

Open Communiqué to President Barack Obama

South Sudanese Civil Society

July 26, 2015

Dear President Obama,

We the undersigned Civil Society of South Sudan, speaking for the voiceless citizens of this great nation, would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome you to Africa. We are hereby expressing our gratitude to the Government and the people of the United States of America for standing with us the people of South Sudan through happiness and hardship.

Mr. President, your trip to Africa gives us hope that peace is going to come to the people of South Sudan, who have suffered the effects of war for many decades. We are tired of this senseless war that has destroyed our country, our social fabric, and our economy. As you know, our people have suffered enormous hardships and have endured famine, violence, and economic collapse since the war broke out in December 2013. Ordinary people struggle to find a meal each day, and the toll of the conflict on all aspects of civilian lives is enormous, particularly for women and children, who are often targeted for rape and sexual abuse, and unimaginable violence.

Mr. President, we greatly appreciate the longstanding support and friendship that your people and your government have given to South Sudan. In this time of great crisis, with escalating violence and crimes against humanity, we respectfully call upon your government and the people of the United States to:

- Continue to stand with and support South Sudan as a nation, and its people in particular;
- Make peace, justice, and democracy a priority in Africa and South Sudan in particular during your visit. Investment and development cannot happen without peace, stability, good governance, and above all democratic transformation;
- Apply pressure on South Sudanese government and opposition leaders to cease hostilities, end the conflict, and sign a credible and equitable peace agreement that leads to a transitional government;
- Impose an arms embargo on South Sudan preventing those countries that are supporting the warring parties and thereby facilitating the continued fighting irrespective of the civilian suffering;
- Condemn the use of chemical weapons and internationally banned arms such as cluster bombs, land mines, and other illegal weapons that are being used in this current conflict;
- Freeze all assets of individuals who are parties to the peace process reasonably believed to obstruct the peace process directly or indirectly particularly by use of hate speech in the media and unwillingness in the mediation and demand accountability and the return of stolen money, which will be used to provide basic needs such as food to the starving population, health services, education and infrastructure development of the country

- Continue to support civil society efforts in peace building and reconciliation efforts in the country.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your consideration and your continued support for our country in this time of crisis.

Long Live President Obama, and Long Live the People of the United States of America and South Sudan.

Sincerely,

South Sudan Integrated Development Organization (SSIDO)

Organization for Peace, Relief and Development (OPRD)

Mundri Relief and Development Association (MRDA)

Community Agribusiness Development Agency (CADA)

Women & Equity Organization (WEO)

Community Fight Against HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence South Sudan (COFAS)

Christian Mission for Development (CMD)

Baptist Relief Agency (BARA)

Voice for Change (VFC)

South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)

Juba Civic Engagement Center (JCEC)

Equatoria Rehabilitation and Development Association (ERADA)

South Sudan Democratic Engagement Monitoring and Observation Program (SSUDEMOP)

Support Education Africa Organisation (SEA)