

# Press Release



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

17 December 2018

### **UPDM Calls Attention to the Continued Devastating Conflict in South Sudan Five Years Down the line And Appeals for Urgent Action.**

Today, the fifth anniversary of the senseless conflict in South Sudan, UPDM appeals to world leaders to stand up for the 7.1 million South Sudanese,<sup>1</sup> mostly women and children, living under fear, despair and hopelessness. As the injustice, brutality and violence against innocent civilians continues under Salva Kiir's leadership four months after the R-ARCSS, we appeal to the International Community to act with urgency and bring an end to the ongoing crimes against humanity that has claimed over four hundred thousand lives in five years.

UPDM unequivocally denounces the dramatic upsurge of rape and sexual violence against vulnerable women and children in Unity State<sup>2</sup> and across the country, as well as the alarming trend of prisoner executions in the country, which according to Amnesty International includes children.

UPDM condemns the government's renewed recruitment activities and its plans to intensify conflict in Bahr El Ghazal and Unity State. Conflict continues in Unity, Wau, Western and central Equatoria States to date with continued loss of lives, property, dignity, and displacement.

The government's continued violation of the UN Security Council imposed arms embargo on South Sudan testifies to their intentions to violate the ceasefire and continue their illegitimate claim to power through violence, arbitrary arrests, illegal executions, manmade famine and abuse of power.

While UPDM welcomes the latest sanctions on individuals supporting the government's brutal agenda against its citizens, these sanctions stop short of holding accountable South Sudan's leaders and neighbouring governments who ordered and/or facilitated the acquisition and transfer of weapons, ammunition and military equipment through their borders into South Sudan.

UPDM reiterates its position on the limitations of the ill-negotiated R-ARCSS that serves the interests of neighbouring economies in the region at the expense of sustainable peace in South Sudan. The agreement (i) fails to acknowledge and address the underlying causes of the conflict; (ii) it stops short of responding to the concerns of millions of aggrieved and victimised citizens; (iii) and fails to reach out to the growing militarised groups in the country who were not represented at the negotiating table. Instead, this agreement gives more powers to the perpetrators, and hence the continued crimes against humanity, provoking rhetoric and anti-peace agenda of this government.

As the Christmas holidays approaches, UPDM calls on IGAD, the African Union, TROIKA, The United Nations Security Council and friends of South Sudan to:

1. Immediately enforce effective deterrent strategies against all actors and accomplices to the violations of the ceasefire agreement and the arms embargo, so as to allow the emergence of legitimate leaders and build trust in the political process for peace in South Sudan.
2. Strengthen protection for vulnerable citizens of South Sudan, especially in the reported hotspots in the country where human rights abuses are on the increase, mindful that some RPF contributing countries have a sinister agenda in South Sudan.
3. Re-open and facilitate an inclusive and accountable agreement early next year, that seeks to strengthen R-ARCSS through addressing the underlying issues, ensuring the concerns of disgruntled and victimised people are sufficiently addressed and build consensus through levelling the playing field for all signatories while putting people at the centre of the transitional goals and objectives.
4. Provide funding for humanitarian support to the internally displaced and the refugees in neighbouring countries, ensuring no forced-return policies against the displaced people.

UPDM stands ready to engage and represent the people of South Sudan in an honest and inclusive political process; devoid of manipulations, coercing and disingenuous schemes that characterised the Khartoum revitalised agreement. To this end UPDM urges the people of South Sudan to stand with us until power is returned to the people, and together lay the foundations for a strong progressive sovereign country that promotes unity, equality and diversity. Many died for the independence of South Sudan and it is our duty, the living, to ensure that they did not die in vain and the sovereignty of our new country is protected.

God bless South Sudan.

Signed,



Taban Julu Lomuja  
UPDM Secretary-General

CC. IGAD, African Union, TROIKA, UNSG, UNSC, People of South Sudan Everywhere

NB.: For queries and comments, please write to [press@updm-rss.org](mailto:press@updm-rss.org), or visit our website/twitter below.

1. South\_Sudan\_2019\_Humanitarian\_Needs\_Overview.pdf: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources>
2. <https://jmecsouthsudan.org/index.php/press-release/item/395-jmec-appalled-by-reports-of-rape-and-sexual-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-bentiu>