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July 19, 2021

Hon. Aleu Ayieny Aleu,
Governor Warrap State,
Republic of South Sudan

Cc: Hon. Justice. Ruben Madol, Minister for Justice and
Constitutional Affairs, Republic of South Sudan

Transmitted via email: Albino Kuek Deng, Spokesperson to Warrap state
governor.

RE: Preliminary Findings on Summary Executions in Warrap State

Dear Honorable Governor,

I am writing on behalf of Human Rights Watch to share the preliminary findings of our research into reports that suspected criminals were summarily executed by state security forces in Warrap State, and to request your response to several questions.

Human Rights Watch is an international human rights organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights abuses in over 90 countries worldwide. We have carried out research in the Sudans for more than 20 years and continue to research and report on important human rights concerns in both countries.

Between June and July, we investigated reports that suspected criminals in Warrap state had been executed, including reports that customary authorities and commissioners had given orders of shoot to kill. We are aware that intercommunal and interclan violence in Warrap escalated between April and December 2020, leading to killings, burned homes, looted property and tens of thousands of civilians' displaced. We are also aware that since your appointment as governor on January 28, you toured several parts of the state to [disseminate your strategy](#) including on how to address violent crime.

Witnesses and other credible sources in interviews with Human Rights Watch described how soldiers executed five civilians in Nyang Akoch on April 11, 2021, including two boys (i.e. under 18-years of age). Four of those killed had been detained between 6-11 April reportedly in conjunction with the ambush of passenger vehicle on the Wau-Tonj road where one person died and another was injured. The fifth victim, an elderly man, had been arrested on April 11, the day of the killings.

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Similarly, during the course of our research we heard from witnesses that soldiers executed 3 men accused of murder in Kuajok on April 26. These executions were reportedly carried out to satisfy a demand by communities and customary chiefs.

We understand that none of the victims was formally charged or brought before a court to answer to the alleged crimes. Witnesses and other credible sources said that you gave the order for the executions on both April 11 and 26.

Human Rights Watch strives to reflect all perspectives in our research and publications. We would therefore appreciate your response to the following questions and any other information you can provide to ensure your views are reflected in our reporting:

1. What strategy have you adopted to address insecurity and intercommunal violence in Warrap state?
2. What authority have you given customary authorities to address intercommunal violence and murder and violent crimes?
3. Could you confirm whether soldiers executed five civilians in Nyang Akoch on April 11, 2021 and 3 civilians in Kuajok on April 26? Did you issue orders for these executions? Were the accused individuals ever charged or presented before customary law or formal judicial authorities?
4. Have you ordered an investigation in response to complaints that the executions were not lawful?

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your responses to our inquiries by **July 26** so that we can include them in our report. We would also welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you further over the phone or other medium.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our South Sudan researcher Nyagoah Pur.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Laetitia Bader



Horn of Africa Director
Human Rights Watch