COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH SUDAN

FEBRUARY 2026



This publication summarizes key findings of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, from its report presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council in February 2026.

Based on witness interviews and other independent investigative activities conducted in South Sudan from January to December 2025, the report examines the human rights situation, identifies responsibility for human rights violations, and offers recommendations to improve the situation.

Established by the Human Rights Council in 2016, the Commission comprises three members. They are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are supported by a Secretariat in Juba, South Sudan.

KEY FINDINGS

The peace agreement is collapsing

Power-sharing arrangements were undermined through detentions, dismissals, and military actions. Plans for elections in late 2026 are unrealistic amidst ongoing repression, expanding conflict, and heightened atrocity risks.

Airstrikes marked a dangerous escalation

Airstrikes in seven states mostly targeted opposition-affiliated areas. Civilians were killed, maimed and displaced from aerial bombardments by government forces using incendiary bombs in attacks on civilian populations.

Legal processes politicized

Opposition leaders were arbitrarily detained and prosecuted in proceedings marked by serious due process violations and executive interference.

Civilians suffered the most

Mass displacement, forced recruitment of boys, child abductions, and widespread sexual violence continued. These violations were systematic and strategic. In 2025, internal displacement rose by almost 40 per cent, to 3.2 million people.

Transitional justice remains stalled

Ten years after leaders committed to transitional justice, none of the three promised institutions have been established, entrenching impunity.

Grand corruption is fueling crisis

Corruption is fuelling multiple crises and killing people. Billions in oil revenue have not benefited citizens. Economic mismanagement and elite capture are driving instability and undermining rights.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Restore and fully implement the Revitalized Agreement now

- End attacks on civilians
- Release arbitrarily detained leaders
- Protect judicial independence and civic space
- Establish the Hybrid Court
- Ensure transparent and accountable economic governance

2025: A YEAR OF RENEWED CONFLICT

A Fragile Peace Unravels

In 2025, South Sudan moved closer to renewed large-scale conflict. Relentless and deliberate obstruction of peace and accountability, and concentrating power deepened political instability and violence. Violations of the ceasefire and the Revitalized Peace Agreement increased at levels not seen since 2018.

Power-sharing arrangements fractured. Transitional institutions stalled. Political authority became increasingly centralized. Regional peace efforts weakened, including the abandonment of the Tumaini Initiative. By December 2025, proposals to amend the Revitalized Agreement — including removing its legal supremacy and delaying constitutional reform — further undermined its foundations.

Escalation of Violence

In late February 2025, fighting intensified around Nasir in Upper Nile State. On 4 March, Nuer militia overran a government garrison. Opposition leaders were arrested in Juba. An UNMISS evacuation helicopter was attacked, killing South Sudan Peoples Defence Forces (SSPDF) commander and a UN crew member. Hostilities spread throughout the year.

By late 2025:

- Armed groups issued calls to mobilize
- Opposition forces formed new alliances
- Civilians were ordered to evacuate areas
- Government restrictions blocked vital humanitarian food aid to conflict areas
- Airstrikes and clashes intensified

The risk of a return to full-scale war became increasingly visible.

A Regionalized Conflict

In March 2025, Ugandan forces deployed into South Sudan. Joint aerial bombardments followed, expanding the conflict's regional dimension. South Sudan also became more entangled in the war in Sudan, adding further political and security risks.

Political Detentions and Purge

Senior opposition leaders spent most of 2025 in detention. The politcally motivated arrest of First Vice President Riek Machar in March marked a major rupture in the transition. Judicial independence was questioned. The African Union described the detentions and dismissals as violations of the peace agreement. The Government's recognition of a splinter opposition faction and removal of opposition officials echoed patterns seen before the collapse of the 2015 agreement.

Economic Crisis and Corruption

Corruption and economic mismanagement continued to undermine recovery. State institutions remained captured by a narrow political-military elite, while public resources were diverted away from essential services. Fiscal instability deepened. Senior political appointments reflected concentration of power within a narrow circle. These dynamics fuelled instability, weakened governance, and deepened suffering.

