
South Sudan: Aid workers killed in ambush. Scanagatta (CUAMM), "We are shocked but we are not leaving"

Rising cases of violence targeting aid workers have been reported in South Sudan and in many countries around the world. The most recent victims were two South Sudanese workers from [Doctors with Africa- CUAMM](#), Moses Maker Manyual, a 33-year-old nutritionist, and Abraham Gulung, a 32-year-old driver, killed on 7 June in a suburban area of the city of Yirol in Lake State, while returning from delivering nutritional supplement parcels before the rainy season. Both were travelling in the first vehicle of a humanitarian convoy that included security guards. They were killed after being ambushed by gunmen. Security guards managed to chase the gunmen away, but it was too late for Moses and Abraham. Both had family in other parts of the country. Funerals have already been celebrated according to traditional rites - a combination of official religion and local practices. CUAMM has its headquarters in Padua and is one of the leading Italian organisations training doctors and volunteers and running health facilities in Africa. They are all in a state of shock after what has happened. **Solidarity with the South Sudanese people.** "We don't know who committed this heinous crime, nor why. Perhaps score-settling among gangs," said Don **Dante Carraro**, President of Doctors with Africa-CUAMM. "We are deeply shocked and concerned about this transition phase to peace, so difficult to achieve", he added. "Next week I will join our people in South Sudan to express our support and meet with the local authorities. Our determination to be close to the South Sudanese people is strong, despite the numerous challenges."



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[It is believed to be a clash between clans over control of pasture areas. Being an aid worker is no longer a deterrent", said Chiara Scanagatta, CUAMM project manager in South Sudan, who recently returned from a visit to the area. Investigations are under way and there have been no arrests so far," she added. "It is unlikely to be an attempted robbery, nothing has been stolen. Personal arguments or family feuds cannot be excluded, but they usually alert us whenever they have concerns.](#)

[We will now consult with local authorities to work out ways of ensuring greater security. We obviously stand by the population.](#)

[Scanagatta is familiar with those areas as she served as country manager for four years, until 2016, and has been travelling there for long periods ever since. She was with Moses and Abraham a month ago. Moses had been working as a nutritionist in Yirol for two years: "He was the right person for the job," she said. "He was very active, always busy, always wanting to understand and wanting to help, travelling from place to place to provide nutritional supplements to the malnourished population. He was deeply committed in his work and enjoyed what he was doing. Abram, the young driver, also loved his job, "he took an interest in our work, he was a pleasure to be with. I must highlight the role of the drivers: they are our guardian angels. Although they were both very discreet and CUAMM has little information on their respective families, "we will do everything we can to convey our closeness to them."](#)



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(the region where Rumbek Diocese's Bishop-elect, Fr Christian Carlassare was ambushed last April) "has consistently been marked by intense conflict," Scanagatta pointed out. It is a Dinka area,

home to nomadic herdsman who compete for controlling more land for their cattle.

It is a heart-rending experience for those who love this country to see that, in spite of the dialogue and reconciliation efforts made at institutional level, no real peace is being achieved at grassroots level. "Violence is rife, but people are not responsible for this and their needs are countless," she remarked. "It might be worthwhile to focus on the education of the younger generations. A cultural change is direly needed." **The South Sudan project** is the largest and most important project run by CUAMM in Africa, owing to the specific nature of the South Sudanese healthcare system, which outsources health services to NGOs while at the same time being supervised by local administration. CUAMM provides support, training and assistance, while also supplementing the scanty salaries of civil servants. It thus supports some 3,000 to 3,500 South Sudanese medical and paramedical staff in 5 counties, with 5 hospitals and 135 peripheral health care units. A total of 301 CUAMM staff operate throughout the country, 245 of whom are nationals and 56 from abroad.



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