

## **Statement on the UPR pre-session on South Sudan.**

Hon, Representatives of permanent missions, distinguish ladies and gentlemen.

This statement is being made on behalf of the South Sudan civil Society Coalition on UPR.

The Coalition since the last review focused on engaging and monitoring the prospects for the implementation of the human rights recommendations and among others on transitional justice, human rights and accountability.

Since the outbreak of the conflict in 2013 the country struggles to reverse the consequences of the violence and while a peaceful settlement was achieved through the signing of two peace agreements (2015 and 2018) the state of human rights remain challenging.

Insecurity emanating from the failure to unify the forces, inter-communal violence are some of the factors that have undermined prospects for peace, national reconciliation and accountability.

Since the last review there has been marginal progress in achieving some of the important recommendations made to address human rights and promote national reconciliation efforts. For example,

The need to establish the transitional justice mechanisms as recommended during the last review, is still lagging behind. Of the three transitional justice mechanisms envisaged in the 2015 peace agreement thus, Commission for Truth Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH), the Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS) and the Compensation and Reoperation Authority (CRA), ONLY the CTRH process has started almost six years from the signing of the 2015 peace agreement.

Similarly, South Sudan government was recommended to promote national peace and reconciliation effort however the initiatives so far undertaken have been inadequate and mostly made in response to outbreak of communal violence, rather institutionalising the concept of national peace and reconciliation as a national strategy.

Strengthening national human rights institutions remain a very important aspect of improving human rights in South Sudan however the South Sudan Human Rights Commission is the most underfunded institution in the country and yet with increase incidences of human rights this commission remain important. The Commission's Chair has been acting since his appointment and this has reduced his authority to make decisions as a full chair of the commission.

### **Recommendations.**

1. The government of South Sudan should expedite the process of establishing all the transitional justice mechanisms including the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and allocate sufficient funding to support reconciliation effort and undertake compensation of human rights victims.

2. The government should develop verifiable victim protection program in order to build confidence and reduce the fear of engaging in the transitional justice process.
3. The government should undertake a national consultative process and ensures the drafting of the legislation for the formation of the transitional justice mechanisms are based on the expectation of citizens and not define by the political class.
4. The government should expedite the unification of the forces in order to build strong security apparatus, secure the country and address the threat of insecurity and improve the environment for voluntary return of South Sudanese in the IDPs camps and in the refugee camps.
5. The Unity government should prioritize the strengthening of the South Sudan Human Rights Commission by allocating funding to support its work, Open civic space and promote civil society rights to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly.

I thank you.