

**CTSAMVM CONFIDENTIAL**  
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**TO:** Lt. Gen. Rabi Mujung Emmanuel (ITGoNU)  
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**FROM:** The Chairperson, CTSAMVM

**DATE:** 25 October 2022

**SUBJECT: CTSAMVM REPORT 2022/21 KILLING, LOOTING AND ARRESTS IN  
EASTERN EQUATORIA STATE**

Dear CTSAMVM Technical Committee Senior Party Representatives,

Please find attached a report on violations of the R-ARCSS which took place in Eastern Equatoria State in July 2022

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

  
Lieutenant General Asrat Deniro Amad  
Chairperson



**Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification  
Mechanism**

**CTSAMVM REPORT 2022/21**  
**KILLING, LOOTING AND ARRESTS IN EASTERN EQUATORIA STATE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Ikotos County is under the administration of the SPLM/A-IO. There is an SSPDF garrison in Ikotos. The relationship between the SSPDF and the County administration has been strained, with the SSPDF accusing members of the SPLM/A-IO of belonging to NAS.

On 17 July 2022 an SSPDF soldier was shot dead in the Tojuru area of the town following an altercation. Soldiers from the SSPDF garrison then went into the town, shot and killed two men and looted houses and shops. Several houses were burnt. The two men who were killed were dragged from their homes and shot in cold blood. Another man was injured. Civilians fled to NGO and religious compounds where they took refuge until the following day.

On 18 July a unit from the Tiger Division was deployed to Ikotos to restore order. The Tiger Division soldiers stabilised the situation and made the SSPDF soldiers return some of the goods they had looted. They stayed for 2 days.

On 31 July 2022 the County Secretary of Ikotos County SPLM/A-IO (also the deputy head of Ikotos Primary School) was arrested in Ikotos by SSPDF MI. He was transferred to Torit and (as at 20 October 2022) remains in custody.

On 5 September Brigadier Adonge SPLM/A-IO from Ikotos and another senior SPLM/A-IO officer went to Torit to take part in the NUF graduation ceremony. They were arrested by the SSPDF – apparently for being involved in the 17 July shooting incident - and transferred to Juba. These arrests are the subject of ongoing investigations by CTSAMVM.

By rampaging through Ikotos following the shooting of the SSPDF soldier on 17 July 2022, looting property and shooting two men to death the SSPDF company in Ikotos not only acted in clear violation of the R-ARCSS, but also failed to comply with their obligations under the R-ARCSS to protect civilians. By arresting and holding a civilian in military custody, the SSPDF also acted in violation of the R-ARCSS.



## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background

- a. The security situation in the Ikotos area has been relatively calm.
- b. The administration of Ikotos County is SPLM/A-IO, as agreed following the signing of the R-ARCSS. CTSAMVM had received information from multiple sources to suggest there have been tensions between the SPLM/A-IO civilian administration in Ikotos and the SSPDF. There is an SSPDF Company in Ikotos from SSPDF 7 Division.

### 2. Allegations:

- a. On 19 July 2022 CTSAMVM received allegations from Maj Gen Gabriel Odongo of Irube Cantonment Site (but resident in Ikotos) that on 17 July 2022 there had been an incident in Ikotos involving SSPDF troops shooting local people and looting property. CTSAMVM made enquiries and confirmed that there had been an incident, following which the SSPDF had sent a detachment of the Tiger Division to restore order.
- b. CTSAMVM later received allegations of the arrest by the SSPDF of:
  - i. The SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary on 31 July 2022
  - ii. Brigadier Adong and other SPLM/A-IO personnel on 5 September 2022

- 3. Aim: The aim of this report is to present the findings of CTSAMVM investigations into alleged or suspected violations of provisions of applicable agreements, to attribute responsibility for breaches of the agreements, and to make recommendations with regard to compliance actions that will help foster peace and reconciliation.

