

Council conclusions on South Sudan

1. The European Union (EU) condemns in the strongest terms the recent escalation of fighting in South Sudan and attacks on civilians, Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites, United Nations (UN) compounds and personnel, diplomatic officials and aid workers. Many people have been killed in heavy fighting and there are growing fears that many more could die in another round of violence.
2. The gravity of the situation demands a rapid response. Any extension of the current crisis must be prevented.
3. The leaders of South Sudan, in particular President Kiir and Vice President Machar, are responsible to their people and should not resort to violence and the politics of ethnic confrontation. They must now do everything in their power to de-escalate the hostilities, spare the citizens of South Sudan further violence, and engage in the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) which has been signed by all parties.
It is the utmost responsibility of the leaders to control their respective forces and respect the ceasefire which they have decreed. All parties must refrain from any unilateral acts that could further undermine the August 2015 Agreement and the ceasefires. They must focus on their implementation, with particular emphasis on the elements relating to security, especially the demilitarisation of Juba, as a matter of extreme urgency.
4. The EU welcomes the prompt and determined response from the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) following the IGAD Plus Summit in Kigali on 16 July 2016, the African Union (AU) and the countries in the region. It supports their constructive engagement to address the crisis, together with the AU High Representative for South Sudan and the Chairman of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC). The EU welcomes ongoing discussions on options, including the deployment of a regional protection force, to help stabilising the situation and considers the resumption of a political process as an urgent necessity.
5. The EU joins South Sudan's neighbours and the international community in working towards rapid restoration of peace and stability, including an end to banditry and looting. Protection of civilians, as well as UN personnel, aid workers and their premises, must also be given high priority and those who provoked the latest round of fighting must be brought to justice. There must be accountability for the atrocities that have been committed in South Sudan, as stipulated in the ARCSS and recalled by the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. Investigation and prosecution of those crimes under international law must start swiftly and impunity must end. In this context the EU calls for the rapid establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and the start of a process of national reconciliation and healing.
6. The EU reiterates its support to the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and welcomes ongoing discussions in the UN Security Council on its further strengthening to better ensure that the UN Mission and the international community can prevent and respond to the violence in South Sudan and protect civilians. The EU also supports the UN Secretary General in asking the Security Council to immediately impose an arms embargo on South Sudan and enact additional targeted sanctions on leaders and commanders undermining implementation of the peace agreement. The EU stands ready to consider further sanctions against any individual who obstructs the peace process. It also recalls its substantial political and financial contribution to South Sudan.
7. The EU urges all parties to allow and facilitate the full, safe and unhindered provision of humanitarian assistance to all those in need, in accordance with international humanitarian law. The EU has been a major contributor to respond to the man-made humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, which is already one of the worst in the world. The South Sudanese population has suffered grave abuses, including by security forces and militias, in particular gender based violence and forced displacement. It is also facing its worst food crisis since the independence of the country. The European Commission is in the process of mobilising additional resources to alleviate the distress of those in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance. The EU commends all neighbouring countries for keeping their borders open and hosting South Sudanese refugees fleeing violence and expects the Government of South Sudan to respect the free movement of people.

[EU Relations with South Sudan](#)

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