

**JOINT STATEMENT BY
THE SOUTH SUDAN RED CROSS (SSRC),
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)
AND
THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC)
ON THE MOVEMENT'S RESPONSE FOLLOWING THE UPSURGE IN THE CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN**

Background

Violent clashes erupted on Friday 8 July between security forces around the presidential palace in central Juba and continued with varying degrees of intensity throughout the weekend. Heavy casualties were reported; numbers remain unclear but are feared to be in the hundreds. It is estimated that tens of thousands of civilians fled the city. Some sought safe haven in the South Sudan Red Cross (SSRC) compound, churches and other institutions.

On 9 July the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the SSRC were asked by the warring parties to collect dead bodies but were impeded by continued fighting. Medical supplies were nevertheless delivered to Juba teaching hospital that same day.

On 10 July, the SSRC warehouse – clearly marked with the red cross emblem – was bombed, seriously damaged and looted.

The ICRC and the SSRC have increasingly been able to move around the city since 11 July, when a ceasefire was declared by both parties. ICRC and SSRC teams distributed emergency food rations in several locations hosting displaced people, delivered medical supplies and began dead-body management. A surgical team was deployed to Juba military hospital. A water treatment plant was restored to working order and water was distributed by tankers to various sites housing displaced people, establishing a daily production capacity of 700,000 litres. This initiative is particularly important to stave off the looming threat of a cholera outbreak.

In the past two days, some of the internally displaced people have started returning home. After a complete shutdown, markets are slowly starting to reopen. But in spite of the ceasefire, the situation continues to be highly tense, volatile and confusing in Juba and many locations throughout the country. Mobilization of armed groups and violent skirmishes have been reported from various hotspots, such as Equatoria, Bahr el Ghazal and Unity.

The security of all Movement staff and volunteers continues to be a major concern. While all international staff have been accounted for, this is not true of the local staff and volunteers, although there are no reports so far of injury or death. Some staff from the ICRC and National Societies working internationally (hereafter "participating National Societies PNS") were relocated on 12 and 13 July by ICRC plane, with a total of 59 delegates flown to Entebbe in Uganda, where they will either be on standby or work remotely. In Juba, the ICRC is maintaining a core team of 35 international staff and continues to operate out of the other three sub-delegations in the country.

Movement coordination

In January 2016, the ICRC, the SSRC and the IFRC signed a Movement Coordination Agreement, for which seven participating National Societies expressed their support in writing. The Agreement commits all Movement partners to maximizing the strength of the Movement by responding to the evolving humanitarian needs in a coordinated, complementary and collective manner.

To achieve this, and as soon as the situation allows, the SSRC, the ICRC, the IFRC and the PNS will resume the Movement Platform meetings in Juba. The platform has the power to make decisions

about the response strategy, including public communication. Other levels of the Movement coordination mechanism, at the operational level, will be activated as the response to the current situation evolves.

Roles and responsibilities

The main needs at present are in relation to caring for the wounded, burying the dead, providing emergency relief to the displaced and securing the water supply.

As per the Movement Coordination Agreement, the ICRC provides the general direction and coordination of the Movement in terms of protection and assistance for people affected by the armed conflict, working closely with the SSRC and the IFRC. It also takes the lead in coordinating operational security and guiding all Movement partners on appropriate measures to take. The ICRC will shortly review its definition of restricted zones and inform all Movement partners.

The SSRC and the ICRC are addressing the immediate humanitarian needs in the crisis. The SSRC Emergency Action Teams, by themselves or along with ICRC teams, are the first-line responders for those affected by the recent fighting.

As part of its role in developing the SSRC's capacity, the IFRC stands ready to support the SSRC in order to optimize its operational response management.

PNS with ongoing projects outside Juba are adapting their activities and are being kept informed of emergency measures. Once needs have been more fully assessed, findings will be shared so that relief efforts can be channelled in the most appropriate way.

As representatives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, we resolve to do our utmost to help those affected by the conflict in South Sudan and appeal to the fighting parties to respect the civilians, wounded, medical workers, medical facilities and humanitarian organizations.

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For the SSRC



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