



Republic of South Sudan  
National Elections Commission

## COMMUNIQUÉ

### National Elections Commission Operational Planning Retreat Entebbe, 3-5 December 2024

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the National Elections Commission of South Sudan, convened a three-day consultative planning meeting in Entebbe, Uganda from 3-5 December 2024 to prepare for elections in December 2026. The meeting focused on challenges and possible solutions related to the electoral legal framework, electoral timelines and preparations for elections, to enable decision-making that will lead South Sudan to credible, transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections.

#### **The National Elections Commission,**

**Acknowledging** the two-year extension of the transitional period, under the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), with the envisaged elections in December 2026;

**Recognizing** the need to align the electoral timelines with the extension of the R-ARCSS and **noting** the challenges and opportunities it presents, and therefore, **stressing** the need for key political decisions required on the alignment of various processes, including Constitution-making and census, to be taken for the NEC to deliver on their mandate and conduct credible elections by December 2026;

**Calling upon** its members to convene and to discuss the implications and impact of the recent extension vis-à-vis the implementation of elections, identifying the main priority topics related to the electoral process, including timelines, budget, legal framework and operational readiness for voter registration and boundary delimitation;

**Underlining** the need to take decisions to allow sufficient time for preparations of key electoral operations due to commence in early 2025, including a national voter registration programme, boundary delimitation, in addition to civic and voter education activities. Additionally, adequate funding is needed to enable the NEC to be a fully functional institution across South Sudan – this includes the necessity of functional office space at the headquarters and across the nation, in addition to being fully staffed in order to plan and administer the electoral processes, including voter registration;

**Reaffirming** its commitment to agree on a strategy to mobilize national election stakeholders to reach December 2026 elections, and **encourages** the Government of South Sudan to agree to realistic implementation plans;

**Further reaffirming** the need to agree on a strategy to mobilize adequate resources for election operations and **calling** upon the Government of South Sudan to ensure timely disbursement of funds

– noting that the absence of the aforementioned political, legal and timeline decisions risks compromising the implementation of a credible electoral timeline;

**Expresses Appreciation** to the United Nations Integrated Electoral Assistance Team for its continued support.

## Resolutions

We, the undersigned Commissioners of the National Elections Commission, resolve that:

1. The NEC implements the electoral process based on the agreed upon legal framework. Urgent reform and clarity of aspects of the electoral legal framework is necessary to allow the NEC to implement credible elections by December 2026. The NEC will develop a detailed list of required amendments and clarity needed in order to address gaps, operational challenges and inconsistencies for consideration by political leadership and lawmakers.
2. In order to achieve elections by December 2026, there should be acknowledgement that political, financial and operational decisions must be finalized in the beginning of 2025 to allow for voter registration preparations and implementation to proceed in 2025. Preparations for an in-person nationwide voter registration exercise during the next dry season beginning in late 2025 need to begin now.
3. The NEC is developing a realistic electoral operational timeline to reach elections by December 2026. This electoral timeline will outline the political decisions, legal, technical and financial needs of the NEC in order to get to December 2026 elections. The timeline will state when the NEC requires these key decisions, including when the NEC needs the finalized legal framework in place for December 2026 elections.
4. As a priority, the NEC will immediately begin the planning and preparations for a national voter registration programme.
5. Any boundary delimitation process needs to be transparent and allow for sufficient consultation before being adopted by the NEC. A political decision on which population data is to be used must be taken by the Parties to the R-ARCSS before the NEC can begin the boundary delimitation process. These decisions need to be taken in line with the technical and legal electoral timeline needs of the NEC.
6. The NEC will develop an advocacy and engagement strategy to ensure broad discussion and awareness of electoral stakeholders enabling them to take informed decisions in a timely manner.
7. The NEC has agreed on a list of action points in order to expedite the implementation of the above resolutions.

## Adoptions

We, the undersigned Commissioners of the National Elections Commission, also adopted and signed the following:




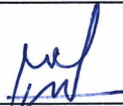





- a) Regulation No. 1/2024 on the Use and Purpose of a Code of Conduct, with the National Elections Commission Code of Conduct (for NEC commissioners and employees) and the respective Code of Conduct by the Commission;

- b) Regulation No. 2/2024 on Observers, Media Representatives, Agents and Special Guests with four Codes of Conducts (for observers, media representatives, agents and special guests);
- c) Regulation No. 3/2024 on Election Campaign with a Code of Conduct (for Political Parties and Candidates during Election Campaign).

## SIGNATORIES

### NEC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1. Hon. Professor Abednego Akok Kacuol Tong  
Chairperson, NEC
2. Hon. Gabriel Gabriel Deng  
Deputy Chairperson, NEC
3. Hon. Mac Maika Deng  
Chief Electoral Officer, NEC
4. Hon. William Kolnyin Deng Deng  
Commissioner, NEC
5. Hon. Amos Juma Ochieng Odek  
Commissioner, NEC
6. Hon. Manuel Makum Matuop Thian  
Commissioner, NEC
7. Hon. George Lemi Stans Yata,  
Commissioner, NEC
8. Hon. Thabo Abosuh Ajang Alijok  
Commissioner, NEC
9. Hon. Sarah Daniel Gatluak Lul  
Commissioner, NEC

  
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*Signed on 5 December 2024*

*Entebbe, Uganda*