4. Methodology:

- a. The investigations were undertaken with the full participation of National Monitors.
- b. The CTSAMVM Monitoring and Verification Team (MVT) based in Torit:
  - i. Met with the County Commissioner of Ikotos County, Joseph Lokalong, in Torit on 21 September 2021.
  - ii. Undertook a patrol to Ikotos from 26-30 September 2022 during which a wide number of witnesses were interviewed including:
    - (1) The Executive Director of Ikotos County; Police inspector and head of CID; The Directors of the Prison Service, Wildlife and Fire Brigade/Civil Defence.
    - (2) The Deputy Chairman of the SPLM/A-IO in Ikotos; the Ikotos Paramount Chief.
    - (3) The brother and other family members of the two men killed in the incident.
    - (4) Civilian witnesses including a returnee from Uganda and a teacher; two people (including a shopkeeper) whose properties were looted; Youth and Women's Group leaders.
    - (5) The Deputy Commander of the SSPDF Company based in Ikotos (Note: The Commander was away at the time of the visit)
  - iii. Met with the recently-appointed Commander of 7 Division SSPDF in Torit on 5 October 2022.
- c. The CTSAMVM MVT based in Juba visited Giyarda Military Prison on 6 October 2022.
- d. The standard of proof used by CTSAMVM to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to verify that a Party is not in compliance with the provisions of the Agreements is "reasonable grounds to believe that the incident that is the subject of the investigation occurred." This is in accordance with accepted practice for monitoring mechanisms and human-



rights- and humanitarian- entities and signifies that sufficient facts and evidence have been collected to conclude that an event has occurred.

## **FINDINGS**

### **5. Tensions in Ikotos:**

- a. The administration of Ikotos County, has, since the signing of the R-ARCSS, been with the SPLM/A-IO. According to the County Commissioner, relations between the governing SPLM/A-IO administration and the SPLM/SSPDF are strained. Witnesses in Ikotos corroborated this; members of civil organisations and local SPLM/A-IO members alleged they were harassed and arrested by the SSPDF because they were SPLM/A-IO.
  - b. The County Commissioner alleged that the SSPDF accused SPLM/A-IO members of being NAS; again this was corroborated by witnesses in Ikotos. The Deputy Commander of the SSPDF Company based in Ikotos told CTSAMVM that SPLM/A-IO forces under Brigadier Adonge had changed their allegiance to NAS; this allegation was repeated by the Police Inspector in Ikotos. CTSAMVM could find no civilian witnesses to the presence of NAS in Ikotos: the Paramount Chief in Ikotos categorically stated there were no NAS in the area, and accusations by the SSPDF that local SPLM/A-IO members had changed allegiance to NAS were false.
6. Shooting incident on 17 July 2022: At approximately 14.00 Hrs an SSPDF soldier was shot dead in the Tojuru area of Ikotos town. Shortly after this incident, soldiers from the SSPDF company in the town went to the area where the incident had taken place and started shooting at people. Two men – one a Prisons Officer and one a member of the Wildlife service – were shot dead and another man wounded. Civilians fled and took refuge in various religious and NGO compounds or ran away to other locations. That night houses were looted and several were burnt. The following day a detachment of the Tiger Division arrived to stabilise the situation. CTSAMVM have been able to determine that:

- a. On the early afternoon of 17 July 2022 an SSPDF Corporal bicycled into the Tojuru part of Ikotos. CTSAMVM has eye-witness testimony that he was drinking with people and an argument arose during which he was shot dead. CTSAMVM could find no eyewitnesses who identified the person who shot him. The SSPDF in Ikotos claimed the man who shot him was a member of the SPLM/A-IO who had defected to NAS with Brigadier Adonge; this allegation was repeated by the Police Inspector. Both the SSPDF and Police inspector claimed that Brigadier Adonge had infiltrated armed men into Ikotos and was responsible for the shooting. CTSAMVM could find no civilian witnesses to substantiate this claim, and no evidence to suggest the killing of the SSPDF soldier was politically motivated and anything other than a criminal act. The County Commissioner stated that Brigadier Adonge was in Ikotos at the time of the incident attending the funeral of his mother, and that he advised him to leave once the SSPDF started shooting in the town in order to avoid any kind of involvement.
- b. Very soon after the SSPDF soldier was shot and killed, soldiers from the SSPDF barracks in Ikotos went into the town and started shooting. The County Commissioner (who was at the Catholic Church at the time) said he called the SSPDF commander, Captain David Witwuar, and asked him to stop but was told “this is what you have been looking for”. CTSAMVM has eyewitness testimony of the killing of two men: a group of about 9 SSPDF soldiers went to the house of Corporal Andrew Lobwaga Lokomo of the Wildlife Service, took him outside into the compound and shot him dead in front of his wife and family. They then went to his brother Lomodong Mark’s house – about 30 metres away – and shot him dead as well before leaving the compound without saying anything. Lomodong Mark was a Prison Warder posted to the prison in Torit but was in Ikotos visiting his family (this was confirmed by the Director of Prisons in Ikotos). Just before these killings the same group of soldiers had met the brother of both of the victims, Mario Othiongo, who was going to his home from church having heard shooting. They were going to shoot him, but one of the soldiers recognised him as a pastor and instead they told him to go to the Police



Station; he fetched his family and took refuge in the DOT compound. One other person was shot and wounded, a watchman for the Red Cross who was hit in both legs and transferred to Torit and then Juba for treatment. CTSAMVM was unable to determine the circumstances of his being shot.

