



Be "One in a Million" Catholics

Thank President Obama for his work to ensure a peaceful referendum in Sudan

Urge him to remain actively engaged during this post-referendum period

Take Action Now! Thank President Obama for his Administration's work to ensure a peaceful referendum in Sudan and urge him to remain actively engaged during this post-referendum period.

Why is action important now? After decades of war between the north and south, the people of southern Sudan held a referendum this January on whether they should secede or remain unified with the north. It seemed unlikely that the referendum would be possible, let alone be as successful and peaceful as it was. The referendum is now over and its official results are scheduled to be released on February 14th, and implemented in July 2011.

However, the hard work to ensure peace and stability in all of Sudan is far from over. Many of the peace agreement's provisions that brought an end to the north-south civil war in 2005, known as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, remain unsettled such as border demarcation, citizenship, oil revenues, and debt allocation as are concerns for the security and rights of minorities remaining in the north, and tensions in the border areas of Abyei, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile. Likewise, the suffering and insecurity of the people in Darfur must be resolved to bring peace and development to the region.

Why are President Obama's actions crucial now? President Obama's active and sustained engagement on Sudan is widely seen as critical to ensuring that a peaceful referendum was held. Bishop Howard Hubbard, of the USCCB and CRS President Ken Hackett remark that: "Only weeks ago it seemed unlikely the people of southern Sudan would have the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination. That such an exercise was possible, let alone as successful and peaceful as it was, is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Administration and others of goodwill." They urge President Obama to continue his active engagement so that peace and stability can take hold in Sudan for the long-term and to support significant and sustained humanitarian and development assistance to help consolidate progress.

What does the situation in Sudan have to do with my Catholic faith? Our Catholic faith calls on us to uphold the life and dignity of every person and to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters everywhere. Conflict in Sudan has already cost millions of lives, displaced millions more, and deepened widespread poverty. As Catholics, we must take action to prevent violence and save lives as well as assist our neighbors in need.

How is the Catholic Church promoting peace and stability in Sudan? The Catholic bishops of Sudan have worked tirelessly with their ecumenical brothers to promote peace in their country, and together, CRS and USCCB have been working with the Church in Sudan to avert conflict, assist people in need, and promote reconciliation.

CRS has worked in Sudan since 1972 and is currently active in Darfur, south Sudan, and in the capital, Khartoum. Working in partnership with the Catholic Church in Sudan and affected communities, CRS provides humanitarian assistance to meet the immediate basic needs of people affected by violence and promotes long-term development as well as peace efforts that strengthen civil society and civic education.

For more information, <http://peaceinsudan.crs.org/> or contact:

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