



JUSTICE
& PEACE

Bishop Gassis Relief & Rescue Foundation

Bishop Macram Max Gassis Statement on Twic-Ngok Conflict

14th March 2022

I wish to express my concern at the recent fighting along the border of the Abyei Special Administrative Area and Twic County, and I call on all parties to cease hostilities and seek a nonviolent resolution to their conflict through dialogue.

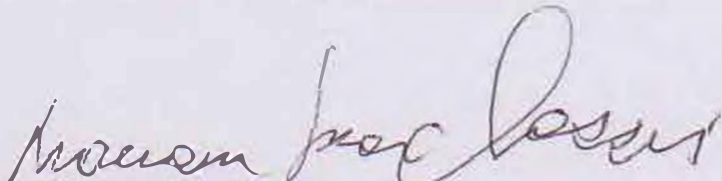
While there are local issues at stake, this conflict is also being fuelled by national dynamics, and in particular I call on politicians, both local and national, to refrain from exacerbating the situation and to work for peace and justice for all communities.

As the Holy Father Pope Francis said in his World Day of Peace message in 2017: "Violence is not the cure for our broken world. Countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering, because vast amounts of resources are diverted to military ends and away from the everyday needs of young people, families experiencing hardship, the elderly, the infirm and the great majority of people in our world" and in his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*: "every act of violence committed against a human being is a wound; every violent death diminishes us as people... Violence leads to more violence... We must break this cycle which seems inescapable".

I wish to condemn recent attacks on church and humanitarian vehicles and personnel in the area. On the 7th March 2022, a convoy of clearly marked vehicles from a church humanitarian organisation travelling from Abyei to Turalei was stopped twice by armed men, and the occupants, including priests, were threatened at gunpoint. The church and the humanitarian organisations are there to help the people - "young people, families experiencing hardship, the elderly, the infirm" and others, to borrow the Holy Father's words. They are not involved in the conflict, and I urge all parties to respect them and facilitate their work.

Let the Dinka people of Twic County and Abyei, and their national politicians, set an example to the nation and the world by breaking the cycle of violence and agreeing to resolve their differences through nonviolent means, to live together peacefully as sisters and brothers. "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9).



+ 

+ Bishop Macram Max Gassis

Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of El Obeid

Founder & Chair of Bishop Gassis Relief and Rescue Foundation