- c. The Deputy Commander of the SSPDF Company in Ikotos, Lieutenant Francis Aken, claimed that the two men killed had been caught in crossfire between the SSPDF and the forces of Brigadier Adonge. CTSAMVM found no evidence to suggest that any other forces were involved in the shooting, and as stated above CTSAMVM has eyewitness testimony that the two men had been killed deliberately and in cold blood.
- d. Following the shooting incident most of the locals remained in religious or NGO compounds for safety. That afternoon and night houses were looted and several burnt by the SSPDF. CTSAMVM interviewed several people including a shopkeeper and a returnee who reported they had lost household items and money. The shopkeeper had everything of value taken. Many other houses were looted and at least 2 burnt. The houses of Brigadier Adonge and 3 other SPLM/A-IO officers were raided and looted.
- e. On 18 July 2022 a detachment of the Tiger Division arrived to restore order. The County Commissioner called an emergency Security Committee meeting at which the officer from the Tiger Division explained that his mission was to protect civilians and return normalcy. The unit was in Ikotos for two days, during which time some of the items looted by the SSPDF were recovered and returned to their owners. The Tiger Division officer addressed the public and encouraged them to return to their homes; he also said that soldiers should protect civilians not harass them. The County Commissioner and other Ikotos residents interviewed by CTSAMVM said that the Tiger Division unit acted very professionally and was effective in restoring peace to the county.

7. The arrest of SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary:

- a. Mr Omui Velen, the SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary, was arrested by the SSPDF in Ikotos on 31 July 2022. This was reported to CTSAMVM by the County Commissioner during their meeting with him on 21 September 2021 and confirmed by the County Executive Secretary, the SPLM/A-IO Deputy County Chairperson and a teacher in Ikotos. The teacher was an eyewitness to the arrest. The Deputy Commander of the SSPDF Company in Ikotos denied any knowledge of the arrest.
  - b. The County Commissioner claimed that the SSPDF alleged that the SPLM/A-IO County Secretary had admitted to being a member of NAS. He asked to see the SPLM/A-IO County Secretary in detention at the SSPDF barracks in Ikotos and did so on 1 August 2022. He stated that the SPLM/A-IO County Secretary looked as if he had been "tortured". The County Secretary stated he had not admitted to being a member of NAS, but that he was County Secretary of the SPLM/A-IO and Deputy Head Teacher of Ikotos Secondary School.
  - c. The SPLM/A-IO County Secretary was transferred to 7 Division SSPDF in Torit. The County Commissioner claimed to have made representations to the Governor to have him released, but according to the County Commissioner he is (at time of writing) still in custody and has been seen in custody by his family. When CTSAMVM met with the Commander of 7 Division, Maj General Angon Chece, on 5 October 2022 he said he was new to the Division and had no information about the SPLM/A-IO County Secretary.
8. The arrest of Brigadier Adonge and other SPLM/A-IO personnel on 5 September 2022:



- a. On 9 September 2022 CTSAMVM was informed that on 5 September Brig Gen Adonge Jimmy Gabriel from SPLM/A-IO Irube Cantonment Site along with 3 bodyguards was arrested in Torit. He went to Torit to attend the graduation of NUF Trainees; CTSAMVM was told this by the County Commissioner and several witnesses in Ikotos. He was apparently accused with involvement in the incident in Ikotos on 17 July 2022 (see paragraph 6 above).
- b. On 21 September 2022 Three relatives of Brigadier Adongo visited CTSAMVM in Juba. They stated that 2 Brigadiers (the other being Brigadier Santo Loyeren) had been arrested on 5 September in Torit with 2 bodyguards. They informed CTSAMVM that they had been told by SSPDF 7 Division that the prisoners had been moved to Giyarda Military Prison in Juba on 15 September.
- c. CTSAMVM was informed in Ikotos that when news of Brigadier Adongo's arrest became known, 44 of 80 SPLM/A-IO NUF trainees who were heading to Torit from Ikotos for graduation decided to turn back, so only 36 graduated on 19 September 2022.
- d. CTSAMVM tried to visit Giyarda Military Prison but, despite the efforts of National Monitors were unable to visit until 6 October 2022, when they met with Lt Gen Thiik Hol, Commander Ground Forces, Maj Gen Jal Macith Jal, Deputy Director for Administration and Col Deng Mareng, Chief of Administration, Ground Forces. They were given no information about the arrested officers, but were asked whether or not they were still SPLM/A-IO or whether they had been integrated. The matter was then taken up with CTSAMVM Senior National Liaison Officers (SNLOs) who are pursuing the matter with senior officers in order to confirm the whereabouts of Brigadiers Adongo, Loyeren and their bodyguards.