Humanitarian Impact

Civilians bore the heaviest burden. Violence, displacement, sexual violence, flooding, and economic hardship deepened an already severe humanitarian crisis. Displacement rose sharply, while declining assistance left many communities without adequate support. Women and children were disproportionately affected.

South Sudan entered 2026 with a derailed transition and rising atrocity risks. Without urgent action to restore political dialogue, accountability, and protection of civilians, prospects for peace remain fragile.

AIRSTRIKES

In 2025, the Commission recorded airstrikes led by the SSPDF in seven of South Sudan's ten states. These airstrikes were marked by attacks on civilians and indiscriminate bombings.

When and where the airstrikes began?

Most airstrikes occurred in Jonglei and Upper Nile States, particularly in counties predominantly inhabited by the Nuer community. Through an official government document titled "*Strategic Response of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity to the Nasir Incident and Reinvigoration of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS),*" the ruling SPLM-IG declared these areas "hostile" and aligned with the SPLM/A-IO. The document labelled nine of sixteen Nuer counties as hostile to the Government of South Sudan.

The Commission analysed images showing victims and attack sites, corroborated by witness testimonies. The evidence indicates the use of a wide range of weapons and munitions, including heavy machine guns and improvised incendiary devices.



"Containers of flammable materials were dropped from aircraft, causing fires and burning victims

Many victims suffered severe and extensive burns, suggesting prolonged exposure to intense heat, rather than injuries usually caused by standard military weapons. Fire damage was also visible in destroyed buildings and surrounding areas, where remnants of containers were found.

"Images of infants maimed or killed by bombs flooded social media, yet these grave violations continued. Air operations require high-level authorisation.

Airstrikes Across Seven States in 2025



Civilians Targeted



Hospitals Attacked



Over half a million people displaced



Aircraft arsenal

Mi-24 Helicopters



Fixed-wing aircraft



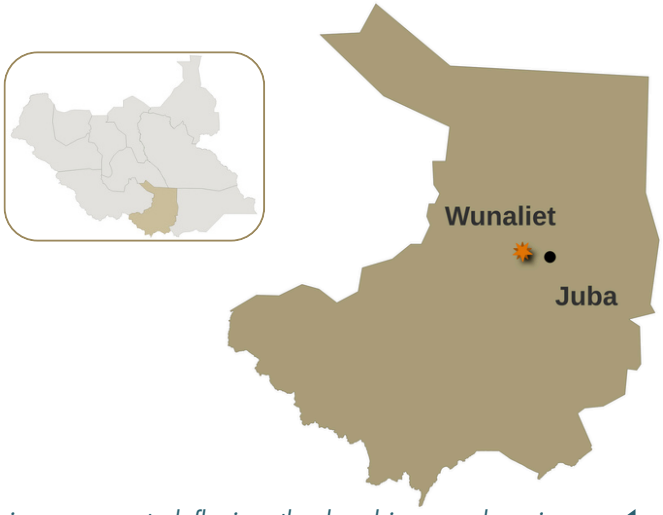
Bell-412 Helicopters



The use of multiple aircraft alongside ground forces points to a high level of planning & coordination.

Airstrikes near the capital

On 24 March 2025, SSPDF and Ugandan forces launched an offensive 15km west of the capital Juba. The attack targeted a cantonment site occupied by SPLM/A-IO since 2019. This marked the first recorded airstrike against any SPLM/A-IO base in South Sudan, violating the 2017 ceasefire and the 2018 Revitalized Agreement.



On 24 March, an SSPDF spokesperson told media that the Chief of Defence Forces was monitoring the situation in Wunaliet and appealed to SPLM/A-IO forces to remain within their cantonment sites. That night, SSPDF bombed the area.

Flight data shows a Cessna Caravan circling the area during the bombing. The aircraft arrived from Uganda that afternoon, operated in and out of Juba.

Eyewitnesses reported fixed-wing aircraft circling the area and dropping barrels filled with liquid, which burst into flames, engulfing grasslands and tukuls.

