

News story: Troika statement on South Sudan forum

The members of the Troika (Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States) welcome the parties' constructive efforts toward compromise for the benefit of the people of South Sudan at the High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) over the last two weeks in Addis Ababa. The Troika expresses its appreciation for and fully supports the continuing effort by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to restore peace through the HLRF, and commends the tireless efforts of the IGAD Special Envoy Ambassador Ismail Wais and the mediation team.

The Troika underscores the critical importance of the parties creating a conducive environment for peacemaking: fighting while talking is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. The parties must make good on their promises to implement the Agreement on a Cessation of Hostilities (ACOH) signed in December 2017. We take note and support the intention by IGAD and the African Union to identify and impose consequences on those undermining peace as soon as possible and we stand ready to support them in their efforts. Implementation of the ACOH must also include the release of political prisoners and prisoners of war, the end to the use of child soldiers and sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon. The parties must also allow unfettered access for Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) monitors and for humanitarian assistance and aid workers responding to Africa's worst humanitarian crisis.

While useful dialogue has taken place over the past two weeks, there is much more for the parties to do if the HLRF is to make meaningful and sustainable progress towards peace. The Troika calls on all parties to reconvene as soon as possible, without preconditions, to address the important security and governance arrangements that are essential for peace. We urge all parties to take steps to maintain the momentum of the process and refrain from comments or actions that could make returning to dialogue more difficult. We urge the parties to agree that a negotiated arrangement for an inclusive transitional government that reflects South Sudan's diversity is needed. We encourage the parties to set as priorities the separation of powers, dispute resolution and reconciliation mechanisms, service delivery, and accountability. Arrangements must not advantage any political, armed, or ethnic group. We call on the parties to develop practical security arrangements that end violence and build confidence, and set out a realistic path to broader security sector reform. We urge the parties to support financial reforms that address corruption and build confidence in public institutions.

The Troika renews its firm view that elections in 2018 are not viable given the continuing conflict, lack of security, displacement of one third of the population, and severe food insecurity affecting half the population. It calls on all parties to reject any unilateral effort to extend power through the ballot box, the legislature, or military means. A negotiated path to elections also means the protection of fundamental political freedoms, and

significant improvements in security and humanitarian conditions. The Troika continues to stand with the people of South Sudan and urges their leaders to move expeditiously to achieve the peace their people deserve.

Further information