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FRIENDS AND DIASPORA OF SOUTH SUDAN URGE LEADERS TO CHOOSE PEACE
UNSC and IGAD Threaten Consequences as Violence and the Threat of Famine Increase

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – August 18, 2014 – Ninety-one individuals and organizations sent a letter to South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir, former Vice President Dr. Riek Machar, and to all South Sudanese military and political leaders who have a role in either choosing to perpetuate or end conflict in South Sudan. These friends of South Sudan, who are calling for an immediate end to violence, include former US government officials, Members of the British Parliament, faith leaders, academics, advocacy and humanitarian organizations, and both Sudanese and South Sudanese.

Since December 15, 2013, when violence broke out in South Sudan that evolved into conflict between the government and opposition forces led by Dr. Machar, the UN reports that tens of thousands have been killed, raped or wounded. Almost half a million are refugees in neighboring countries and over 1.3 million are internally displaced. Flooding caused by the rainy season has deteriorated already inadequate living conditions, creating an even greater risk for the spread of disease, such as cholera, which has been confirmed in three states. UNICEF reports that 6 million are in need of humanitarian assistance and 4 million are in danger of starvation by year-end without donations by the international community and cooperation for the delivery of aid by the warring parties. Peace talks, led by Africa’s IGAD, have stalled and fighting continues with no end in sight. Last week, the UN Security Council paid an emergency visit to South Sudan and with the support of IGAD, threatened consequences for individuals that undermine peace.

The letter, signed by those who care deeply about South Sudan, reminds the country’s leaders of the vision that inspired the international community to support their struggle for freedom, justice and equality; and it urges these leaders to once again demonstrate the same level of pride, determination and unity that ultimately resulted in the independence of South Sudan. The letter urges South Sudan’s leaders to choose peace “by committing now to participating whole-heartedly in the peace process, enforcing the cease fire agreements, ensuring unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, and by doing whatever is necessary to put South Sudan back on track as quickly as possible.”

Supporters of peace in South Sudan are encouraged to add their name to the letter through an online petition at change.org: <https://www.change.org/president-salva-kiir-and-dr-riek-machar-and-all-south-sudanese-military-and-political-leaders-please-choose-peace-participate-in-the-peace-process-enforce-the-ceasefire-ensure-delivery-of-humanitarian-aid-and-do-what-is-necessary-to-put-south-sudan-b>

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Sudan Unlimited seeks to support Sudanese and South Sudanese in their efforts to secure and enjoy freedom, justice, equality, democracy, peace, and prosperity.

Available for interviews:

Allan Reed is recognized by South Sudanese as one of their oldest friends. During Sudan's first civil war after independence from Britain in 1969-71, Reed established a Southern Sudanese refugee hostel in Gambela, Ethiopia as a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher. He served as an extensive foreign witness during the civil war, walking 3,000 miles with rebel Anya-Nya forces in Upper Nile, Equatoria, and Bahr-el-Ghazal. Reed filmed and narrated a documentary based on his travels with Anya-Nya that was telecast by NBC-TV on the "First Tuesday" Program that was featured in September 1971. During this time, 1970-71, he frequently spoke on BBC's "Focus on Africa" radio broadcasts about war in Southern Sudan; he wrote the feature article for the inaugural issue of "Grass Curtain," published by Southern Sudan Association in London; and he researched possibilities for emergency humanitarian assistance to Southern Sudan for the Ad Hoc Sudan Consort. In 1972-74, Reed served as the Deputy Area Coordinator for Sudan Council of Churches/Commission for Relief and Rehabilitation in Wau, Bahr-el-Ghazal. Later in 1982-85, he backstopped USAID's program in Sudan from AID/Washington, Africa Bureau. In 2003-05, Reed established and directed USAID's Sudan Field Office from Nairobi to support operations in Southern Sudan; and in 2005-08, he re-established and directed USAID's office and program operations in Southern Sudan following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In October 2010 through January 2011, Reed was seconded on temporary duty from USAID/Bosnia to support USAID assistance to the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission.

Allan can be reached at (415) 290-8004 or ayonallan@yahoo.com.

FULL TEXT OF LETTER

August 18, 2014

Dear President Salva Kiir, Dr. Riek Machar and all South Sudanese military and political leaders,

We write to you as friends of South Sudan and members of the Diaspora. At your request and at the request of the South Sudanese people, we have invested our lives and resources to support your great and costly struggle for freedom, justice, equality and peace.

With you, we envisioned a new South Sudan where a government that reflected and represented the people of South Sudan would govern in a manner that would provide protection, security and stability throughout the country. With you, we believed the resources of the country, including donations from the international community, would be used to build roads and the necessary infrastructure that would enable the development of South Sudan in ways that would protect the near-pristine environment of South Sudan while attracting investors, opening up markets and creating employment opportunities that spurred economic growth. With you, we saw a bright future where every South Sudanese had access to education, healthcare, clean water, proper sanitation, food and basic necessities that would allow them to work beside you to build a strong and prosperous nation.

We were shocked and profoundly saddened by the violence that engulfed South Sudan in December and we are deeply disappointed that it continues today, eight months later, with no resolution in sight. As you are aware, instead of facing the bright future we envisioned together, the people of South Sudan are suffering and dying from violence, disease and malnutrition. South Sudan remains dependent on the international community for assistance and security while it contributes to regional insecurity that threatens the continent.

