



## Press Statement

H.E. Macram Max Gassis, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of El Obeid strongly condemns the deliberate targeting and bombing of the Mother of Mercy Catholic Hospital in the Nuba Mountains, South Kordofan, Sudan, on May 1, which has continued today, May 2, 2014.

Bishop Gassis said that

'the bombing is an outrage against innocent civilians who are seeking medical assistance from our hospital. The sick have nothing to do with the conflict that has devastated the Nuba Mountains since June 2011. They are innocent civilians protected by international law from direct targeting by military forces. International law demands that civilians are protected during conflict, but the attack today is a direct violation of this fundamental humanitarian principle. It is a violation of the sacredness of all human life, which we must protect at all costs.'

The hospital is the only functioning hospital in the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan State, which provides essential care and a variety of support services to over 150,000 people annually. The Bishop fears for the safety and well-being of hospital staff and patients, and communities living in fear of this very real threat of indiscriminate aerial bombardment.

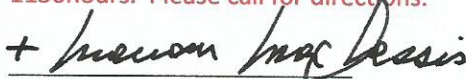
Bishop Gassis personally appealed to President Bashir:

'I wish to appeal to President Omar El Bashir, whose air force carried out this bombing today, to ensure that our hospital is protected from further bombing. The Mother of Mercy hospital is a Catholic Church health institution which offers life-saving services without distinction based on religion, tribe, or political affiliation. By targeting our hospital, you are targeting our Moslem and Christian brothers and sisters, as well as continuing the religious oppression of the Catholic Church in Sudan. Such unjustified action will have consequence within the Universal Catholic Church. I appeal to you to ensure the safety of the innocent patients at our hospital, and that of the hospital, during this ongoing conflict'.

Bishop Gassis stated that the Diocese of El Obeid is committed to peace in South Kordofan, whose only aim is to work for a peaceful solution to this long and bloody war. He appealed against the continued use of indiscriminate aerial assault as a weapon to kill, injure and maintain a culture of fear and death among the local population, and reminded President Bashir that the use of guns will not solve the crisis, but rather all parties in the conflict needed to dialogue in a civil manner, so that a just and peaceful solution could be found.

Please refer to <http://nubareports.org/sudan-targets-only-hospital-in-nuba-mountains/>

Bishop Gassis is holding at press conference at his residence in Lavington on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 1130hours. Please call for directions.



+ Bishop Macram Max Gassis  
Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of El Obeid,  
May 2, 2014.

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