



Communiqué

South Sudanese Civil Society Forum on the High Level Revitalization Forum

December 11, 2017

The South Sudanese Civil Society Forum (SSCSF) which includes organizations, representatives, including refugees that met in Entebbe-Uganda from the 4th to 8th December, 2017, to ensure civic engagement is at the centre of the upcoming High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF).

The SSCSF,

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the continuing violence South Sudan which has gone from bad to worse. Six million people – half the population – are severely food insecure. Nearly four million people have been displaced from their homes, including 1.87 million internally displaced persons and 1.93 million refugees, of whom 86% are women and children. Over the past year, the conflict has escalated to include previously stable parts of Greater Equatoria and Greater Bahr-el-Ghazal. The fragmentation of parties to the August 2015 peace agreement has been worsened by the emergence of new armed opposition groups, resulting in a breakdown of the agreement. Continued violations of the agreement, without consequence, have created an atmosphere of impunity which has left citizens unable to count on the current Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led process to deliver peace in South Sudan.

2. **Takes note** of the response made by IGAD in recognition of the rapidly deteriorating situation, IGAD Heads of State and Government held an Extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa in June 2017, in which they pledged to convene a High-level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) to restore full implementation of the peace agreement. A new Special Envoy for South Sudan, Amb. Ismail Wais, was appointed to lead the effort.

3. *Commends the efforts of*, the taskforce from IGAD Secretariat and Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission Secretariat to lead consultations in close coordination with Council of Ministers. They held consultations with the various warring factions and civic groups within South Sudan as well as refugee communities in Gambella, Ethiopia and produced a Pre-Forum Consultations Report. IGAD plans to hold the Council of Ministers Meeting scheduled for 17th of December 2017 to launch the Forum with consultation to continue till 22nd December, 2017.

4. *Also notes* the recent protest against the approval of the Pre-forum Consultation Report of IGAD submitted by President Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of Republic of South Sudan to the Chairperson of IGAD, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalgn, ahead of the HLRF dated 6th December 2017

5. *Encourages* all parties to the conflict and calls upon the leadership and other stakeholders in the country to demonstrate the required political commitment and will to participate in the High Level Revitalization Forum.

6. Urges IGAD to provide accreditation to civil society to participate in the upcoming High Level Revitalization Forum. It is both urgent and critical that civil society participates in the process in order to ensure the forum achieves its ambition to be ‘inclusive’ and recognise that the voices of every South Sudanese citizens must be represented in all negotiations in order to achieve long-lasting peace.

7. Emphasizes that for the HLRF to be deemed a success, the following minimum criteria MUST be met:

- An immediate and unconditional Cessation of Hostilities and Permanent Ceasefire to be agreed and implemented by all parties to the conflict.
- A clear timeframe with indicators is set and communicated, where the negotiation phase does not exceed a maximum period of three months, and the end of the transitional period results in a democratic free and fair election, where conditions for refugees and Internally Displaced Persons are also favourable to participate in the election.
- Punitive measures for non-compliance with the terms of the agreement are set and adhered to by all parties.
- In order for IGAD-led peace process to succeed, the participation of that process should be truly inclusive of the people of South Sudan. This means representation from women, refugees and IDPS, youth, political parties, military, faith-based groups, traditional, disabled groups and those in the diaspora.
- Fundamental restoration of peace to our country such as security sector development, institution strengthening, truth, healing and reconciliation and accountability.
- Dialogue moves beyond power sharing, to civic matters on the future of South Sudan.
- Unfettered humanitarian access is granted to all South Sudanese in need.
- Outcomes of discussions are transparent, accurate and communicated to the people of South Sudan, without manipulation.
- Mediators are fully mandated to lead the mediation process without undue influence and interference from IGAD Member States.

8. Urge IGAD to fully recognize and endorse a parallel process (track 2) led by South Sudanese civil society organizations, that runs alongside the political process. This process will ensure a political process that is accountable to its people, and provide the people of South

Sudan the ability to keep a close eye on the process and as such safeguard the future of South Sudan. To ensure the effectiveness of this process, IGAD should empower its focal person for civil society to actively engage and communicate with civil society.

- 9. Commends South Sudanese parties to the HLRF to sign the ‘People’s Declaration for Peace’ at the launch of the HLRF.** The declaration will be a public pledge addressed to the people of South Sudan that leaders will sign to demonstrate their commitment to ending the conflict.

The Declaration will call for the following commitments

Parties to the conflict

- Commit to an immediate Cessation of Hostilities and Permanent Ceasefire and seek a political solution to put an end to its suffering citizen.
- Engage in the HLRF and recognize this is their last opportunity to put the interests of the people of South Sudan first.

IGAD Heads of State and Government and Secretariat

- Demonstrate genuine commitment to the HLRF process by;
 - Maintain common and unified positions throughout the HLRF process and stop sending different signals to the warring parties;
 - Align their engagement with all parties to the conflict;
 - Utilizing their leverage on the parties to the conflict appropriately and when needed;
 - Committing senior and resourced representation throughout the HLRF process;
 - Safeguard seeking a peaceful solution for South Sudan above all else

African Union

- Demonstrate genuine commitment to the HLRF process by committing senior and resourced representation throughout the HLRF process; in keeping with its Peace and Security mandate for the peoples of Africa
- Reaffirm the IGAD plus member states that will continue accountability for this process throughout
- In accordance with the decision of the AUPSC Communiqué of 20th September 2017, to elaborate possible measures against those who obstruct peace, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat should take the lead to;
 - Put in place concrete steps to implement the agreed upon punitive measures for those who fail to comply with agreements reached at HLRF
 - Ensure there is sustained active role played by AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konaré;
 - Re-activate the mandate of the AU High Level Ad hoc Committee or the AU+5 countries including (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa) to support the HLRF.

Troika and International Community

- Demonstrate genuine commitment to the HLRF process by committing senior and resourced representation throughout the HLRF process;
- Support our conditions for the success of HLRF and sustain pressure on those who obstruct the peace process;
- The United States specifically should assign a Senior Level representative to work with the Norway and UK Special Envoys

- Foster coordinated actions for punitive measures against individuals and parties who obstruct the peace process and those that violate agreements secured during the HLRF.

CALL TO ACTION

The Civil Society organizations signed to this communiqué, call upon all citizens of South Sudan to actively engage and keep a close watch over this process. Together we must all demand and ensure a peaceful solution is reached for the future of our nation.

List of organisation

1. Africa Youth Action Network (AYAN)
2. #Anataban
3. Africa Women's Right Empowerment Institute (AWORE Intstitute)
4. Association Media in South Sudan (AMDISS)
5. Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)
6. Catholic Radio Network
7. Church Leaders Initiative for Peace (CLIP)
8. Crown the Woman
9. Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice (CIPGJ)
10. Forum for Democratic and Accountable Governance (FODAG)
11. Dialogue and Research Initiative (DRI)
12. EVE-Organization for Women Development
13. Human Rights Initiative (HRI)
14. Institute for Economic and Accountancy (IEA)
15. Institute for Promotion of Civil Society (IPCS)
16. Peace Development and Collaborative Organisation (PDCO)
17. Soweto Community Based Organisation (SCBO)
18. South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA)
19. South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy
20. South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)
21. South Sudan Youth Association for Peace and Development (SSYPADO)
22. South Sudan Domestic Election and Monitoring Program (SSuDEMOP)
23. South Sudan Network for Democracy and Elections (SSuNDE)
24. Upper Nile Youth Development Association (UNYDA)

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