Survivors recounted fleeing the bombings and seeing other civilians being burned by fire, including a boy burnt beyond recognition.

On 25 March 2025, in since-deleted posts on X, Uganda's Chief of Defence Forces declared that its forces had bombed SPLM/A-IO, and threatened the survival of Nuers.

The Commission documented rape and other violations committed by SSPDF soldiers against Nuer civilians during accompanying ground operations.

ANALYTICAL FINDINGS

- Evidence including aerial surveillance, troop movements, and public statements by South Sudanese and Ugandan military leaders shows joint planning and authorization at senior levels.
- The bombing targeted civilians or was indiscriminate, constituting serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.
- Attacks on SPLM/A-IO's cantonment violated the 2017 ceasefire and 2018 Revitalized Agreement.

Aerial attack on a hospital in Jonglei

On 3 May 2025, helicopters struck Old Fangak Town, hitting a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) hospital, market and public offices. The attack destroyed the hospital pharmacy and medical supplies. Seven people were killed and 27 injured.



MSF facility in Old Fangak after the aerial attack on 3 May 2025

One week earlier, SPLM-IG declared Fangak County, under SPLM/A-IO administration, a "hostile area".

The hospital was well known to military authorities, clearly marked as a medical facility with large signage.

The SSPDF later acknowledged "strategic bombings" in the county, following earlier warnings of "punitive aerial and riverine actions."

The attack triggered mass displacement, with over 110,000 people fleeing. By the end of the month, displacement in Old Fangak County was estimated at 50,000 people. The attack is a gross violation of international law, including special protections for medical facilities.Nobody has been held accountable.

ARMED CONFLICT

Western Equatoria

Western Equatoria remained a major conflict hotspot in 2025. Since 2020, political and military actors resistant to power-sharing have mobilised ethnically targeted violence against Azande and Balanda communities.

In 2025, tensions escalated into direct clashes between SPLM-IG and SPLM/A-IO forces — patterns later replicated in other states.



How the Crisis Escalated

After SPLM-IG and SPLM/A-IO agreed in December 2024 to dismantle unlawful checkpoints, SPLM-IG selectively enforced the policy, triggering direct hostilities.

- **6 January 2025:** The South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) occupied an SPLM/A-IO position at Boo Bridge, triggering clashes.
- **10 February 2025:** President dismissed Governor Alfred Futuyo (SPLM/A-IO nominee) and replaced him unilaterally.
- **12 February 2025:** SSPDF Forces overran the SPLM/A-IO's cantonment near the state capital.

Expansion of Fighting

Fighting intensified throughout the year. In June 2025, SSPDF forces took control after two months of clashes. An airstrike was reported in Nagero County in October.

By December, SPLM/A-IO had lost key positions, despite its continuing ambush operations. Control shifted through force rather than negotiation.

Impact on Civilians

The violence devastated communities across the state. In 2025, ethnically targeted attacks escalated into direct fighting between SPLM-IG and SPLM/A-IO forces — patterns later seen in other states.

Civilians were abducted and killed while gathering food. Children were recruited into armed groups, and sexual violence against women and girls persisted. Food insecurity worsened as humanitarian access remained restricted.

Impunity continues to enable violations by all parties to the conflict. The relative safety of Tambura Town was precarious following the withdrawal of UNMISS peacekeepers in late 2025.

Military force and administrative measures were used to consolidate political control, in violation of ceasefire commitments and international law. The State's failure to protect civilians breaches its international legal obligations.

The Commission identified SSPDF and SPLM/A-IO commanders responsible for serious crimes, including individuals previously named who have never been held accountable. Impunity continues to drive repeated violations.

ARMED CONFLICT

Upper Nile and Jonglei states

Conflict erupted in southern Upper Nile State in February 2025, then spread into Jonglei State, expanding into its interior by December 2025. SPLM-IG ignored calls to deploy a neutral force to address insecurity in Nasir, instead deploying partisan armed forces which triggered clashes and preventable escalation.

