



# RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH SUDAN

JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN

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## MEDIA RELEASE

The project of the combined Catholic Religious in South Sudan (RSASS) to build a centre for human, pastoral and spiritual formation, peace building and trauma healing for South Sudanese at Kit near Juba, was launched officially by Archbishop Paulino Lukudu Loro on 11th October 2014. On Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, this centre, now named the **'Good Shepherd Peace Centre'** was officially blessed and opened by the Apostolic Nuncio to South Sudan, Archbishop Charles Balvo, assisted by the Archbishop of Juba, three other Bishops, an apostolic administrator and a large number of Diocesan and Religious priests. A crowd of more than 800 people, including several ambassadors and local dignitaries, gathered for this joyful occasion.

Given the conflict within the country and the difficulty this posed in bringing in materials and employing a capable workforce, the completion of this Centre is a remarkable achievement. The project has been built within budget, with most of the funds donated by Italian and German Catholic charities, some international NGOs, on land leased from the St Martin de Porres Brothers and also financially supported by several Catholic religious congregations present in South Sudan.

There are forty, en-suite bedrooms each capable of accommodating two beds plus a youth hostel that can accommodate sixty people. With spacious conference and dining rooms, a central chapel and many seminar rooms and outdoor tukuls, on a peaceful site near the Kit river, it is expected that this quality, purpose-built facility will be a very positive force in the search for peace in South Sudan. The simple but profound message above the chapel entrance says: **'Be at Peace'**.

The initial community to staff the Centre consists of a South Sudanese Comboni Priest, two members of *Solidarity with South Sudan* - a Vincentian priest from the Philippines, and a Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the USA - plus a Jesuit priest from Rwanda and a St Martin De Porres Brother from Uganda. It is being staffed by a team living unity in diversity. That in itself is a message to South Sudan in working together in fraternity for a common vision and future.

The President of the Religious Superiors' Association in South Sudan (RSASS), Fr Daniele Moschetti, Provincial of the Comboni Missionaries, gave special thanks to all who have contributed to achieve this common dream for the people of South Sudan and in a special way the Supervising Engineer, Br Hans Eigner and to the Building Contractor, Mr. Robert Andama, for their energy and commitment to quality while completing this large centre in 17 months. Tribute was paid to both the Christian and Muslim workers, Ugandan and South Sudanese, who worked side by side with respectful harmony to complete this Centre. The Centre is open to people of all faiths. That the Centre exists at all shows that a lot can be achieved against the odds. It is a gift of hope for the people of South Sudan, especially for all who will receive formation from this centre. It is also a great sign from the religious and the Local Church that the Catholic Church is concretely committed for peace, justice and reconciliation in the country through their personnel and structures.

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