



Press Release

The United Nations celebrates its 70th anniversary with 70 achievements in South Sudan

JUBA, 23 October 2015 – The United Nations in South Sudan has highlighted 70 achievements that have benefited host communities in South Sudan, and renewed its unwavering commitment to peace and security, development, humanitarian assistance, and human rights as the organization celebrates the 70th anniversary of its founding.

Under the theme “Strong UN. Better World.” 22 UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, along with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) gathered today at a flag-raising ceremony in the UNMISS compound. Humanitarian and development workers, human rights advocates, peacekeepers and representatives of South Sudan have reaffirmed the importance of enabling “a strong UN to realize a better world.”

Emphasizing the significant role the UN has played in its 70 years, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message that it is a moment to recognize and honor the dedication of the many, who in the line of duty, made the ultimate sacrifice.

“Seven decades after its founding, the United Nations remains a beacon for all humanity. As we raise the blue flag of the United Nations – a banner of hope for everyone, let us reaffirm our commitment to a better and brighter future for all,” the Secretary-General said.

A photo exhibit highlighted 70 achievements of the United Nations family in South Sudan. Amongst them, the UN has:

- Conducted nearly 6,000 aircraft rotations, airdropping 100,000 metric tons of food since January 2014 – one of the largest humanitarian air operations in the world;
- Provided clean water to nearly 500,000 people; distributed long life insecticide nets to over 300,000 people, vaccinated over 3.4 million children under five years against polio and nearly 1.3 million children under 15 against measles since January 2015;
- Cleared 1,600 mines and 20,000 unexploded ordnance this year alone, and released one billion square meters of land to the community since 2004;
- Walked over 8,000 kilometers across Unity State, conducting patrols to protect civilians, braving the rainy season in 2015;
- Trained South Sudan National Police Service officers on the functioning of the Emergency Call Center, and also trained journalists on conflict sensitive reporting;
- Organized nearly 124,300 health consultations at clinics in the Protection of Civilians sites in Upper Nile State since January 2015;
- Delivered more than 19,000 survival kits with vital supplies to hard-to-reach areas across the country since June 2015;

- Assisted more than 265,000 refugees from Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Central African Republic with food, water, shelter, health care and basic education this year alone.

Speaking to over 300 UN staff, government officials, foreign dignitaries, and community leaders at the UNMISS compound, Ellen Margrethe Løj, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan said, "We might not have had a choice over what happened in South Sudan, but we do have a choice over how we respond. Today, to celebrate United Nations Day, we respond with joy and happiness. Let us respond with peace, never with violence."

The United Nations has supported South Sudan for nearly 50 years. The first UN agency to operate in this region was United Nations refugees agency, UNHCR in 1968. The objective was to receive and assist refugees fleeing from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (then Zaire). Since then, the organization has been providing life-saving assistance to South Sudanese people in need, as well as those from neighboring countries seeking refuge in South Sudan.

For more information on "the 70th anniversary with 70 achievements," visit http://unmiss.unmissions.org/Portals/unmiss/%20Press%20Releases/2015/October%202015/leaflet_rev2_pages_WEB.pdf

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