

**“Comprehensive Peace for the UN’s Newest Member State:
Challenges for South Sudan and the International Community”**

**Program for an international conference
organized by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) New York Office**

Thursday, October 13, 2011, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**The Church Center for the United Nations
Second Floor
777 First Avenue at 44th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017**

Rationale

South Sudan, the UN’s newest member state, is confronted with a number of challenges that imperil international peace and security in the region. To begin with, the Council established the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), which has a broad mandate to help the new state with consolidating peace and security. As the recent flare-up of armed conflicts have demonstrated, the help of international peacekeepers will also be needed for resolving differences between the North and South Sudan around the transitional border areas South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei.

Moreover in addition to border demarcations and security arrangements, the Secretary-General’s recent report on Sudan (S/2011/239) highlights a number of outstanding issues for the peaceful secession of the South, such as external debt obligations, the sharing of oil revenues, and the reintegration of refugees. For all these problems the solution depends on whether a political environment can be created in which north and south can resolve their disputed interests peacefully. Important support to this environment will be provided by the collaborations that new state will seek with its neighbors, but also by the integration into regional and subregional organizations.

In addition, while South Sudan has enjoyed a considerable amount of autonomy since 2005, a lasting peace is contingent on the establishment of institutions that support such a process. Going forward towards building an inclusive society, South Sudan will be tasked with building legitimate institutions that provide citizens security, justice and jobs, and to do it in a way that it overcomes exclusions along sectarian and ethnic lines.

Achieving these aims will become realistically possible only if the people and the government of South Sudan enjoy substantial and lasting international support. Yet time and again such external interference has proven to create its own dynamics of challenges. First, external support must not come at the expense of national ownership of such transition processes. And second, outside assistance must reckon with the absorption capacities on the ground and not overwhelm fledgling institutions with complex and often contradicting programmatic biases of donor institutions. Hence, the coordination and complementarities of the various state- and society-building efforts will remain an ongoing challenge for the international community engaged in South Sudan.

Objective

Against this backdrop, the purpose of the conference is to engage different national and international actors to support South Sudan's transition into an independent, viable, and sustainably peaceful state. Thematic discussions will revolve around key political challenges posed by the geopolitical environment for South Sudan going ahead as an independent nation, as well as the establishment of the core functions of governance towards securing peace, building a democratic state, and achieving sustainable and human development.

Program Thursday, October 13, 2011

9:15 a.m. Sign-in and Light Breakfast

9:45 a.m. Welcome by Dr. Werner Puschra, Director, FES New York

10:00 a.m. Panel 1: Political Challenges for South Sudan's Positioning in the International Arena

Issues: **North-South Relationship:** What are the key political issues that the new nation will have to settle with the North? Does the secession of the South trigger the further compartmentalization of the North, and, if so, at what cost?

Geography and Destiny: How will South Sudan, as a new and land-locked nation, position itself in the region? What type of engagement is envisioned and with which neighbors and regional organizations?

Special Relations: How have interests and activities of global powers, as well as big donor countries, shaped the past, how will they affect the future of South Sudan?

Speakers: **Dr. Luka Biong Deng**, Director of Kush Inc. and former minister of Presidential Affairs in the Office of the President of the Government of South Sudan

Dr. Qutbi Elmahdi, Head of the Political Bureau, National Congress Party and Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of the Sudan

Dr. Xue Lei, Research Fellow, Center of International Organizations and International Law, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies

Chair: **Ms. Katherine Almquist**, Former USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa

12:00 noon **Keynote Address: A Coherent International Approach to Promote South Sudan's Peaceful Future**

Speaker: **Gen. (R) Martin L. Agwai**, Former Force Commander of the African Union - United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)

1:00 p.m. **Lunch Break**

1:45 p.m. **Panel 2: Peace and Security Challenges for South Sudan**

Issues: **UN Peacekeepers as early Peacebuilders:** How can the re-established UN Mission to South Sudan UNMISS learn from the previous years of engagement in South Sudan? How can UNMISS consolidate peace and security to foster long-term stability and development?

The Army: Transforming the South's various rebel movements and factions into a legitimate, democratically controlled force will be indispensable for the functioning of state institutions. How can renegades be re-integrated into the SPLA? How can the spirit of war be overcome and how can combatants be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated?

Coordination: How can external support balance the need for improvement of security and the rule of law that are essential for state formation with the urge to generate quick and tangible economic gains (peace dividends)? How can international support for e.g. security sector reform, policing, and the rule of law, be coordinated with that for the provision of basic services?

Speakers: **Edmond Mulet**, UN Assistant-Secretary General for Peacekeeping

Dr. Dawit Toga, Focal Point for the Sudan, Peace and Security Department, African Union Commission

Chair: **Dr. Werner Puschra**, Director, FES New York

3:15 p.m. **Coffee Break**

3:30 p.m.

Panel 3: Achieving Sustainable Economic and Human Development

Issues:

Democratization: How can independence promote government, parliament, and parties becoming broad-based, inclusive institutions that allow for the meaningful participation of opposition members? How can an inclusive constitutional process be launched that leads to the establishment of institutions and services that are equally accessible to all citizens of South Sudan?

Natural Resources: How should oil revenues be administered and distributed in a socially fair manner to become a driver for South Sudan's peaceful development and economic diversification? Can water sharing agreements become a tool for regional integration? What role for foreign, large-scale land-based investments?

National Ownership: How to make sure that support of international actors is demand-driven, not supply-driven? What national capacities, Diasporas and other expertise are readily available? How to safeguard that domestic absorption capacities are not overburdened by foreign aid?

Aid architecture: What mechanisms are in place, what mechanisms have to be established to safeguard coordination of donors amongst each other and with multilateral bodies (UN, World Bank, EU)?

Speakers:

Dr. David Nailo Mayo, MP of National Assembly of the Republic of South Sudan, Head of Economic and Finance Committee

Raja Jandhyala, Deputy Assistant Administrator, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Dr. Suliman Baldo, Director, Africa Program, International Center for Transitional Justice

Chair:

H.E. Mr. Morten Wetland, Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN

5:00 p.m.

Conference Wrap-up