

**South Sudan Women Position on the Promotion of Durable Peace and
Reconciliation in South Sudan
15th September 2017**

In our continuous effort to search for sustainable peace and reconciliation in South Sudan and in line with UNSCR 1325 on *women, peace and security*, we, fifty (50) South Sudanese women from forty (40) different organizations including (National NGOs, CSOs, FBOs, Academia, research institutions and refugees) from South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya convened a regional workshop in Entebbe, Uganda from 14th to 15th September 2017. The workshop aimed at reviewing the ongoing peace and reconciliation initiatives in the country; reflecting and identifying successes and challenges undermining the attainment of sustainable peace and development; and come up with an action plan and recommendations geared towards improving and repositioning women's role in the continuous peace building initiatives in South Sudan.

We reviewed reports and briefings of our leaders on the current peace initiatives including the National Dialogue, the IGAD and JMEC activities; shared experiences on the sufferings and violence encountered by our people, particularly women, children and elderly; and reflected on the nature of our shared humanitarian crisis that takes lives on daily basis.

Firmly committed to achieving enduring peace and stability; and promoting national reconciliation, accountability; and healing among the people of South Sudan;

Acknowledging the progress made to date by our country leaders on the intricate and multifaceted issues of building relations between different conflicting parties;

Appreciating the efforts and leadership role that IGAD continues to play in an effort to resolve the conflict in South Sudan and specifically, by observing the IGAD Gender Policy and considering the IGAD communiqué of 12th June 2017 in its effort of availing again a platform for engagement of the belligerent parties;

Further welcoming an integrated national, regional and global blend of approaches to this process; and urge the international community and friends of South Sudan to continue supporting the peace initiatives in the country;

Further appreciating that, women's contribution in South Sudan's society is treasured and cannot be undervalued, women played a crucial role in the liberation struggle, peace building and reconciliation processes resulting in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA 2005), the Independence of South Sudan (2011) and the Peace Agreement (ARCC) signed 2015; yet it remains that standing together as a nation, we can make a difference in an effort to bring sustainable peace, security and development to South Sudan;

Determined to build an inclusive society, build a culture of peace and demand cessation of hostilities;

Deliberately declare that women are tired of interminable Sexual and Gender Based Violence (S/GBV), displacement, destruction of livelihood and the killings of their sons and daughters;

Convinced that peace is extremely important and that this is the right opportunity that needs to be carefully explored;

Reaffirm our commitment through this convening to pursue solutions to move the country towards sustainable peace, reconciliation and stability, hereinafter present the following ideas and recommendations for realization of sustainable peace:

Recommendations to IGAD

- ***Inclusivity:*** IGAD must ensure that there is genuine inclusivity in the process. It is important that stakeholders such as the women and youth groups, faith based organizations, academia, traditional leaders and civil society be included. This is crucial and beneficial to the interest of the belligerent parties, increases legitimacy of the process and informs the substance of negotiations and an understanding of issues affecting the ordinary people.
- ***Gender Parity:*** We urge that IGAD ensure that UNSCR 1325 is part of its mandate. It should set a mandatory participation of at least 50% women representation in the belligerent parties' delegates. This also applies to IGAD's mediation team. Furthermore, it should ensure that women organizations are substantially represented through a clear selection criteria which should include core values and commitment to peace and well informed on gender and governance dynamics in South Sudan, demonstrate competences in practical experience and an understanding of ground realities and strong record of representing women, and has a connection to a constituency and capacity to mobilize and influence public opinion;
- ***Gender expert support team:*** We urge IGAD to establish a robust gender support team composed of local and regional women and men with technical expertise to present gender issues and guarantee its inclusion in all the stages of negotiation and implementation and advise mediators to employ gender responsive measures including the language used in different aspects of the process and Agreement;
- ***Timeline:*** We urge IGAD to revise the existing implementation matrix and come up with a clear and realistic timeline for the process (High Level Revitalization Forum). Furthermore, accountability measures including a comprehensive monitoring mechanism with measureable indicators should be put in place. Throughout this process civil society, women's groups and other stakeholders should continue to take part through consultations, observation and create a feedback loop between stakeholders and their constituencies.
- ***Coordination Mechanism:*** We recommend that IGAD should devise a clear coordination mechanism amongst and with other South Sudan peace processes such

as the National Dialogue, the Arusha SPLM Reunification process and President Museveni's peace initiatives.

