

# IGAD

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OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOYS  
FOR SOUTH SUDAN

## Summary of Latest Reports of Violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) Investigated and verified by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in South Sudan Reporting Period: 17 March 2015 – 31 March 2015

**Background:** The IGAD Monitoring & Verification Mechanism (MVM) was set up in February 2014 to monitor implementation of the COHA by the two Parties to the Agreement, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) and the SPLM/A In Opposition, as well as any armed groups under their control or invited to support them. The MVM has 6 Monitoring and Verification Teams (MVTs) deployed to the states of Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity, where hostilities have occurred. The Teams monitor violations through direct observation and investigation, including information-gathering from varied sources. There is an extensive process of fact-checking before each violation is verified and submitted to the Office of the IGAD Special Envoys for South Sudan, who carry out a further review. The following is a summary of the most recent verified violations between 17 March and 31 March 2015.

Reference	Date of Violation	Location	Nature of Violation	Responsible Party
V036	17 March 2015	Unity State Rubkona, Bentiu	<p><b>Incident: Ambush of GRSS vehicle in Rubkona</b></p> <p>There have been ongoing clashes in the Bentiu area between the Parties. The MVM verified two violations in the area in February 2015 involving hostilities: one incident attributed to the SPLM/A (IO) and one clash in which it was not possible to attribute responsibility.</p> <p>Bentiu was designated a Special Arrangement Area held by Government Forces, at the COHA Implementation Workshop in November 2014.</p> <p>On 17 March, there was an exchange of hostilities close to the UNMISS Base/POC camp near Rubkona, Unity State. On investigation, the Monitoring &amp; Verification Team (MVT) was able to verify that a Government Forces Land Cruiser had been ambushed by SPLM/A (IO) on the road between Rubkona town and Kilo 30. The ambush took place just 1.3 km north of the UNMISS base and POC camp. Government Forces said in unconfirmed reports, that two of its soldiers were killed in the ambush. There was then an exchange of fire close to the POC site, during which Government Forces responded forcefully. A number of civilians from the camp were caught in the crossfire: two women were killed and 9 people injured.</p>	SPLM/A (IO) Forces

			<p>The IGAD MVM determined that the ambush of the vehicle was a violation of the COHA by the SPLM/A (IO). It was also determined that fighting between both Parties took place so close to the POC camp as to constitute a danger to civilians.</p> <p><b>Articles of COHA Violated:</b>  <i>1.1 The Parties agree to cease all military actions aimed at each other</i></p> <p><b>Recommendations</b>  The MVM Joint Technical Committee (JTC) recommends that IGAD Special Envoys make strong representations to the SPLM/A (IO) to refrain from any hostile acts in Unity State, and to also respect the agreed status of the Special Arrangement Areas.</p> <p>The JTC further recommends that the Special Envoys impress on both Parties their duty to protect civilians, and to make every effort to ensure that civilians do not become victims of ill-directed crossfire or of incidents close to civilian areas.</p>	
<b>V037</b>	23-24 March 2015	<b>Unity State,</b> Guit County; Nhialdiu, Rubkona County	<p><b>Incident: Government Forces provoke clashes south of Bentiu, Unity State</b></p> <p>Tension remained high in the Bentiu area, as evidenced by previous violations. During recent weeks, the MVT observed a build-up of GRSS Forces in Bentiu.</p> <p>On 23 March, the MVT investigated reports of fighting south-east of Bentiu, and confirmed that Government Forces had launched attacks on Guit, an area under the control of SPLM/A (IO).  On 24 March, the MVT investigated reports of clashes south-west of Bentiu, and determined that Government Forces had launched an attack on Nhialdiu, an area under the control of SPLM/A (IO). There was no evidence to suggest that there had been shelling by SPLM/A (IO) Forces against GRSS positions prior to the shelling. A number of military casualties were reported.</p> <p>The MVM Joint Technical Committee determined that there was a violation of the COHA, as Government Forces mounted offensive operations against SPLM/A IO on 23, 24 March.</p> <p><b>Articles of COHA Violated:</b>  <i>1.1 The Parties agree to cease all military actions aimed at each other</i></p>	<b>GRSS Forces</b>

			<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The situation in Unity State remains volatile and tense. It is the recommendation of the JTC that the Special Envoys make strong representations to both Parties to refrain from any offensive actions in Unity State.</p> <p>It is further recommended that the IGAD Special Envoys put pressure on both Parties to abide the agreement reached at the COHA Workshop of November 2014 and respect the provisions of the Special Arrangement Areas.</p>	
<b>V038</b>	25 March 2015	<p><b>Jonglei State</b> Ayod Town, Ayod County</p>	<p><b>Incident: SPLM/A (IO) attack Government Forces position in Ayod</b> Ayod, Jonglei State, was designated a Special Arrangement Area held by Government Forces, during the COHA Implementation Workshop in November 2014.</p> <p>On 25 March, it was reported to the MVT that SPLM/A (IO) Forces had attacked the Government military site in Ayod, and been repulsed. After investigation, the MVT determined that this attack did take place. SPLM/A (IO) Forces came from the north and assembled at the airstrip before attacking the base. A number of fatalities among SPLM/A (IO) Forces was confirmed, as well as some soldiers from the GRSS. No civilians were killed.</p> <p>The MVM Joint Technical Committee therefore determined that the SPLM/A (IO) were responsible for a violation of the COHA, in mounting offensive operations against a Government Forces position on 25 March 2015.</p> <p><b>Articles of COHA Violated:</b> <i>1.1 The Parties agree to cease all military actions aimed at each other</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The JTC recommends that IGAD Special Envoys put pressure on both Parties to respect the COHA and refrain from all military actions.</p> <p>It is further recommended that the IGAD Special Envoys urge both Parties to abide by the agreement reached at the COHA Workshop of November 2014 and respect the provisions of the Special Arrangement Areas.</p>	<b>SPLM/A (IO) Forces</b>

**Attribution and Type of Violations for the period of 28 February 2014 to 31 March 2015**

As of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015, in the past 13 months the MVM has reported a total of 38 incidents which resulted in violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. This includes 19 violations by the GRSS and 23 violations by the SPLM/A (IO). Some incidents include violations by both Parties and of more than one article and in more than one state.

Incidents including Violations	Attributed to Government Forces/GRSS	Attributed to SPLM/A (IO)	Article 1 Cessation of Hostilities	Article 2 Cessation of Hostile Propaganda	Article 3 Protection of Civilians	Article 4 Humanitarian Access	Article 7 Operations of the MVT
38	19	23	32	1	19	6	4

Violation by Location	UPPER NILE	UNITY	JONGLEI	JUBA
	22	13	7	2