



SSANSA WELCOMES CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AGREEMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN

(JUBA, January 28, 2014) – We welcome the signing of a cessation of hostilities between the Government of the republic of South Sudan (GRSS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army - in opposition. (SPLM/A – in opposition) says the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA) today. We urge both parties to respect this significant commitment. GRSS and SPLM/A – in opposition signed this crucial agreement on 23rd of January 2014 at the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in an IGAD mediated peace talks. The agreement is a significant milestone in the journey towards peace in South Sudan. The parties should now move quickly to political talks aimed at finding sustainable solutions to the conflicts and issues that triggered it.

"This agreement demonstrates the commitment of both parties to addressing the current political crisis through dialogue and not military means. It should send a strong message out to the rest of the world that South Sudan does not need a military support to any side but facilitation for inclusive political settlement." Said, Louis K. Mark, program officer at SSANSA

SSANSA is deeply concerned about violation accusations being traded by both parties not long after the agreements entered into force. We urge all the parties to respect their commitment and the care for the people they serve by ending all hostilities immediately in accordance with the cessation of hostilities agreement.

"A continuation of attacks by both sides is a mockery to this agreement to end hostilities and is watering down their own efforts, that of IGAD mediators and the international community that helped reach this agreement. It is an expression of utmost dishonesty about their commitment to end the sufferings caused by this crisis to the peoples the two parties claim to represent." Said, Geoffrey L. Duke, Secretariat Team Leader of SSANSA

We urge the mediators and both parties to ensure that the monitoring mechanism prescribed by the agreement is established immediately and made operational. We welcome that in the agreement, both parties recognize the important role the civil society can play in monitoring compliance of the parties to the cessation of hostilities. We particularly applaud the inclusion of community representatives to monitor compliance alongside other national, regional and international mechanisms. We urge the international community to support the implementation of this agreement. The agreement requires timely gathering and verification of information related to the crisis and directly to the agreement but this can greatly be hindered if the logistics capacity of the monitoring teams are not supported.

We call upon both parties to commit to and focus on efforts of full implementation of the ceasefire agreement rather than focusing on doubts of whether it can be implemented or not. If both parties cease hostilities, it would give an opportunity to appropriately seek resolutions to further allegations that some fighters are under the command of neither of the government nor the SPLM – opposition.

"This agreement will remain just a piece of paper. Its meaning lies in the implementation. The meaningfulness will fundamentally be demonstrated by the actions of both parties through abiding by the terms set forth in the agreement or violating it. And that is how the world will tell which party is truly standing for peace" Concluded Geoffrey L. Duke.

For more information

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South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA) is a nation-wide network of civil society organizations from across the 10 states of South Sudan working to reduce and prevent gun violence in South Sudan. The network was formed to facilitate civil society actions to make communities safer from armed violence. (<http://ssansa.org/>)