

Joint South Sudan Women's Statement at the Verge of the 43rd Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the Situation of South Sudan

Yes to Peace and No to war

March 12, 2025 Juba South Sudan – we, the undersigned women led organizations and signatories to the Revitalized Agreement on the resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) 2018 including the South Sudan Women's Coalition for Peace (SSWCP), Women Bloc of South Sudan, Gender Empowerment for South Sudan Organization (GESSO), alongside representatives of the business community, academia and youth raise our voices with urgency at this critical moment in our nation's history.

As the IGAD Heads of State and Government convene for the 43rd extraordinary summit, we express our grave concern regarding the ongoing political unrest in South Sudan, particularly in Western Equatoria, Western Bahr El Ghazal, and Upper Nile States. The resulting displacement and loss of lives are deeply distressing. We extend our sincerest condolences to all South Sudanese who have been affected by the recent clashes and have lost loved ones.

We categorically reject any return to war. War is neither an option nor a solution to the challenges facing our nation. The South Sudanese people, particularly women and children, have endured the devastating consequences of violence for far too long. Today, we bear the economic hardship that has made it incredibly difficult for women to provide for their families and afford basic necessities. We cannot allow a return to violence and chaos, which would only exacerbate these hardships. We deserve to live in peace and dignity.

We strongly oppose the rising ethnic and regional divisions that threatens our national unity. We demand that the leaders immediately stop fuelling tribal and regional rivalries for political gain but promote national cohesion, inclusion and equitable representation at all levels.

We remind all political actors and especially the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU), especially the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Government (SPLM-IG) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) that they bear the highest responsibility to uphold the 2017 Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access Agreement. We urge all parties to exercise restraint, desist from finger-pointing that breeds hatred, de-escalate tensions, and recommit to the full implementation of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS). We firmly believe that sincere, constructive and inclusive dialogue, not violence, is the only path towards sustainable peace and development.

We remain deeply concerned about the deepening suffering of South Sudanese refugees across the region. The heightened insecurity and cuts in humanitarian aid have left those in Sudan and Kakuma, Kenya and Uganda in an increasingly vulnerable situation. We must ask, where can they find a safe sanctuary? What actions are our leaders taking to address this urgent issue? We demand decisive actions by RTGoNU to prioritize the well-being of its people and take full responsibility to create a safe and secure environment that facilitates a dignified return and reintegration of our displaced citizens.

We insist that the peace process must move forward including the Tumaini process – no more delays or excuses. Complete the the security arrangement, the permanent constitution-making process, and prepare for the conduct of free, fair and credible elections. Let South Sudanese citizens to choose their leaders. The women of South Sudan will not accept any further postponement of elections.



We further urge all stakeholders, friends of South Sudan, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN) to maximize pressure on the leaders end hostilities to honor and fulfill their promises to a genuine peace. To South Sudan's partners and donors, South Sudan people need your support now more than ever to ensure our peace process deliver results and a dignified future for all.

We, the undersigned reiterate that the women of South Sudan are desperate for peace. We will not rest, we will not be silenced and we will not be side-lined, until lasting peace is achieved in all the corners of our land. Women have been at the forefront of peace efforts and will continue to be part of every process until South Sudan is free from the shadows of war.

We say NO to war, YES for PEACE, democracy and national unity.

Mrs. Rita M. Lopidia – South Sudan Women's Coalition for Peace

Mrs. Maria Gideon – Women's Bloc of South Sudan

Ms. Sarah Nyanath – GESSO

Ms. Yar Manoa Majok – Representative, Business Community

Prof. Pauline Riak – Representative, Academia

Dr. Koiti Emmily - Representative, Youth

Signed on behalf of the above

Mrs. Rita M. Lopidia

Ms. Sarah Nyanath

Ms. Yar Manoa Majok

Dr. Koiti Emmily

Please contact: info@evesouthsudan.org or gesoorganisation@yahoo.com for more information