



## **EQUATORIA INTER-STATE NON PARTISAN PEOPLE –TO-PEOPLE PEACE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS AND TRADITIONAL LEADERS**

**June 26, 2026**

### **COMMUNIQUE**

#### **PREAMBLE**

We the Religious and Traditional Leaders of Equatoria Region gathered at Good Shepherd Peace Centre –Kit from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 2026 for a Peace Conference under the auspices of the South Sudan Council of Churches with the support of its Peace Partners FECCLAHA, CHRISTIAN AID, NCA and FCA, guided by the theme of “**Nonpartisan People-to-people Peace Approach**”

**Convinced** of the desire of the people of South Sudan to live in peace, harmony and prosperity;

**Cognizant** of the numerous difficulties towards the realization of the aspirations of the people of South Sudan in pursuing peace, stability and development;

**Acknowledge** that the current economic hardships are leading the masses of South Sudan to depression and other unprecedented sufferings;

Having deliberated on the concerns above, this conference hereby calls for the consideration of the following:

1. **Federalism:** that it should be Adopted as the System of a good governance in the Republic of South Sudan because it addresses problems linked to the rule of law, institutional empowerment, local customs and aspirations, resource sharing and promotion of development.
2. **The Security Sector Reforms.** That the reforms should include equal representation of the people of South Sudan in the army, specialized organs and organized forces based on merits and professionalism. And that all civil populations be they pastoralists, farmers and other community armed groups should equally be disarmed without exceptions.

3. **Land.** That it is an important asset that must belong to the **Indigenous people of the area** because of the ancestral links and ownerships therein. In this regard, development committees should not get involved into demarcation, distribution and sale of land. On the other hand, the role of the local Government should solely regulate issues concerning land based on 1956 boundaries. All the grabbed lands must be considered illegal.
4. **Indigenous Traditional authorities.** That they must be recognized as being custodian of histories, customs and traditions of the people. They should be respected in all protocols, provided with facilities and all other privileges necessary for their duties. As such, roaming chiefs should be banned from exercising illegal demarcations of land and establishment of illegal customary law courts in areas beyond their indigenous jurisdictions.
5. **The phenomenon of Child abduction.** This is a serious concern that must be stopped, criminalized and prosecuted. Therefore, laws relating to kidnapping should be enacted, promulgated and enforced for broader child protection.
6. **Movements of cattle.** This is a dangerous phenomenon in all dimensions of security and social cohesion in the region. Therefore, these movements of cattle with the ill intention of disrupting the livelihoods and peace of the indigenous communities with the motive of settling and dislodging the indigenous from their ancestral lands must be abolished and criminalized. The conference also calls for improvement of cattle breeds in the country so that they can bring in economic dividends and food security. This requests training of pastoralists for a better service delivery in this regard.
7. **Marriages.** That marriage is a relationship between man and a woman and it should be conducted according to local customs that recognize love and consent between the spouses. Therefore marriages should not be treated as business transactions that limit the rights and freedoms of the spouses. Furthermore, child marriages must be discouraged and criminalized.
8. **Politicians and Community Elites.** Those politicians and community elites who promote manipulations, hate speech, falsehood, disunity and disputes among people must be exposed, avoided and prosecuted in the courts of law.
9. **Change of Modus Operandi (Life Style).** South Sudanese must embark on cultures of research, creativity and innovation, food security and development. All chapters of war-mongering, revenge and tribal militarization, idleness must be discouraged.
10. **Tribalism.** The evil of tribalism is the catalyst of conflicts and poverty in South Sudan. Therefore, the path to national identity must include promotion of common languages, positive cultures, sports and social cohesion.
11. **Constitution.** This conference believes that the best constitution is that, that enhances the aspirations of the people of South Sudan as stipulated in the National Anthem. This constitution should be people-driven and reflecting the history,




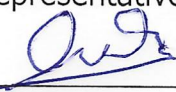
dignity and cultures of the people of South Sudan. The conference recommends that the process of constitution making must exhibit transparency, wider consultation and the process be expedited within the envisaged timeframe.

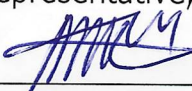
- 12. Credible National Elections.** The conference stands with the people of South Sudan on the need for elections which are long overdue. This is because the elections will provide opportunity for them to elect their able leaders who will represent and offer them service delivery according to their aspirations. Hence, the conference recommends that this proposed electoral process should facilitate equal civic space and freedom of political participation as prerequisites of the principles of Good Governance and formal democratic process for a transparent, free, fair, and credible elections. The conference warns that manipulation of elections against the will of the people, will put the country into unprecedented situations of confusion, mistrust and turmoil.

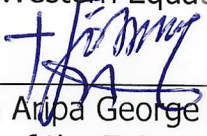
In sum, this conference calls for an inclusive dialogue that is representative of the various sections of the people namely political parties, traditional leaders, faith based groups, civil society organizations and other well-wishers to be genuine stakeholders in resolving all the problems of South Sudan.

Therefore, it appreciates the African Union C5 initiative to bring in all parties including the hold-out groups to the negotiating table in Tanzania. However, it equally calls for the considerations of the points above to be included in the talks and also adopt other pertinent recommendations of the national Dialogue for purposes of inclusivity.

  
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