

## **A Call for the Direct Participation of Civil Society in South Sudan's Peace Talks**

Citizens for Peace and Justice (CPJ)

17 February 2014

Citizens for Peace and Justice (CPJ), a coalition representing more than 30 civil society organizations, is deeply concerned with the grave human suffering brought about by the conflict in South Sudan. We condemn all actions and inactions that have resulted in the death, injury, sexual violence, displacement, destruction of property, and gross disruption of life for an untold number of our people.

CPJ appreciates the ongoing efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) to end hostilities and resolve the conflict through a negotiated agreement. We strongly support the calls for a more inclusive process that provides for the meaningful participation of all citizens, including civil society, women's groups, youth groups, religious leaders, traditional authority and academics. CPJ believes that this is the only path to a just and sustainable peace.

From 9-12 February 2014, CPJ held a conference in Nairobi, Kenya in order to develop concrete plans for civil society in its efforts to secure a resolution to the crisis. The conference brought together more than 60 representatives of civil society from South Sudan and the diaspora.

At the close of the conference, we resolved the following:

First, CPJ calls on IGAD to provide for the direct and independent participation of civil society in the peace talks currently underway in Ethiopia. We specifically ask that CPJ representatives be given the necessary accreditation such that they can actively participate at all meetings of the parties; contribute proposals for consideration in the talks, including draft language for any agreements; and offer their expertise and advice to the mediators.

Second, we request the following issues be included in the agenda for the peace talks:

- Comprehensive institutional reforms, with a focus on constitutional reform, political party reform, electoral reform and security sector reform
- Mechanisms for securing truth and reconciliation
- Mechanisms for securing justice and accountability
- Humanitarian access and protection of civilian populations
- Management of oil and other natural resources
- Foreign military intervention

Third, we propose that IGAD use the following 13 Principles as criteria to develop and assess proposals for a transitional political arrangement:

1. *Stop the violence* – There must be sufficient buy-in from belligerent parties to immediately and credibly implement the cessation of hostilities agreement.
2. *Enjoy the support of the people* – Political settlements should not be forced on the people of South Sudan. The direct participation of civil society in the mediation process will help to ensure that proposals are in line with the needs and wishes of the people.
3. *Provide access for humanitarian and development support* – The conflict has had a devastating impact on people throughout the country. At risk populations must be provided with the support they need to reestablish their lives.

4. Foster unity, respect diversity and build national identity – The nation-building process should encourage the development of an inclusive national identity that finds strength in diversity.
5. Protect sovereignty – South Sudanese have sacrificed greatly to achieve their independence. The transitional arrangement must safeguard our right of self-determination.
6. Allow space for political and civic engagement and for comprehensive governance reforms – To achieve sustainable peace, South Sudan must address the underlying governance crisis. Reforms must be designed and implemented in an inclusive manner.
7. Support democracy, embrace a multi-party system and ensure free and fair elections – For the past decade, South Sudan has struggled to establish democratic institutions. We must take into account the successes and failures of past elections and establish a strong electoral process to set the stage for a more democratic system of governance.
8. Promote truth, justice and reconciliation – If South Sudan is to come to terms with its violent past, the government must provide space for an independent and inclusive process of truth, justice and reconciliation.
9. Disincentivize violent behavior – Political settlements should not reward those who engage in acts of violence, particularly those responsible for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.
10. Empower local government – The governance system should ensure the meaningful devolution of decision-making authority and resources to the local level, thereby helping to counter regional development imbalances.
11. Harness resources to benefit the people – South Sudan's natural resources have done little to raise the living standards for our people. We should have clear plans and the necessary oversight to ensure that resources are not wasted through corruption and poor governance, but are directed towards socio-economic development.
12. Maximize job creation, service delivery and infrastructure development – We must ensure that our government has the necessary expertise to jumpstart economic development.
13. Build international support – Without the support of our international partners, South Sudan's path to independence would have been far more difficult. We must work to maintain and build upon this international support.

Lastly, we call for the development of a Transitional Roadmap for South Sudan, which can be used as a platform to coordinate activities by civil society and other actors in promoting the resolution of the crisis in South Sudan and the monitoring and implementation of any peace agreements.

