

South Sudan 10 years of independence: Troika Statement

The Troika (United Kingdom, Norway and United States) congratulates the people of South Sudan on 10 years of independence. On 9 July 2011, all South Sudanese joined together in unity to celebrate the country's birth. It was a joyous occasion, filled with hope and possibility.

The first ten years of this young country's history have seen much suffering, due to conflict-related abuses, famine, flooding and disease. Yet through it all, the South Sudanese people have shown resilience. We commend the commitment many have shown in working together to build a brighter future, so it is deeply saddening that the promise of peace and prosperity that independence represented remains unfulfilled.

The Troika has stood with the people of Sudan and South Sudan through decades of struggle and whilst we join those celebrating today, we grieve for those who have suffered and lost loved ones. Today, millions do not have enough food to feed themselves or their family. The Troika urges immediate action to ensure access for humanitarian aid and to end violence against South Sudanese and the aid workers who serve them.

Due to the immense suffering caused by the outbreak of war our aid is now primarily humanitarian, but we want to see South Sudan get back on the road to economic and social development. After all, South Sudan is rich. Its riches do not just reside in the oil beneath its land or the lumber in its forests. South Sudan is rich because of the diverse communities of people that make up this young country. It is on their behalf that we have been a constant supporter of the implementation of the peace agreement. However, nearly three years since we commended the signing of the agreement, many tasks remain undelivered. Few of the tangible benefits of peace are seen by ordinary citizens. The Troika welcomes the progress that has been made but, urges the signatories to accept accountability for their commitments and go much further, much faster.

The great challenge now facing South Sudan is to recapture the sense of unity, strength, and hope that prevailed on this day ten years ago. With reconciliation through compromise and accelerated implementation of the peace agreement South Sudan can become a peaceful, democratic country, where human rights and the rule of law are respected. A country where all people have food on their table, where businesses prosper, and where the Government truly serves its people. To realise that vision both the politically-manipulated and localised communal conflict that tears at the fabric of society itself, needs to stop. Preparations for peaceful, credible, and inclusive elections must begin in earnest; unified forces must be created; transitional justice mechanisms must be fully established; and key financial reforms need to happen as quickly as possible.

The Troika remains eager to work in close partnership with the transitional

government to implement fully the 2018 peace agreement. We are committed to standing with the South Sudanese people as they work toward their aspirations of peace and prosperity. We urge the political leadership of South Sudan to take the actions needed to build the country the jubilant crowds of 2011 dreamed was possible.