While the situation is dire and could evolve into decades of conflict that was experienced and is ongoing in Sudan, we believe another way is possible because we have witnessed Southern Sudanese accomplish, through sheer determination, what some believed was impossible. In 2011, Southern Sudanese participated in a near perfect demonstration of the democratic process because of their commitment to a vision of a better future. This Southern Sudanese pride and determination that showed the world then what you can accomplish together is needed today more than ever.

The last eight months cannot be erased and they must be dealt with in order to establish a strong and united country that can weather the storms ahead, but these last eight months do not need to define South Sudan or its future. You can do that by committing now to participating whole-heartedly in the peace process, enforcing the cease fire agreements, ensuring unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, and by doing whatever is necessary to put South Sudan back on track as quickly as possible. We, as friends of South Sudan and members of the Diaspora, remain committed and stand ready to support any effort that benefits the people of South Sudan.

Please choose peace.

Sincerely,

Andrew Natsios
Former USAID Administrator
Former U.S. Envoy to Sudan

The Baroness Caroline Cox
House of Lords, Westminster, UK
CEO, Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART)
United Kingdom

Lord Alton
House of Lords
London, UK

The Rt Hon the Lord Luce KG GCV
House of Lords
London, UK

Baroness Tonge
House of Lords
London, UK

Baroness Kinnock
House of Lords
London, UK

Paul Flynn MP
House of Commons
London, UK

Mark Lazarowicz
MP for Edinburgh North & Leith
House of Commons
London, UK

Nic Dakin MP
House of Commons
London, UK

Roger Gale MP
House of Commons
London, UK

Allan Reed, Long-time friend of South Sudan
Gwendolyn Reed, Former Matron of Juba Hospital, Church World Service
Fija Reed, Former Solidarity with South Sudan Volunteer
Silver Spring, MD USA

Amute Francis Lobalu, Human Rights Officer
South Sudan Human Rights Commission
Juba, EES South Sudan

Eric Reeves
Northampton, MA USA

James Majur Ater, Chairman
SPLA/Veterans in Diaspora Organization
Kansas City, MO USA

Pam Omidyar, Founder & Chair
Randy Newcomb, President & CEO
Humanity United
San Francisco, CA USA

Natasha Kieval, National Student Director
STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities
Washington, DC USA

Hon. Thomas H. Andrews, President and CEO
United to End Genocide
Washington, DC USA

Ruth Messinger, President
American Jewish World Service
New York, NY USA

Richard Parkins, Executive Director
American Friends of the Episcopal Church of SS/Sudan (AFRECS)
Alexandria, VA USA

Professor Greg Miller, Chair
South Sudanese Covenant Committee
Christ Episcopal Church Poughkeepsie
Poughkeepsie, NY USA

The Reverend Heidi McGinness
Director of Outreach
Christian Solidarity International-USA
Denver, CO USA

Anita Sanborn, President
Colorado Episcopal Foundation
Denver, CO USA

Bishop Duncan M. Gray, III
Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi
Jackson, MS USA

Mark Koenig, Director
Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations
New York, NY USA

The Reverend Ronald D. Culmer, Rector
St. Clare's Episcopal Church
Pleasanton, CA USA

Paul Perkin, Vicar
St. Mark's Battersea Rise
London, UK

The Venerable William Clay Parnell
Archdeacon for Mission
The Episcopal Diocese of New York
New York, NY USA

Rev. Dr. Alan Arnold, Moderator
Trinity Sudan Ministry
Lexington, SC USA

Rev. John Calhoun
Concord, CA USA

Dr. Rev. Debby Bellingham
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Faith McDonnell, Director of Religious Liberty Program and Church Alliance for a New Sudan
The Institute on Religion and Democracy
Washington, DC USA

Ahmed H. Adam, Visiting Scholar
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President, Genocide Watch
Research Professor, George Mason University
Arlington, VA USA

Dr. Joseph Agolory
Research Scientist
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Texas A&M University
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Dr. Samuel Totten, Professor Emeritus
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
Fayetteville, AK USA

Dr. Caroline Fari
University of Texas at Austin
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Nasredeen Abdulbari
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Nagla Ahmed
2010 Human Rights Advocate
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Edmund Yakani, Executive Director
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Dr. Thon Paul Agok, Managing Director
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Juba, South Sudan

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Voice for Change (VFC)
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Pretoria, South Africa

Elisabeth Achan, Executive Director
Windows for Sudan

Jacob Berry
Darfur Mission
Kampala, Uganda

Hannah Todd, University of Cambridge
Intern, Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART)
United Kingdom

Olivia Warham, Director
Waging Peace
London, England UK

Dr. Jacky Mamou, President
Collectif Urgence Darfour
Paris, France

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African Freedom Coalition
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Debra Dawson, President
African Soul, American Heart
Fargo, ND USA

Joan Hecht, President
Alliance for the Lost Boys of Sudan
Jacksonville, FL USA

Laura Limuli, Coordinator
Brooklyn Coalition for Darfur &
Marginalized Sudan
Brooklyn, NY USA

Roz Duman, Founder & Director
Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action
Denver, CO USA

Richard Sribnick, MD, Chairman
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Columbia, South Carolina

Martha Boshnick, Co-Chairman
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Gerri Miller, Founder
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Never Again Coalition
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Neiki Ullah, Communications Director
New York Coalition for Sudan
New York, NY USA

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Pittsburgh, PA USA

Sharon Silber, US Representative
Society for Threatened Peoples
New York, NY USA

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Birmingham, AL USA

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