Throughout 2025, airstrikes and clashes involving multiple armed forces and militias continued. By January 2026, renewed fighting was accompanied by hate speech against Nuer civilians by political and military leaders. The Commission publicly warned of a significant increase in atrocity risks.

Accounts of Civilian Killings

Civilians were targeted in SSPDF military operations, causing immense suffering. Survivors shared harrowing accounts with the Commission:

- Families were burned alive in their homes during aerial attacks.
- Civilians were executed by ground forces.
- A displaced woman described waking in terror as bombs fell on her family compound.
- One witness reported Agwelek militia killing his young nephews on their farm.
- Others saw elderly civilians shot and killed.

Accounts of Sexual Violence

Multiple armed groups committed sexual violence against women and girls. Women who fled the Nasir garrison reported severe sexual violence by Nuer militia, who said the attacks were punishment for being married to Dinka soldiers. Rapes were also reported during operations to retake Nasir by forces under SPLM-IG. Widespread fear of sexual violence intensified mass displacement.

Chronicle of Conflict



Early February 2025: SSPDF mobilized alongside allied Shilluk Agwelek and Dinka Abushok militia in Malakal.



15 February 2025: Agwelek militia leader General Johnson Olony addressed forces and started the Nasir offensive.



19 February 2025: SPLM-IG forces advanced east along the Sobat River towards Nasir, clashing with militia in Baliet and Ulang counties.



Late February 2025: Airstrikes commenced in Ulang County, in civilian areas.



4 March 2025: Nuer militia overran the Nasir garrison, killing scores.



7 March 2025: The garrison commander was killed during an UNMISS evacuation operation.



16 March 2025: Aircraft bombarded Nasir, Longochuk and Ulang counties, killing civilians including children suffering severe burns consistent with incendiary bombs.



May 2025 through January 2026: Airstrikes intensified along Upper Nile and Jonglei.

Aerial bombardments and ground operations by SPLM-IG forces immiserated civilian populations through forced displacement and denial of basic needs. Despite famine warnings and intensifying child malnutrition, authorities blocked food aid to opposition areas.

Over half a million people were displaced by conflict in Upper Nile and Jonglei states in 2025. The Commission identified armed forces and militia members as responsible for gross human rights violations.

FORCED RECRUITMENT

In 2025, government security forces abducted boys and young men from the capital Juba and transported them to fight militia in Upper Nile. While all conflict parties have been implicated in forced recruitments, SSPDF are responsible for most cases.

In March 2025, joint security forces under SPLM-IG command launched a forced recruitment campaign in Juba. On 9 June 2025, a spokesperson announced plans to recruit 3,000 soldiers for training in Malakal. Later that month, Juba police also announced a crackdown on alleged "gangs". More than 600 youth were detained, and reports indicate that some were forcibly recruited.

The Commission interviewed survivors, families of missing persons, and witnesses. Many victims were not told why they were detained. Others were told they would be sent to fight in Nasir. Some youth were released only after families paid ransom.

Testimonies suggest that many youth abducted in Juba were likely killed during military operations. The Commission also found that Agwelek militia and other forces forcibly recruited boys and young men in Malakal, including children from multiple states.

> **Evidence implicates senior SSPDF leadership in forced recruitment, coordinated with other forces under SPLM-IG. Companies involved in transporting abducted youth may also be complicit.**

The campaign in Juba reflects wider patterns of impunity and the failure to implement security sector reforms. These abductions, detentions, and forced recruitments constitute gross violations of international human rights law. The grave violations against children amount to serious crimes.

The Forced Path: From Juba to Upper Nile

1 *Boys and young men captured in Juba*



2 *From Juba, they were airlifted to Malakal*



3 *Upon arrival in Malakal, youth were taken to a barracks, issued uniforms, weapons, & ammunition*





4 *They were then transported eastwards on crowded trucks*



5 *Some managed to escape; Others received basic military training at Gel Achiel Payam*



6 *Then they were forced to fight in conflict zones against Nuer militia*

GRAVE VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN

Children in South Sudan continued to bear a disproportionate and worsening burden of conflict in 2025. Escalating hostilities, the breakdown of security and governance, and widespread impunity led to repeated and grave violations against girls and boys, including forced recruitment, abduction, sexual violence, killing, and maiming. These violations are systemic, ongoing, and continuing into 2026.

