

Media Release



Pact Policy Paper on the Upcoming Referenda in Abyei and Southern Sudan

Juba, December 1, 2010: With just six weeks until Sudan's referendum on self-determination, Pact has issued a policy briefing on the upcoming referenda and popular consultations in Sudan, entitled *It's not too late for Peace*. In the paper, Pact urges the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) to ensure the referendum is free, fair and above all peaceful, regardless of the outcome of unity or secession.

Pact is aware of the hurdles; delay in voter registration and legibility, the Abyei border issues and logistical requirements; that both signatories have gone through to ensure that the referenda take place as scheduled in the CPA. We acknowledge the great milestone achieved with the commencement of the registration of voters and the setting up of referenda centres all over the country. However, both parties are being called upon in this paper to put their differences aside and ensure that the popular consultation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, and referenda in Southern Sudan and Abyei do come to pass.

Pact offers actionable recommendations to the northern and southern governments, as well as the international community, to help foster a peace before, during and after the vote.

The parties involved should expedite the process and ensure that delays in the implementation of the referenda in both Abyei and Southern Sudan are removed and the objective of the CPA is preserved as the SPLM and NCP made a commitment at the signing of the pact.

The civil society, citizens, the government, observers and the international community are appealed to in the document to work jointly to ensure that adequate security measures are put in place to ensure that voters are given space and are assured of a secret ballot to determine the future of their country.

“While these threats are significant, the potential for peace should not be underestimated. Therefore, the governments of north and south, civil society leaders and the international community should strive to ensure non-violent, free and fair referenda in Southern Sudan and Abyei.” – An extract from the document.

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About Pact Sudan

Pact Sudan is a capacity building organization that operates in the 10 states of Southern Sudan and in the Three Areas; Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Our programmatic focus areas are peacebuilding, natural resource management and, provision of safe and clean drinking water.