South Sudan: declaration by the High Representative, on behalf of the European Union, on delays in the implementation of the peace agreement and widespread violence

The people of South Sudan deserve lasting peace. The political and inter-communal violence occurring in Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Warrap and other parts of the country is of great concern.

The perpetuation of violence leading to a high number of fatalities, forced displacement, sexual and gender-based violence and other human rights abuses, must stop. These conflicts have also killed humanitarian workers and are hampering the delivery of principled humanitarian aid in areas affected by severe food insecurity and recurrent natural disasters.

This situation is worsened by the regrettable stalling of the implementation of the peace agreement and the high proliferation of arms in the country. Violations of the ceasefire are also being reported and investigated by the monitoring bodies. The ceasefire must be fully respected by all actors, including those who are party to the Rome Declaration. The recent renewal of sanctions by the UN Security Council, including of the arms embargo on South Sudan is welcome in this regard and will help support an inclusive and sustainable peace in South Sudan. The fulfilment of security arrangements also remains imperative.

In line with the declaration of the IGAD Council of Ministers on 23 April, which deadlines have unfortunately not been respected by the South Sudanese parties, a swift agreement on and completion of state governorships and other political nominations is vital, as is ensuring women represent 35% of those in public office.

These gaps in national and local governance systems are hampering conflict resolution efforts. This is all the more important in view of the need for a whole-of-society effort in the containment of...
the COVID-19 pandemic.

To step up EU support to South Sudan, genuine progress in the reforms foreseen by the peace agreement, including those related to transparent public financial management, is needed, as is accountability for human rights abuses to stop the culture of impunity. The set-up of transitional justice institutions is also paramount.

The EU calls upon the South Sudanese government and all relevant stakeholders to redouble efforts to proceed in the timely implementation of the peace agreement through political compromise, to stop the widespread violence that is deeply impacting on the population of South Sudan and to facilitate the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian workers to those most in need and affected by the conflict. The EU supports and further encourages IGAD and its Member States to continue to step up their efforts to monitor and support peace implementation in South Sudan. The EU also supports the efforts of the AU, which will remain instrumental to support the full implementation of the peace agreement.

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