



INFORMATION NOTE

UNMISS-Supported Mobile Court Concludes in Bentiu

BENTIU/JUBA, 26 October 2025 – The UNMISS supported mobile court in Bentiu, Unity State successfully concluded its proceedings on 24 October 2025 after addressing 135 criminal and civil cases, including murder and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The Bentiu mobile court, an initiative led by the Unity State Government, the Judiciary of South Sudan, and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, with support from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), began hearing cases on 29 September.

The court adjudicated 45 criminal cases, convicting 40 people; while 18 were acquitted, or cases against them were dismissed. Moreover, combined with the advanced deployment of the investigation team on 22 September, it ensured the release of 99 people who were wrongfully incarcerated or had otherwise already served their sentences. Six cases involved members of the security forces.

Notably, the mobile court delivered decisions on 6 SGBV cases, resulting in 2 convictions. In addition, the mobile court granted 22 divorces, including 17 brought by women who had been subjected to SGBV related criminal acts, such as forced marriage and/or domestic violence.

“Through the Bentiu mobile court, the Unity State government and the Judiciary of South Sudan initiated the process of re-establishing the Judiciary in the State after 12 years of absence, which will enable permanent access to justice, particularly for women and children, those living in poverty, and other marginalized segments of society” said Anees Ahmed, the Director of UNMISS’ Rule of Law Advisory Section.

“UNMISS is supporting these joint efforts as the six mobile court deployments in Unity State since February 2024 demonstrated significant demand for access to justice through the formal justice system given its contributions to breaking cycles of violence, reducing abuse and exploitation of women and children, and fostering conditions for durable peace.”

In August 2025, permanent judges were appointed to Unity for the first time since 2013, enabling the State government and Judiciary to start taking steps to re-establish the Judiciary. On 29 September, the Unity State Governor officially returned the court premises to the Judiciary at the opening of the mobile court, which enables the formal justice system to hold court proceedings. While the judges will temporarily depart following the completion of the mobile court, they are soon expected to return. UNMISS will continue to support the government and Judiciary to implement the necessary requirements for judicial processes to permanently operate in Bentiu.

The Bentiu mobile court was funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Juba.

Note to Editors:

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- *The Bentiu mobile court operated from 29 September to 24 October 2025, while an advanced investigation team deployed on 22 September.*
- *Over 150 criminal cases were reported during the investigation mission and mobile court.*
- *In 2024 and 2025, UNMISS supported the deployment of five mobile courts across Unity State, including the first courts in Koch, Mayom and Leer counties since 2013. The growing demand for justice also prompted the Governor to support a mobile court in Bentiu in December 2024. While no cases were decided by the formal justice system in Unity State in 2023, mobile court judges decided 449 cases in 2024 and 2025.*

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