What they suffer?

Abduction from homes, farms, schools, and roads

Sexual violence, rape, and forced pregnancies

Killing and maiming during clashes, bombings, and attacks

Severe burns and blast injuries from aerial bombardments

Detention, captivity, and abuse in military sites



How children are targeted?

Forcibly recruited into armed forces and groups

Used as fighters, porters, guards, or cooks

Girls held as sexual slaves and forced "wives"

Forced to carry out domestic labour for armed actors

Compelled to participate in violence, including killings

Lasting impact on children

Deep psychological trauma, including depression and aggression

Loss of empathy, shame, and social isolation

Disrupted education and loss of childhood

Family separation and mass displacement

Long-term physical injuries and untreated health conditions

Why these violations continue?

Children in South Sudan continued to bear a disproportionate and worsening burden of conflict in 2025. Escalating hostilities, the breakdown of security and governance, and widespread impunity led to repeated and grave violations against girls and boys, including forced recruitment, abduction, sexual violence, killing, and maiming. These violations are systemic, ongoing, and continuing into 2026.

Grave violations against children are not isolated incidents.

They are systematic, ongoing, and driven by impunity.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual violence against women and girls remains a defining and persistent feature of the conflict in South Sudan. In 2025, the Commission again documented widespread, systematic, and strategic sexual violence, continuing established patterns that remain unaddressed.

Ground and aerial military operations, displacement, detention, and the presence of armed forces created coercive environments in which sexual violence flourished. Entrenched impunity, repeated hostilities, and the failure of State protection continue to enable these crimes.

How conflict leads to sexual violence and lasting harm



TESTIMONIES COLLECTED BY THE COMMISSION

Victims and witnesses told the Commission that sexual violence was often ethnically targeted. Survivors said perpetrators demanded to know their ethnic identity before assaults and used it to justify rape. One woman described being raped in front of her children as punishment for being Nuer.

Sexual violence is widely used in detention sites. Women described being held in military barracks, chained, and raped by multiple soldiers. Men also experience sexual violence, including rape with objects and severe genital beatings, often accompanied by humiliation and denial of medical care.

Women and girls abducted by armed actors said they were held in captivity, repeatedly raped, and treated as property, including being claimed as soldiers' "wives" and subjected to sexual slavery and forced pregnancy.

Many survivors said they did not report the crimes due to fear, shame, stigma, and risk of retaliation. One girl who became pregnant after rape said her family forced her to hide the crime to protect her child. Survivors repeatedly described their attackers as "those in power," reflecting the impunity behind these violations.



- **Sexual violence in South Sudan is systematic, strategic, and enabled by impunity.**
- **Without justice and accountability, it will continue.**

DETENTION AND PROSECUTION OF OPPOSITION LEADERS

Government security forces began detaining SPLM/A-IO members on 4 March 2025, after Nuer "White Army" militia overran the Nasir military garrison. On 9 September 2025, one-page handwritten chargesheets were issued for eight Nuer SPLM/A-IO leaders detained in March, and access to lawyers was finally permitted. On 22 September, they were prosecuted together in a consolidated trial, which has continued into 2026.

The eight accused face charges of serious crimes. However, no detailed indictments have been issued, and the chargesheets provided to each accused person do not contain the essential factual details required for an effective defence. The prolonged detentions without charges violate their core rights.



Riek Machar

First Vice President and SPLM/A-IO Chairperson, detained without charge and denied legal counsel for over 5 months.

On 9 September 2025, charged with 18 offences, including for serious crimes carrying the death penalty or life imprisonment:

- Murder
- Treason
- Crimes against humanity

With the main opposition leader detained, negotiated power-sharing arrangements collapsed. President Salva Kiir unilaterally dismissed Machar and other opposition leaders from government posts. The SPLM/A-IO further fragmented, and armed conflict intensified.

