

Beat: Politics

UPDATE2 -- UN-chartered helicopter;shot down in South Sudan, k

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USPA News - A Russian helicopter chartered by the United Nations (UN) was shot down in the volatile northern region of South Sudan on Tuesday afternoon, killing three crew members and injuring a fourth, the aircraft's owner said. It was not immediately clear who may have been responsible.

The incident happened at about 2:28 p.m. local time when the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) lost contact with one of its chartered Mi-8 helicopters, which was on a routine cargo flight from the city of Wau in northwestern South Sudan to the oil town of Bentiu in northern Unity State. The aircraft crashed about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) south of Bentiu. UNMISS said three crew members were killed in the crash while one surviving crew member was receiving treatment from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in Bentiu. It did not specify whether the victims were United Nations employees or if they were working for Russian airline UTair, which owned the aircraft. "According to the preliminary data, the helicopter was shot down by ground fire and is located 3 kilometers (1.8 mile) from the destination airport," UTair said in a statement. It said those killed were the pilot, a flight engineer and a flight attendant. The co-pilot suffered minor injuries. No passengers were on board. "I wish to convey my heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and wish a full and speedy recovery to the injured crew member," said Toby Lanzer, the officer-in-charge of UNMISS. A statement from the mission said it had launched an investigation to determine the cause of the crash, but did not comment on UTair's statement that said the helicopter was shot down. South Sudan, which became the world's newest country when it broke away from Sudan in 2011, has witnessed widespread violence between rebels and government forces since an apparent coup attempt in December 2013. A fresh ceasefire deal was signed by leaders on Monday in hopes of ending the conflict that has left thousands of people killed.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2627/update2--un-chartered-helicoptershot-down-in-south-sudan-k.html>

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