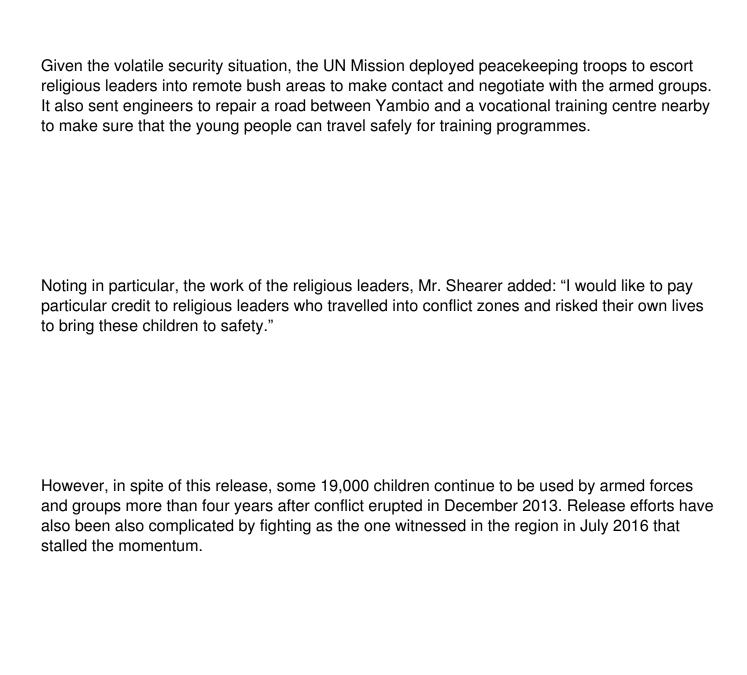
Juba, South Sudan, February 8 (Infosplusgabon) - Some 300 child soldiers, including 87 girls, were formally released by armed groups in South Sudan, the United Nations mission in the country reported on Wednesday, calling on all stakeholders to support the young people on the journey back to their communities and help them build a future for themselves.
"Children should not be carrying guns and killing each other. They should be playing, learning, having fun with friends, protected and cherished by the adults around them," said David Shearer, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for South Sudan, welcoming the release.
Undertaken in Yambio (south-western South Sudan), it is the first such release in over a year and marks the first phase of the overall programme which will see more than 700 children return back to their communities, a UN statement said.
"They will have endured suffering, including sexual abuse. It is vital that they receive the support they need to re-join their communities and that they are welcomed home by family and friends without any sense of stigma," added Mr. Shearer
At a formal ceremony, the children were disarmed and were provided with civilian clothes as



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3/4

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