

# Government response: Ministerial statement on the peace process in South Sudan

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said:

The UK welcomes the resumption of peace talks in South Sudan next week and the consultations that are now underway. This is a critical moment for the peace process and we remain strongly in support of regional efforts to bring about a lasting peace.

It is disappointing that we once again find ourselves in a position where the cessation of hostilities agreement reached at the last set of talks has not held, and the talks have so far failed to generate serious commitment to compromise. Meanwhile, the people of South Sudan remain in a terrible state of conflict and humanitarian crisis. Fighting, troop movements and the rhetoric of war continues, pushing the country deeper into crisis. In recent weeks we have seen violent clashes surge in Unity, Jonglei and the Central Equatorias. This is causing immense suffering and preventing lifesaving assistance from reaching those most in need.

As no party has yet been held to account for violating the cessation of hostilities agreement, the perpetrators continue to act with impunity. This is undermining prospects for a lasting peace to be agreed at the upcoming talks. Those who have violated the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement must face consequences for their actions. We urge the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to take immediate action in this regard, to leave the parties in no doubt of the region's commitment to peace.

Only a negotiated agreement can bring peace in South Sudan and create the conditions for elections. We believe that the High-level Revitalisation Forum remains the only platform with the scope and inclusion to deliver this.

## **Further information**

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