Timeline

4 March 2025 — Arbitrary detentions begin, amidst violence in Nasir

7 March 2025 — President publicly declares "White Army" is under SPLM/A-IO command

26 March 2025 — Riek Machar placed under de-facto house arrest

28 May 2025 — Chief Justice and his deputy replaced by unexplained presidential decree

11 September 2025 — Charges formally announced against the eight accused

22 September 2025 — Trial commences in a Special Court

Violations in the legal process

The conduct of State institutions and leaders involved serious violations of domestic and international law. This included prejudicial public statements by government officials that undermined the presumption of innocence, as well as unexplained dismissals of senior jurists indicating interference with judicial independence.

The absence of a credible investigation was reflected in the lack of factual findings presented by an opaque investigation committee. Serious violations of fair trial rights were also observed, including interrogations conducted under duress without access to legal counsel. In addition, prolonged arbitrary detentions reflected the failure of courts to effectively constrain security forces and protect fundamental rights.

The allegations

Prosecutors allege that SPLM/A-IO leaders exercised command responsibility over "White Army" militia that attacked the Nasir military garrison. The defendants have rejected this accusation. The Commission and other entities have previously described the "White Army" as a broad label for Nuer militia that lack centralized command or a formal structure.

While such militia have at times fought alongside SPLM/A-IO forces, the assertion that the SPLM/A-IO exercised control over militia in Nasir during March 2025 remains highly contested and is not supported by the Commission's findings. Authorities have also not enabled a credible investigation into the events in Nasir.

ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

A Decade of Delay

In 2015, South Sudan's leaders committed to establishing three independent transitional justice institutions:

- The Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing
- The Hybrid Court for South Sudan
- The Compensation and Reparations Authority

Ten years later, in 2025, none has been established. As a result, impunity has deepened, structural drivers of conflict remain unaddressed, and gross human rights violations continue. Without independent transitional justice institutions:

- Victims remain unheard
- Serious crimes go unpunished
- Public trust erodes
- Political tensions deepen
- Conflict risks increase

Delays and procedural violations discourage victims and weaken confidence in reform.



The Hybrid Court: *Urgent and Necessary*

The Hybrid Court for South Sudan remains essential. The failure to establish the Hybrid Court is profoundly damaging. The Court would ensure credible, impartial and effective investigation and prosecution of past and ongoing atrocity crimes.

Its absence:

- Enables continued impunity
- Undermines fair trial standards
- Weakens domestic accountability

The Hybrid Court would have prevented the serious shortcomings seen in the trials of opposition leaders. The Court would provide a trusted forum to address serious crimes and leave a lasting legacy for accountability. Clear timelines, operational benchmarks, and safeguards must now be agreed to move the Court forward.



Truth Commission: *Limited Progress, Major Gaps*

On 24 January 2025, the process to establish the Truth Commission and the Reparations Authority began.

- October 2025 – Panel formed to select four South Sudanese Commissioners
- 23 January 2026 – Names submitted to the Ministry
- AU and UN began selecting three African Commissioners

Despite these steps, the Truth Commission has not been established. The selection process fell short of legal requirements. Victims and civil society were excluded from key stages. Selected names were not published. The process lacked transparency, adequate funding, and meaningful public participation.

Ten Years After the Promise: Justice Still Delayed

Transitional justice cannot remain a promise;
Without accountability, peace will remain fragile.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Between 2011 and 2025, South Sudan earned approximately $24.5 billion from oil exports and received more than $3 billion in unrepaid oil-backed loans.
Yet:

- Hunger and extreme poverty affect most of the population.
- Public services have collapsed.
- Civil servants have gone unpaid for nearly two years.
- South Sudan ranks at the bottom of global development indicators.

The sustained diversion of public resources by politically connected elites has hollowed out State institutions. Corruption is a central driver of the country's economic crisis, political instability, and human rights violations.

