

Change in behaviour for South Sudan actors 'long overdue,' Security Council told

20 July 2017 – Highlighting challenges facing South Sudan, a senior United Nations official today underlined that overcoming obstacles borne of a volatile combination of insecurity and political uncertainty is critical for the war-torn country to be put on the track to peace and stability.

The security environment remains extremely volatile and South Sudan is in need of an effective and credible ceasefire, El Ghassim Wane, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, told the Security Council today, noting reports of active military operations in parts of the country since the Government's announcement of a unilateral ceasefire in June.

In his briefing, Mr. Wane also noted that while the Government has publicly expressed its commitment to create an environment conducive for the conduct of the National Dialogue, certain recent decisions seem to contradict those pledges, such as blocking of key media websites after their alleged criticism of the authorities.

Every effort should be made to ensure that [the Dialogue] is inclusive, transparent, takes place in a free and secure environment, has clear outcomes that complements the ARCISS [Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan] and is supported by a sufficiently broad political consensus from all political forces in the country, he added.

Further, noting the importance of an Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD, an eight-country trade bloc in Africa)-led revitalization process, the UN official urged the Council to continue its support for the process and called on national stakeholders to embrace it as a genuine opportunity to restore peace in South Sudan.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. Wane stressed the importance of the unity in the region and the need for the international community to call on the leadership of all sides in South Sudan that the current situation in the country is unacceptable and unsustainable.

A change in behaviour is long overdue, and the pursuit of political objectives through violence for which the people of South Sudan continue to bear a heavy toll should not be allowed to continue, he stated.