



The South Sudan Civil Society Forum

For immediate release

Civil Society Forum Condemns Cancellation of a Panel Discussion on the Constitution History of South Sudan by National Security Service

(Juba, June 17, 2021) The South Sudan Civil Society Forum condemns the cancellation of the “Panel Discussion on Constitutional History of South Sudan” on July 17, 2021, by the South Sudan National Security Service. The event was part of a series of panel discussions aimed at creating an environment for youth to discuss, understand and own the constitution and its review process as provided for in the 2018 Peace Agreement.

National Security officials stormed the venue of the event just before its commencement ordering its immediate cancellation, on claims that there “There is no constitution in the country” that “Only parliament is authorized to discuss the constitution and reconstituted parliament is yet to resume sessions”. The NS officers proceeded to confiscate the banner of the event but returned it later.

The Forum considers the cancellation of this event a gross violation of the constitutional rights of citizens to freedom of expression, association and assembly and a deliberate move to undermine citizens’ participation in the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement

The Forum encourages the National Security Service to support citizens to engage in such peaceful and constructive activities to prevent citizens energy being negatively used in perpetuating violence, destruction, and social fragmentation.

The Forum further urges the Security Service to uphold its founding Principles as stipulated in Article 6 of the National Security Service Act, 2014, which emphasizes the need to be subject to the authority of the Constitution and the law; respect the will of the people, the rule of law, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; while exercising professionalism in its mandate which focuses on information gathering, analysis and advice to relevant authorities.

The Forum looks forward to improved relations between the National Security Service and the ordinary citizens as it endeavors to support citizens’ constructive and effective participation in the search for lasting peace in the country.

The South Sudan Civil Society Forum (SSCSF) is a coalition of more than 200 independent civic groups including civil society organizations, women and youth groups, academia, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations from across South Sudan. The SSCSF was established in December 2017 to provide unified contributions from civil society to the High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) and now act as a bridge between the peace process and the South Sudanese population.