## **ASSESSMENT**

9. It is the assessment of CTSAMVM that there is no evidence that the killing of the SSPDF soldier in Ikotos on 17 July 2022 was anything other than a criminal act. The response by the SSPDF Company based in Ikotos demonstrated ill-discipline and was disproportionate. There is no evidence that any other people other than the SSPDF were involved in the shooting, and CTSAMVM has clear eyewitness statements that the two men killed were shot by the SSPDF in cold blood. There is no doubt that SSPDF soldiers looted civilian property and burnt several houses. CTSAMVM interviewed a number of victims of looting, and were also told that the Tiger Division unit which arrived on 18 July 2022 forced some SSPDF soldiers to return stolen goods.
10. There is tension in Ikotos between the SPLM/A-IO administration and the SSPDF. Local community leaders and SPLM/A-IO members claim they are harassed by the SSPDF. The SSPDF believe that elements of the SPLM/A-IO led by Brigadier Adonge have changed allegiance to NAS, and that because Brigadier Adonge was in Ikotos for the funeral of his mother he was responsible for the killing of the SSPDF soldier. CTSAMVM found no evidence that this was the case.
11. The SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary is a civilian. CTSAMVM has eyewitness evidence that he was arrested and beaten by the SSPDF in Ikotos and is still being held by the SSPDF in Torit (at time of writing).
12. Brigadiers Adonge and Loyeren travelled to Torit on 5 September 2022 in order to take part in the planning of the NUF graduation parade scheduled for 19 September 2022. When they arrived they reported to the military authorities and were summarily arrested and, according to the latest information available to CTSAMVM, remain in custody in Juba. These arrests are not in the spirit of the R-ARCSS and go against the principles that underpin the formation of the NUF.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

13. CTSAMVM concludes that:



- a. By summarily killing 2 men and looting civilian property in Ikotos on 17 July 2022 the SSPDF acted in clear violation of the R-ARCSS, specifically Article 2.1.10.5: "Acts of hostility, intimidation, violence or attacks against the following: civilian population including IDPs.....". The SSPDF also failed with its obligations to protect civilians under Article: 2.1.10.7.4: ".....protection of human rights of civilians at all times to ensure safety and dignity of individuals and communities."
- b. By arresting and detaining a civilian (Mr Omui Velen, the SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary) - without any due process or involvement of the civilian police – the SSPDF acted in clear violation of the R-ARCSS, specifically Articles 2.1.10.5 and 2.1.10.7.4.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

14. During the incident of 17 July 2022, the SSPDF unit in Ikotos displayed a complete lack of discipline. Rather than acting to protect civilians it went on the rampage, looting property and killing two men in cold blood. It is significant that the military authorities thought it necessary to restore order by deploying a unit of the Tiger Division, and that the Tiger Division forced soldiers from the SSPDF to return some of the good stolen. CTSAMVM has no evidence to suggest those soldiers guilty of crimes in Ikotos on 17 July 2022 are being held to account. CTSAMVM recommends that the SSPDF unit in Ikotos is withdrawn, or at least replaced by an NUF unit as soon as one is available.
15. By continuing to hold Mr Omui Velen, the SPLM/A-IO Ikotos County Secretary the SSPDF continues to be in violation of the R-ARCSS. CTSAMVM recommends he is released immediately.
16. CTSAMVM will continue to monitor and report on the case of the detained Brigadiers Adonge and Loyeren. CTSAMVM calls on the SSPDF to cooperate fully with CTSAMVM in this matter in accordance with the R-ARCSS.