- ***Regional representation:*** We encourage IGAD to engage other prominent African leaders and personalities, including credible regional institutions to take part in the revitalization process. We also encourage IGAD to engage in confidence and trust building exercises with South Sudanese stakeholders;
- ***Access to justice and information sharing:*** We urge IGAD to advocate for the establishment of strong mechanism to deal with issues of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV). All warring parties should set out clear strategies for dealing with soldiers and perpetrators of GBV, holding them accountable as well as institute preventive and response measures;
- ***Security Sector Reform:*** We are calling on JMEC to ensure security sector reforms adopted are women friendly and focused; in line with the national action plan developed by the South Sudanese women and approved by the government of South Sudan.

Recommendations to the National Dialogue (ND) Secretariat

Aware of the fact that long time unaddressed grievances is one of the root causes of conflict in South Sudan, we regard national reconciliation processes as an important pillar for a sustainable peace and stability in South Sudan.

- Given the limited understanding of the general public on the ND and its various processes, ND leadership should create massive awareness raising and dissemination of information;
- We urge the ND leadership to ensure that the process is inclusive, credible, safe and transparent;
- For a meaningful dialogue, we strongly urge the government to release all political prisoners
- Establish appropriate mechanisms for collecting communities concerns that will improve the methodologies employed during the ND;
- Increase women's numerical representation by at least 35% in all ND decision-making structures and committees.

Signed this day of 15th September 2017 by:

1. South Sudan Women General Association (SSWGA)
2. South Sudan Women Association in Uganda (SSWAIU)
3. EVE Organization for Women Development
4. National Transformational Leadership Institute, University of Juba
5. Women's Bloc of South Sudan (WBSS)
6. South Sudan Women Empowerment Network (SSWEN)
7. Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO)

8. South Sudan Young Leaders forum
9. South Sudan Democratic Elections Monitoring and Evaluation Program (SSuDEMOP)
10. South Sudan Council of Churches
11. Sudan Pentecostal Church – Juba
12. South Sudan Christian Women for Change – Nairobi
13. #Anataban
14. Upper Nile women Group in Uganda
15. Young Women Ambassadors (YWAC)
16. Muslim Women of South Sudan
17. Voice for Change
18. Crown the Women South Sudan
19. Private Sector Women Representatives
20. South Sudan Women refugee group – Bidibidi camp settlement – Uganda
21. White Shirt Women Group - Rhino Camp – Uganda
22. South Sudan Women Leaders for Peace
23. Bahr el Ghazal women group in Uganda
24. Mothers group – South Sudan International Fellowship in Uganda
25. Hope Restoration Organization – South Sudan
26. Consortium of Women’s Organization – South Sudan
27. Women ecumenical group – South Sudan
28. Young women group – Kiryandongo refugees camp settlement – Uganda
29. South Sudan Equatoria Women Association in Uganda
30. Association of Media Women South Sudan (AMWISS)
31. Working Women group of the University of Juba – South Sudan
32. Isis- Wicce
33. WPDI
34. HRSS
35. Steward Women – South Sudan
36. Inspire a Sister Initiative – South Sudan
37. South Sudan Women for Peace – Maga-maga – Camp – Bweyale, Uganda
38. Youth leaders – SS International Fellowship - Kampala, Uganda
39. Sudan Women Association in Nairobi (SWAN)
40. South Sudan Ecumenical Women Leaders – Nairobi.