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Declaration on behalf of the EU on South Sudan

Despite all the efforts to resolve the crisis over the past six months, fighting in South Sudan has continued. Many thousands of innocent people have lost their lives. Over one and a half million have been displaced. Millions more face the risk of famine. Appalling human rights violations and crimes against humanity have taken place.

The warring parties have so far failed to make any significant progress in the IGAD-mediated peace talks. Commanders and political leaders continue to obstruct the peace process. Perpetrators of gross human rights violations are enjoying impunity. It is unacceptable that the cessation of hostilities agreements signed on 23 January and reconfirmed on 9 May continue to be breached.

The European Union is determined to do everything possible to avert further suffering of the people of South Sudan. Today, the EU has therefore decided to adopt as a first step restrictive measures against individuals responsible for obstructing the IGAD-led peace process, breaching the ceasefire and committing egregious human rights violations.

It is now time for the South Sudanese leaders to rise to the challenge and start negotiating in good faith towards a peaceful, equitable and sustainable solution. Full implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the rapid resumption of talks leading to the formation of a transitional Government of national unity is the only way the South Sudanese people can be spared further violence and famine and begin to recover from the violence and desperation of recent months.

For the people of South Sudan, peace and independence has been a prize of inestimable value, hard won after years of civil war. They expect their leaders to act with courage, conviction and honesty to break with the past and usher in a new period of peace and prosperity. The European Union will continue to stand by the South Sudanese people and those who are acting for peace.

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