

CIVIL SOCIETY OF SOUTH SUDAN



**Paper presented at the UN Security Council meeting
in New York, March 2017**

**Presented by Betty Sunday
Coordinator, Women Monthly Forum on the Peace
Process**

Your Excellences

Mr. President

Thank you for inviting us civil society of South Sudan to brief the Security Council on the current situation in our country. It is important for you to hear directly from civil society, including from women's organizations, on the security threats we face and our recommendations for durable peace.

Today I represent the Women's Monthly Forum founded in 2014 – women from all walks of life came together to push for our inclusion in the peace process and to coordinate the voices of grassroots women, to the women that were going to Addis. Since then we have continued to advocate for women's inclusion in the implementation and monitoring of the agreement.

The security threats for South Sudanese women continue to be extreme – we cannot move freely – to fetch water or get food – due to continuous incidents of rape and other violence. This is happening throughout the country including in POC camps. Women also continue to face challenges to be heard even in government institutions.

If the peace agreement was implemented women could go about their lives without fear – their children could go to school and they could collect food and tend to their gardens.

The peace agreement cannot be allowed to die. This is a very important document for South Sudanese women. We have fought hard for this and now want it to come to life. It contains provisions for women to take up their role in determining the peaceful future of the country.

The political will for the implementation needs to come from all sides within South Sudan as well as from the international community including the Security Council. South Sudan cannot do this alone.

We as civil society this meeting be solution based meeting, because we have seen numerous such meetings that end up with position papers that are not action-oriented.

We urge the council and government cooperate in seeking a long lasting solution for the political crisis our country is facing; Among the key issues that we are urging this council through this meeting to decide on actions are;

- 1- Implementation of the Agreement on the resolution of conflict in the Republic South Sudan.** The agreement offers great opportunity for political transformation but the challenge is that the parties to the peace agreement are facing issues of political will and good faith politics simply because of too much focus on political power sharing.
- 2- SGBV and human rights:** The council is aware through the work of UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict about the occurrence of SGBV cases in South Sudan. We are urging the council and the government to cooperate to actualize the signed joint communique between our president and the UN.
- 3- Humanitarian situation:** The current humanitarian situation described by various actors as worrying including our government's declaration of famine in some parts of the country is a disturbing situation. Therefore, we urge the council to urgently provide humanitarian support to those in need and we urge our government to provide all the necessary support for facilitation of humanitarian access and protection of humanitarian worker and properties.

- 4- **National Dialogue:** The declared national dialogue by the president of the republic of South Sudan is a public call that the citizens wish to get involved fully and effectively in seeking lasting political solutions to the political challenges the country is facing. Our urge is let the national dialogue be inclusive and facilities in total environment where ceasefire is secured for safe participation of every citizen.
- 5- **UNMISS Mandate:** South Sudan being member of the United Nations has the obligation for commitment to its duty and responsibility under UN charter. We are aware that UNMISS is approaching the renewal its mandate, our urge is to let the new mandate of UNMISS have chance of providing capacity support for the government of South Sudan on human rights protection, rule of law, UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and professionalization of policing services
- 6- **Coordination of political efforts among UN/AU and IGAD:** We are impressed that recent UN/AU and IGAD committed themselves for coordination of efforts for seeking political solutions for the challenges our country is facing. We are urging this council meeting to partner with our government actualizing the declared UN/AU and IGAD joint communique dated 29th January, 2017

Mr. President, we are urging this council to be pro-active in engaging the government of South Sudan for the realization of the political expectations in the peace agreement on the resolution of conflict in the Republic South Sudan. We urge the conflicting parties in South Sudan to get committed on to the decisions of this council.