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DECLARATION OF THE AU HIGH-LEVEL AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH SUDAN (C5) PLUS AT THE LEVEL OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

VIRTUAL SUMMIT

29 SEPTEMBER 2026

DECLARATION

WE, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) High-Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan (C5), under the leadership of H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the C5, convened a virtual summit of the C5 Plus at the level of Heads of State and Government on 29 September 2026, on the situation in South Sudan.

We reaffirm the AU's continued commitment to supporting peace and political stability in the Republic of South Sudan, take stock of ongoing efforts to implement the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), and propose actionable measures to support the peaceful conclusion of the transitional period and the conduct of credible, inclusive and transparent general elections scheduled for 22 December 2026.

The C5 Plus Summit was attended by the following high-level participants:

- **H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa**, President of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the C5;
- **H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit**, President of the Republic of South Sudan;
- **H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh**, President of the Republic of Djibouti and Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD);
- **H.E. Abdelmadjid Tebboune**, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, represented by Hon. Sifi Ghrieb, Prime Minister;
- **H.E. Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno**, President of the Republic of Chad, represented by General Ahmat Kogri, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration, and Chadians Abroad;
- **H.E. Bola Ahmed Tinubu**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by Ambassador Sola Enikanolaiye, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs;
- **H.E. Paul Kagame**, President of the Republic of Rwanda, represented by Mr. Olivier J.P Nduhungirehe, Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- **H.E. Yoweri Museveni**, President of the Republic of Uganda, represented by Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka, Minister of Defence;
- **H.E. Dr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud**, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, represented by Hon. Abdisalam Abdi Ali, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation;
- **H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed**, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, represented by Dr. Gedion Timothewos, Minister of Foreign Affairs;

- **H.E. Dr. William Ruto**, President of the Republic of Kenya, represented by Hon. Abraham Kithure Kindiki, Deputy President;
- **H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf**, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), represented by H.E. Selma Malika Haddadi, Deputy Chairperson;
- **H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu**, Executive Secretary of IGAD; represented by Amb. Moussa Djama Ali, the IGAD Special Envoy, South Sudan;
- **H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete,** former President of the United Republic of Tanzania and AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea; and
- **H.E. Geoffrey Onyeama**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and Head of the AU Pre-election Assessment Mission (PAM) to South Sudan.
- **H.E. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga**, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU);

Following extensive deliberations and briefings on measures to further strengthen and enhance support for the effective implementation of the R-ARCSS, and for the conduct of peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent elections scheduled for 22 December 2026;

WE HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **RECALL** the Declaration of the African Union (AU) High-Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan (C5) adopted during the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) High-Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan (C5) Plus Summit, under the chairship of H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and the Chairperson of the Committee, held on the margins of the thirty-ninth (39th) Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Addis Ababa on 15 February 2026, and recognizing it as a credible pathway for the international community's support for the People and Government of South Sudan;
2. **TAKE NOTE** of the progress made in implementing the R-ARCSS, particularly the relative reduction in large-scale conflict achieved under the Permanent Ceasefire, while **EXPRESSING CONCERN** over renewed hostilities and reported ceasefire violations, and the commitment of the South Sudanese authorities to hold credible, transparent and inclusive general elections on 22 December 2026; **REAFFIRM** that the R-ARCSS remains the only viable and paramount framework for the country's political transition, as well as for sustainable peace, development and prosperity;

3. **STRONGLY URGE** the parties to comply fully with the provisions of the R-ARCSS and demonstrate commitment to its full implementation; in this regard, **CALL UPON** all parties to immediately cease hostilities, uphold the Permanent Ceasefire, refrain from unilateral measures that undermine the Agreement, to engage in a constructive National Dialogue process, which is meaningful, thorough, inclusive and transparent and, to **ENSURE** that all stakeholders concerned participate in the dialogue without preconditions with a view to building trust for the stability of the country;

4. **COMMEND** the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for appointing H.E. Jakaya Kikwete as the AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, with particular focus on South Sudan; **WELCOME** the engagements of the High Representative, including his recent shuttle diplomacy to South Sudan and his sustained mediation efforts and commitment to peace; and **ENCOURAGE** the Special Envoy to continue engagements to support the full implementation of the R-ARCSS;

5. **TAKE NOTE** of preparations in South Sudan towards holding the general elections in December 2026 and **STRESS** the importance of the stakeholders to address the political, technical, operational, financial, legal and security requirements necessary for a peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent electoral process; **WELCOMES** the pledge by the Federal Republic of Nigeria of technical support including capacity building for electoral officers on electoral management, civic and voters education, developing modalities for registration of IDPs, refugees and returnees, post-election dispute resolution process, and training on election security and deployment on election day;

6. **TAKE NOTE** of the commencement of the Inter-Party Dialogue on Election-Related Matters on 24 September 2026 as an important step towards addressing outstanding electoral issues; and **ENCOURAGE** the concerned parties and stakeholders to engage constructively towards agreement on the electoral roadmap and guarantees for the implementation of deferred critical transitional task post-election; **CALL** for a broader and inclusive political participation in the process, including women and youth and **CALL FOR** continued engagement with opposition parties and other stakeholders currently outside the dialogue, with a view to taking their concerns into account and building wider political consensus around the electoral process and the peaceful conclusion of the transition, and **REQUEST** the AU High Representative to provide a Platform for the hold-out groups to engage with the Government of South Sudan, with a view of taking their concerns into account;

7. **COMMEND** the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for deploying the AU Pre-Election Assessment Mission (PAM) to South Sudan, which was led by H.E.

