

# 'We will not give up on looking for peace for South Sudan': UN deputy chief

In a visit to South Sudan on Tuesday, the UN Deputy Secretary-General spoke mother-to-mother with displaced women, pledging that she and other senior women leaders from the international community will not give up on the hope for peace for their nation.

Amina Mohammed spearheaded a delegation to the war-torn country that included Bineta Diop, the African Union's Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, and Bience Gawanas, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa.

At a UN camp in the northwestern city of Wau, the three women—who come from different countries on the continent—met with South Sudanese women affected by gender-based violence.

Ms. Mohammed shared news from the recent African Union summit, which concluded in Mauritania on Monday, where heads of state called on South Sudan's leaders to be accountable for peace.

She added that the UN also is doing its part.

"Unfortunately, so far we have failed. It's the truth. So, there is not peace in South Sudan," she said.

"But as mothers, because of the children, we will not give up. Not on peace. Not from Bineta, from Amina, from Bience: We will not give up on looking for peace for South Sudan."



UN Photo/Isaac Billy

Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed took a message of hope and peace to South Sudan.

South Sudan will celebrate its seventh year of independence on 11 July. But since 2013, the world's youngest country has been consumed by fighting which has killed scores and left some two million citizens displaced within its borders and more than two million more fleeing into neighbouring countries as refugees.

The UN Deputy Secretary-General urged the women of South Sudan not to abandon their dreams for peace.

She said: "You must not be tired. You must have hope. We must find ways to close the gap between the tragedy today, and your dream of tomorrow."

Ms. Mohammed pointed out that all the women present—including her delegation, who she referred to as her "sisters"—were either mothers, wives, or daughters. Likewise, every man who perpetrates violence against them either is a son, brother, or husband.

The mother of six reminded her audience that all men come from women, and she encouraged them to "sow the seed of respect for a woman in the heart of your son."

But to address the present problem of achieving peace, she underscored the importance of women's presence at the negotiating table.

"So, we will fight for your right for your voice to be where it's supposed to be," she stated.