



# IGAD MVM



## Factsheet: IGAD Monitoring & Verification Mechanism

### Background

The IGAD Monitoring & Verification Mechanism (MVM) was established under the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) of 23rd January 2014, which was aimed at bringing an end to the recent military confrontation within South Sudan. The COHA was signed in Addis Ababa, by two Parties: the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army In Opposition. The MVM was established a month later.

The MVM operates under the overall leadership of IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, an 8-member East African bloc based in Djibouti. The MVM informs the mediation process, led by the Office of the IGAD Special Envoys for South Sudan, through monitoring, investigating, verifying and reporting on the two Parties' compliance with the COHA. Violations are publicly declared, once breaches have been thoroughly investigated and verified.



### IGAD-MVM's Mandate

The mandate of the IGAD-MVM is to monitor the implementation of the COHA Agreement by the two Parties and thus help bring an end to the conflict. This has resulted in great loss of life, the displacement of millions of people and destruction of property and livelihoods.

Through a system of on-site monitoring, the MVM oversees commitments by the two Parties to:

- **Cease military confrontations and withdraw forces**
- **Refrain from attacks on civilian populations and respect human rights**
- **Ensure humanitarian access, especially to displaced people**
- **Stop dissemination of hostile propaganda**

The MVM is an interim mechanism which will continue its activities until such time as a permanent ceasefire is put in place, and a political settlement is agreed. It has been established within a broader framework of mediation and negotiation processes, aimed at bringing sustainable peace and stability to South Sudan and restoring respect for the rule of law.

**A Status of Mission Agreement (SOMA)** was signed in May 2014 between IGAD and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan. It outlines the MVM's legal status, as well as the inviolability of its premises and assets. It safeguards the MVM's independence and freedom from interference and guarantees freedom of movement for all staff within the country. The SOMA also preserves the right of confidentiality of Mission communications, and grants immunity from arrest, detention or legal process to all MVM staff, in respect of any acts performed in the course of their duty.

## **MVM's Composition and Functions**

The IGAD-MVM, set up in February 2014, works under the leadership of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and reports to the Office of the IGAD Special Envoys in Addis Ababa. The MVM is generously supported by IGAD Member States and the IGAD Partners Forum, as well as through financial and in-kind contributions from the US, EU, China, Denmark, Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Sweden and Norway.



There are some 80 MVM staff altogether, based at the Joint Technical Committee Headquarters in Juba (JTC HQ) and in 6 Monitoring and Verification Teams in the 4 most conflict-affected states of South Sudan. Staff come from 12 contributing nations, including Burundi, China, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, UK and US. These personnel also represent contributions from the African Union, European Union and the Troika (US, UK and Norway).

The JTC Chairman is supported by a deputy, several advisers and liaison officers. They coordinate the field monitoring teams and help direct investigations. They also engage with key partners such as the AU and UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as stakeholders such as humanitarian organisations, Party representatives, community leaders, donors and members of the international community.



The six Monitoring and Verification Teams (MVTs) are deployed to the states of Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity & Central Equatoria, where hostilities have occurred. The MVTs can be deployed anywhere at short notice, but mainly patrol areas in Bor, Bentiu, Nassir, Juba, Melut and Malakal. Security and some logistical support for the teams is provided by UNMISS. Each team consists of 13 people, including team leaders, observers and support staff, as well as community liaison officers and representatives from the two Parties in conflict. To date, the SPLM/A (IO) representatives have not fully participated in the MVM for technical reasons.

The monitors, many of whom are former military officers, are skilled in investigation techniques and have received training in the implementation of the COHA, as well as international humanitarian and human rights law. They are especially aware of the prevalence of gender-based violence and child soldier recruitment, among other aspects of civilian protection.



## **IGAD-MVM Operations: Investigating Violations**

The task of the Monitoring and Verification Team is to monitor activities by the Parties, and armed groups either under their control or invited to support them. The MVTs patrol their areas of responsibility and gather information on potential violations which they immediately report to the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) at MVM headquarters. This can include reports of military fighting, movements of forces, blockage of aid routes, forced recruitment of child soldiers and attacks on civilians, as well as inciting propaganda and other activities prohibited by the COHA.



The MVM can initiate investigations based on its own findings. Allegations of violations can also be submitted to the MVM by the two Parties, by members of the public and communities, or third parties such as non-governmental and multilateral organizations.



Upon receipt of an allegation, the JTC Chairman initiates a preliminary investigation and may task an MVT field team to carry out further enquiries. This can include site visits, interviews with military forces, civil authorities, members of the public and humanitarian organizations. The MVT is entitled to visit any location and speak to anyone without hindrance. The Party representatives on the team can be present during all investigations and decision-making processes.

The JTC reviews these findings and determines whether there has indeed been a violation, and if further investigations are required. If the violation is substantiated, the MVM Chairman sends a consolidated report to the IGAD Special Envoys, with recommendations that the parties are required to take. The Envoys may request further information. Once verified, the Envoys publish the violation, and engage the parties and international community on follow-up action or disciplinary measures.



### **VIOLATIONS of the COHA**

**From February 2014 to mid-April 2015, the MVM reported 38 incidents which resulted in serious violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.**

**These included 18 violations by the GRSS and 23 by the SPLM/A (IO). Some incidents include violations by both parties and of more than one article.**





### **IGAD-MVM's Core Commitment**

The Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM) is committed to monitoring the two Parties' compliance with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in four areas: cessation of military confrontations, ensuring protection of civilians, ensuring humanitarian access and cessation of hostile propaganda.

The MVM works in an impartial, professional and thorough manner to investigate alleged breaches of the Agreement on the basis of credible information, complaints submitted by the parties and others, and direct requests from the IGAD Special Envoys.

The MVM is working for the betterment of the people of South Sudan, in support of the peace process, and in accordance with agreements, national laws & international law.



For further information, please see [www.southsudan.igad.int](http://www.southsudan.igad.int) or contact [comms@igadrss.org](mailto:comms@igadrss.org)