Geoffrey Onyeama, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and **REQUEST** the Chairperson of the AU Commission to take urgent action on the implementation of the mission's findings regarding the key political, legal, technical, operational, financial, and security prerequisites required to ensure a peaceful, credible, inclusive, and transparent electoral process in accordance with the R-ARCSS;

8. **RECOGNISE** the continued cooperation and significant role of the AU, IGAD, Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC), the United Nations and other regional and international partners in supporting the peace process in South Sudan;

9. **EXPRESS DEEP CONCERN** over the deteriorating humanitarian situation affecting millions of people, marked by acute food insecurity, displacement, and limited access to essential services and aggravated by flooding, disease outbreak and the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in neighbouring Sudan; **STRONGLY CONDEMN** attacks against humanitarian workers, medical personnel and facilities; **URGE** the South Sudanese authorities and all parties to ensure safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access and the protection of civilians**.** In this regard, **CALL UPON** the Government of South Sudan to ensure unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance, and the protection of humanitarian workers and civilians consistent with international humanitarian law and international human rights law; **FURTHER CALL UPON** international partners, donor agencies, and humanitarian actors to continue mobilising resources to meet the pressing needs of affected populations;

10. **APPEAL** to the Government of South Sudan to consider the recommendations of the AU PAM to South Sudan and to publish a feasible, consensual and time-bound electoral roadmap that clearly sets out the legal basis, scope and sequencing of elections; **ENGOURAGE** AU Member States and international partners, in a position to do so, to provide the necessary technical and financial support in response to verified electoral needs and the nationally agreed electoral roadmap, to the AUC by October 2026, based on national consensus; and **RECOMMIT** to strengthened coordination and cooperation among the AU, IGAD, C5, R-JMEC, and the UN;

11. **CALL ON** the Government of South Sudan to make available predictable, adequate and timely fiscal and budgetary resources to ensure the full operationalisation and capacity-building of key transitional institutions including the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC), the National Elections Commission (NEC), and the Political Parties Council (PPC), towards earnest preparation for credible and peaceful elections;

12. **WHILE REAFFIRMING** unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and stability of the Republic of South Sudan; **CALL ON** the Government of South Sudan to take urgent steps towards consolidating the progress achieved and to lay the groundwork for a successful organization of the elections including the consideration of releasing all political detainees, especially Dr. Riek Machar, in the spirit of national cohesion and reconciliation;

13. **CONDEMN** the fatal ambush on the joint United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) patrol in Jonglei State, which resulted in the death of three Ethiopian UN peacekeepers and the injury of seven others; CALL on the authorities to immediately investigate the incident while ensuring the protection of civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian and medical personnel; **FURTHER EXPRESS** deepest condolences to the families, the Government, and the People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the UN family for the loss. In this regard**, CALL** for the full respect of the Permanent Ceasefire;

14. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the pressing need for coordinated support to the South Sudanese authorities to facilitate effective implementation of the R-ARCSS, **WHILE REAFFIRMING** the primary responsibility of the Government of South Sudan to finance and implement its commitments, **RECOGNISE** the offers made by Member States to extend technical assistance in support of the peace process and preparations for the elections; **REQUEST** Member States, particularly the C5 and international partners, to provide voluntary and needs-based technical assistance, including support for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform, electoral processes, and related technical, financial and logistical requirements, in line with verified needs and the nationally agreed electoral roadmap.

15. **FURTHER REQUEST** the African Union Commission, in consultation with IGAD and the United Nations, to establish a joint AU-IGAD-UN subcommittee (Taskforce) under the auspices of the C5, working closely with the AU High Representative, mandated to support preventive diplomacy efforts, strengthen coordination among stakeholders, monitor progress in the implementation of agreed measures and provide political oversight and strategic guidance in support of the sovereign ownership of the peace process and the conduct of peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent elections in South Sudan;

16. **REAFFIRM** the unwavering commitment of the C5 Committee to support and accompany the Government of South Sudan and the people of South Sudan in this critical phase of the transition in their aspirations to reach a lasting peace ushering in prosperity and development; and **COMMIT** to ensure the full

implementation of this Declaration; and **DIRECT** the AU Commission to follow up on its implementation; and

17. **REMAIN** seized of the matter.