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JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Japan and UNDP Witness Inauguration of South Sudan's State Revenue Authority in Yambio, Gbudue State

Yambio, 24 November 2017 – Gbudue State Governor, Hon. Badagbu Daniel Rimbasa along with the Japanese Ambassador to South Sudan, H.E. Seiji Okada, and UNDP Country Director, Kamil Kamaluddeen officially inaugurated Gbudue State Revenue Authority as the second-ever state revenue authority after Aweil to be founded in South Sudan.

The Government of Japan and UNDP have collaborated for the past two years to help Ministry of Finance and Planning salvage the worsening economic situation in South Sudan and to diversify the revenue base from near complete dependency on oil revenue. UNDP through funding from the government of Japan so far provided training on transparent public revenue generation and accountability to State Legislative Assembly members, facilitated establishment of a unified tax system in Jubek, Aweil, and Yambio States, developed tax education program being broadcasted on SSBC-TV to promote voluntary tax compliance. In September, Gbudue State Legislative Assembly became the second state to sign the harmonized State Revenue Authority Bill into law, constituted the Revenue Authority governing board and appointed the new commissioner to manager the day-to-day administration of the Authority.

"The inauguration of the Gbudue State Revenue Authority is the state government commitment and political to establish an independent centralised institution capable to collecting local revenue in a transparent, accountable and efficient manner to enable the state government deliver social services to the vulnerable people," stated Hon. Badagbu Daniel Rimbasa, during the inauguration.

"A robust non-oil revenue tax collection system, will enable the government to mitigate the impact of financial austerity induced by inadequate budgetary allocations from the central government on account of sharp fall in oil revenue receipts and continued volatility in the international oil market," stated Paulino Singbagbe Paidia, State Minister of Finance.

H.E. Seiji Okada, the Japanese Ambassador to South Sudan, appreciated Governor's initiative for peace and security and stressed that nothing can be achieved without peace. Also, he pointed out that even though tax revenue is critical to implement government policies, collection of tax revenue should be coupled with economic development through vocational training for the youth.

Kamil Kamaluddeen, UNDP Country Director emphasized the importance of the support from Japan. "I would like to compliment the Governor and the Ministry of Finance for taking this historic step and taking a concrete step towards provision of essential services to



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the vulnerable people of Aweil and thank the Government of Japan for its steadfast support to the project.”

According to the World Bank, the economy of South Sudan is one of the world’s most underdeveloped and the most oil-dependent. UNDP has been supporting the state government to build a sustainable and transparent non-oil revenue system since 2015 with funding from the Government of Japan since 2016. This pilot program has a roadmap to be replicated in other states in the future.

Way forward – next steps of joint Japan-UNDP support for Jubek – the official inauguration of the Revenue Authority is expected in Mid-December 2017.

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