



## Media Release

16 June 2011

### Sudan conflict kills civilians, and opens old scars in Melbourne

Anglicans in Melbourne, where large numbers of Sudanese refugees have settled, have expressed deep concern about escalating violence in Sudan that threatens to plunge the beleaguered country into another civil war.

Misha Coleman, CEO of Anglicord, an Anglican overseas aid agency based in East Melbourne, said that the conflict was rapidly becoming a humanitarian crisis.

“Protecting civilians must be of the highest priority,” Ms Coleman said. “In South Kordofan, the violence between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) has already claimed civilian lives and contravenes the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.”

“The only way to address the suffering of the civilian population is through an immediate cessation of hostilities by all parties,” she said.

“Melbourne has a large Sudanese population, many of whom are refugees and still bear the scars of previous conflict,” said the Chair of the Multicultural Ministry ???, Bishop Philip Huggins. “We hold the people of Sudan in our prayers, and as a community we will continue to offer what support we can to them.” [I’ve asked for more of a quote here]

South Kordofan is on the border between north and south, and tensions have been rising since the referendum in January, which will see the south officially secede from the north in July. Increasingly violent border disputes mean that thousands are fleeing the region in fear of all out war. The conflict is making it too difficult and dangerous for humanitarian agencies in the border region to reach the thousands of displaced people who need shelter, food and water.

Anglicord has opened an appeal in partnership with Act Alliance, a global alliance of churches and related agencies, which is already active in Sudan. Since before the referendum, ACT Alliance partners have been carrying out emergency training in all 10 southern states and the three contested areas that border the north and south.

For further comment, please contact:

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