Signatories:

Joyce Lamanya Solomon Abaha, Kush Center

Ramadan Adam, Citizen

Agyedho Adwok, Citizen

Rev. Tijwog Hather Agwet, Dwogo (DRRC)

John Apuruot Akec, Academics and Researchers Forum for Development

Zachariah Diing Akol, The Sudd Institute  
 Julia Akur, South Sudan Women Lawyer's Association (SSWLA)  
 Abraham Awolich, The Sudd Institute  
 Mer Ayang, Artist  
 Emmanuel Ben, South Sudan Land Alliance (SSuLA)  
 Laura Beny, South Sudanese Professionals in the Diaspora  
 John Beny, Citizen  
 Luka Biong, Kush, Inc.  
 Awak Bior, Leaves Bookshop  
 John Mairi Blackings, South Sudanese Professionals in the Diaspora  
 Chuol Gew Nhial, Citizen  
 Simon Buony, Nile Hope  
 Rev. Orozu Lokine Daky, Serving and Learning Together (SALT)  
 Kuer Dau, New Sudan Women's Federation (NSWF)  
 Dagu David, Citizen  
 Anyieth D'Awol, The Roots Project  
 David De Dau, Agency for Independent Media (AIM)  
 Atong Demach, Citizen  
 Daniel Deng, Kush, Inc.  
 David K. Deng, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)  
 Augustino Kuol Deng, South Sudan Youth Peace and Development Organization (SSYPDO)  
 Robert Deng, University of Juba  
 Valentino Deng, Citizen  
 Pio Ding, Citizen  
 Julia Duany, Citizen  
 Kueth Duany, South Sudanese Friends International  
 Geoffrey L. Duke, South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA)  
 Tiondi Francis, Peace and Development Collaborative Organization (PDCO)  
 Emmanuel Gale, Institute for the Promotion of Civil Society (IPCS)  
 Samuel Lony Geng, Centre for Livelihood, Research and Poverty Reduction (CLIP-Poverty)  
 Daud Gideon, Citizen  
 Obwaya Joe Isidoro, South Sudan Human Rights Defender Network (SSHRDN)  
 Lona James, Voice for Change (VFC)  
 Rev. George Riak Kuirthoi, Nile on Aid of Hope (Noah)  
 Peter Lasu Ladu, Equatoria Rehabilitation and Development Association (ERADA) and Juba Civic Engagement Center (JCEC)  
 Laila Lokosang, Rally for Peace and Democracy (RPD)  
 Alfred Lokuji, Citizen  
 Merekaje Lorna, South Sudan Democratic Engagement, Monitoring and Observation Programme (SSuDEMOP)  
 Rev. Both Reath Luong, Nuer Peace Council (NPC)  
 Beny Gideon Mabor, Citizen  
 Don Bosco Malish, Citizen  
 Peter Gai Manyuon, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)  
 Wani Mattias, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)  
 Jackline Nasiwa, Citizen  
 Rev. James Ninrew, Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)  
 James Keah Ninrew, Universal Intervention and Development Organization (UNIDO)  
 Priscilla Nyagoah, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)  
 Paleki Obur, South Sudan Women's Empowerment Network (SSWEN)  
 Rev. John Phillip Omot, Miakdell  
 Catherine Pita, EVE Organization for Women

Isaac Lony Ruot, South Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections (SSuNDE)  
Henry Swaka, Civil Society Alliance  
Rev. Peter Tibi, RECONCILE International  
Abila Reuben Tom, Voice for Change (VFC)  
Lam Tungwar, Artist  
Koma James Vens, Peace and Development Collaborative Organization (PDCO)  
Samson Wassara, Citizen  
Ayom Wol, Citizen  
Edmund Yakani, Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO)  
Emile Yakani, Citizen

CPJ Contacts:

In South Sudan:       Lona James  
                              Voice for Change (VFC)  
                              Tel: +211 955 022 367  
                              Email: [lwillal2000@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lwillal2000@yahoo.co.uk)

In Kenya:             David K. Deng  
                              South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)  
                              Tel.: +254 703 754 068  
                              Email: [ddeng@sslawsociety.org](mailto:ddeng@sslawsociety.org)