adults have started to die of hunger-related causes. The IDPs report that their food security situation in the camps is deteriorating further and that their repeated complaints are falling on deaf ears!

It is mid-Summer in South Sudan. Heat rages ominously in Juba, Bor and Malakal, where the greatest count of the IDPs is. Amidst this ghastly condition, the wide expanse of cramped tented shelters, provide too uncomfortable and dangerous habitat for large families. Domestic flies, mosquitoes and cockroaches infest the camp dwellings. This is definitely the reason for the high morbidity and fatality caseloads of bacterial diseases – bloody and watery diarrhoea (dysentery), malaria, typhoid, pneumonia and warm infestations. The daily patient workload is simply too overwhelming for the few medical personnel serving in the camps. Sanitary facilities constructed for the IDP camps are not only unsightly, but horribly unhygienic and disease traps.

To make matters worse, a few weeks ago armed government security forces overwhelmingly comprised of the President's tribesmen ransacked the makeshift toilets erected outside the perimeter fence of the IDP camps in Juba. This obviously worsened the condition and the over forty thousand displaced persons have to scramble for toilets and bathroom shelters. This sadistic, heartless act of the security forces is evidence that the government wants the IDPs dead at all costs.

The IDP camps have remained porous, as the security fences are constructed of see-through material. Recently some hard-hearted armed security personnel feeling no restraint, shot randomly inside the camps, killed and wounded the IDPs. These are consequences of ominous government media propaganda that the IDPs are rebels. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Mr. Michael Makuei Lueth, is on record to have fanned ill sentiments against the UN Peacekeepers that they are sheltering armed rebels disguised as asylum seekers. These loathsome sentiments are repeatedly echoed by the Presidential Spokesperson Mr. Ateny Wek Ateny.

It is out of question that the underlying causes of the unnecessary deaths and suffering of the IDPs is gross negligence from those who have mandate to protect civilians at the peak of a humanitarian crisis. Given the fact that the Juba government has since failed in its constitutional mandate, one would expect the organizations with humanitarian mandates to serve those people responsibly. It is sad to note that despite provisions on prioritising humanitarian assistance in the Cession of Hostilities agreement signed on 23 January 2014, very little has been done.

With regard to this painful reality, we urge the United Nations to consider finding a more radical solution toward mitigating the escalating crisis at the IDP camps. It should be borne in mind that on top of the unspeakable sanitary, health and living conditions, the camps are fast becoming insecure and too dangerous! Armed conflicts between disgruntled security

forces are recurrent and the state of uncertainty is looming. Malakal, which is under rebel control, is susceptible to air raids. Relocating the IDPs should be no option. We, therefore, urge IGAD and AU to exert more pressure on the belligerent forces to allow humanitarian access to IDP locations over South Sudan. It is becoming a real cause for alarm that more innocent people may die from non-firearm related causes if more humanitarian assistance is not delivered.

Signed:

**The Interim Secretariat of the Rally for Peace and Democracy in South Sudan  
March 08, 2014**