Private Capture of Public Revenue

After the Commission exposed corruption involving Crawford Capital Ltd. in its September 2025 report – *Plundering a Nation: How Rampant Corruption Unleashed a Human Rights Crisis in South Sudan* – the company expanded control over revenue systems through "e-Services." In December 2025, a presidential decree mandated its use across government institutions.

The company sought control of aviation overflight fees worth up to $5 million per month. The Commission found that individuals linked to senior political elites benefit from the company's ownership structure, reflecting a fusion of public authority and private enrichment.

Oil for Roads
A $2.2 Billion Corruption Scheme

Between 2021 and 2024, the Commission found that Benjamin Bol Mel was central to the "Oil for Roads" scheme, which diverted approximately $2.2 billion off-budget.

- Few roads were built.
- Revenue flowed into patronage networks.

From February to November 2025, Bol Mel oversaw government economic policy, highlighting how corruption is entrenched at the highest-levels of decision making

Regime security over Food security

For the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the Ministry of Presidential Affairs overspent its allocation by 5,873%, while the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security spent only 16% of its budget, and the National Election Commission spent almost nothing. These stark distortions demonstrate a clear prioritization of regime security and political power over food security and democratic processes.

The sustained mismanagement and diversion of public resources have direct consequences for economic and social rights. Unpaid salaries, collapsing services, and deepening poverty are not incidental outcomes, but predictable results of systemic corruption.

The Commission finds that South Sudan's economic collapse is not the result of resource scarcity, but of systemic diversion of public wealth. Financial opacity, off-budget expenditures, and institutional capture have transformed economic governance into a mechanism of political survival rather than public service delivery, directly affecting economic and social rights.

CONCLUSION

Impunity and elite capture of State institutions continue to drive conflict and violations in South Sudan. Civilians bear the consequences through violence, displacement, and deepening hardship. Preventing a return to full-scale war requires urgent action.

The failure to implement the Revitalized Peace Agreement — especially security and justice reforms — has fuelled renewed conflict and weakened civilian protection. Arbitrary detentions and unlawful prosecutions of opposition leaders have undermined trust and destabilized the transition.

Aerial bombardments, forced recruitments, and attacks against civilians show planning and authorization at high levels. Women and children continue to bear the heaviest burden, facing sexual violence and grave abuses enabled by impunity.

Corruption and economic predation continue to finance conflict, weaken State institutions, and deprive citizens of basic rights and services. Without addressing these structural drivers, instability will persist.

Credible transitional justice is urgently needed. Domestic courts cannot deliver accountability. Establishing the Hybrid Court and restoring respect for the Peace Agreement are essential to protect civilians and secure lasting peace.

South Sudan's leaders must end predation, repression, and armed violence that harm the population, violate human rights, and obstruct peace and development. Urgent national, regional, and international engagement is needed to protect civilians, restore the rule of law, and support a path toward lasting peace.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of South Sudan

- Immediately cease aerial bombardments, forced recruitment, and violations of international law.
- Withdraw politicized charges against SPLM/A-IO leaders.
- Repeal National Security Service arrest and detention powers.
- Cease actions undermining power-sharing and judicial independence.
- Hold elections only with minimum security, legal, and political safeguards.

To all Armed Forces & non-State Armed Groups

- Cease attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure.
- Guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access.
- Enforce command responsibility, especially for sexual violence and violations against children.
- Prohibit attacks on medical and humanitarian actors, including in aerial operations.

To the African Union & IGAD

- Enforce compliance with the Revitalized Agreement.
- Establish a high-level regional mechanism to restore the transition.
- Immediately operationalize the Hybrid Court with clear, time-bound benchmarks.

To UN Member States & International Partners

- Support regionally-led stabilization efforts.
- Fully fund humanitarian and civilian protection operations.
- Apply targeted sanctions against individuals credibly implicated in serious crimes, consistent with international law.

To the United Nations System

- Prevent instrumentalization of UN engagement.
- Prioritize civilian protection and humanitarian access.
- Condition political support on demonstrable respect for fundamental freedoms and legal obligations.