

*12 April 2014*

Call for Action on South Sudan

We are here today in Washington, D.C., in solidarity with the people of South Sudan, who are in desperate need of help. Despite a Cessation of Hostilities agreement, fighting has continued, causing tremendous suffering and large-scale displacement inside and outside the country. This is a man-made disaster. All parties need to urgently work together to create the conditions for peace and stability to return to South Sudan.

On behalf of the United States of America, the European Union, and the United Nations, we express our deep concern over the five million people in need, the 800,000 people who are internally displaced, and the 280,000 who have fled to neighboring countries. We thank those countries for hosting refugees from South Sudan.

Humanitarian agencies have reached more than one million people with life-saving aid. But this is just a fifth of the people in need. We call for immediate and unconditional access for the UN and humanitarian organizations to reach people in need across all areas of South Sudan.

More must be done.

The next three months are critical. Protecting people from violence is essential. Prevention of communicable diseases, especially among displaced people, is key as the rainy season approaches. We are already seeing extremely high rates of malnutrition amongst displaced people and the communities helping to host them. People need to be able to plant crops before the rains and have access to other sources of humanitarian assistance in order to avert a catastrophic decline in food security which could affect up to seven million people.

We must protect civilian communities and deliver food, seeds, tools, shelter, health and nutrition, and water and sanitation.

We must deliver these supplies to the parts of the country where people need them most. We must do this despite the fighting, the insecurity, the rainy season, and the bureaucratic obstacles.

We must ensure an adequate level of response to the most acute needs of refugees in the neighboring countries, and we must take into account the very specific need in terms of protection for thousands of children, women, and unaccompanied minors who are the majority of the displaced. It is also very important to remember the host communities that can be put under tremendous pressure in already very fragile contexts.

With this joint declaration, we call for action on three fronts:

First, we call on parties to the conflict to stop fighting.

Second, we urge all donors and States to provide the \$232 million needed to fund vital aid operations over the next three critical months. Humanitarian workers are on the ground, and with these funds can deliver.

Third, we call on the parties to the conflict to respect the people of South Sudan and to abide by international humanitarian law. Parties must end attacks on civilians and civilian objects, stop the recruitment of child soldiers, and respect medical and civilian humanitarian relief personnel.

The international community must stand by the people of South Sudan in its hour of greatest need. Unless action is taken now up to a million people could face famine in a matter of months.