

South Sudan Taskforce on the Engagement of Women

Women of South Sudan Call for an Inclusive Peace Process June 2015

In advance of the next round of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led talks, the South Sudan Taskforce on the Engagement of Women* and other women leaders convened in Nairobi from June 9-11, 2015. Our goals were to identify the root causes of the conflict and determine concrete steps toward a more inclusive and effective peace process that prioritizes, above all else, the needs and interests of the people of South Sudan.

We express our despair and grave concern about the crisis in our homeland. We appreciate the effort undertaken by the IGAD and the warring parties to resolve the conflict. However, war is still raging. Moreover, the peace talks continue to prioritize the positions of the warring parties while failing to address the root causes of the conflict. Thus far, the parties have failed to create a process that is truly inclusive; is driven by the needs of the people; and is transparent so that all South Sudanese can feel ownership and confidence in the proceedings. While the current violence affects certain parts of our country more directly, as women we recognize this is a national crisis impacting every part of South Sudan. Thus, an inclusive, participatory process is required to lead the country to a sustainable peace.

Therefore, we call upon all of the parties in the new “IGAD Plus” structure to carry out the immense responsibility of making the next round of talks an inclusive and authentic process. Specifically, we request that the talks:

1. Address the root causes of violence via community consultations to understand the drivers of conflict;
2. Ensure the fighting stops and the Cessation of Hostilities is adhered to;
3. Be centered on the people of South Sudan through a comprehensive and genuine national dialogue process;
4. Move away from the positions of the warring parties and other stakeholders, to the interests of the people;
5. Be inclusive and representative of the people;
6. Be transparent through the creation of a feedback loop; and
7. End in a comprehensive signed agreement.

Women bring unique perspectives to matters of peace and security: we understand what’s happening on the ground, we are trusted bridge-builders within our families and communities, and we have the technical expertise and knowledge that add value to the process. Understanding the role women are already playing in preventing violence and stabilizing our country, we stand ready to support you. Together we can ensure the next round of talks address the long-standing root causes of the conflict.

The Taskforce is an impartial, non-political group that represents the unheard voices of communities. We do not seek positions or power; we seek peace for our country.

*The Taskforce on the Engagement of Women is a group of South Sudanese peacebuilders with varied backgrounds and expertise. Our objective is to increase the credibility and effectiveness of the peace process in South Sudan by ensuring it is inclusive, comprehensive, and gender-sensitive. To do so, we act as a conduit between communities and senior officials.