

## UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases

Meetings Coverage  
Security Council

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**10161ST MEETING (AM)**

**SC/16374**  
**29 May 2026**

### **Security Council Renews Sanctions on South Sudan for One Year, Adopting Resolution 2821 (2026) amid Concerns Measures Are Hindering Progress**

The Security Council today extended for one year the sanctions imposed on South Sudan, including asset freezes, travel bans and an arms embargo — amid concerns expressed by some speakers that the African position on the issue is being overlooked and that sanctions are hindering progress towards lasting peace.

Resolution 2821 (2026) (to be issued as document [S/RES/2821\(2026\)](#)) was adopted by a recorded vote of nine votes in favour (Bahrain, Colombia, Denmark, France, Greece, Latvia, Panama, United Kingdom, United States) to none against, with six abstentions (China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Somalia).

Along with renewing those measures until 31 May 2027, the 15-member organ also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts assisting the 2206 South Sudan Sanctions Committee until 1 July 2027.

The United States drafted the text and led negotiations on it, with no substantive changes from the previous [resolution 2781 \(2025\)](#).

Earlier this year, the Council was [warned](#) that South Sudan risks relapsing into full-scale civil war.

The world's newest country gained independence in 2011, prompting the establishment of a UN peacekeeping mission to support stability. However, fighting between rival factions erupted in its capital Juba and quickly spread nationwide in 2013, triggering a major political and security crisis. A 2015 peace agreement collapsed soon after it was signed, but a Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South

Sudan — signed in 2018 — led to the formation of a Transitional Government. Yet, violence and political tensions persist.

## Stalled Progress on Peace Agreement Benchmarks

Progress on implementing the 2018 Revitalized Agreement — particularly its five key benchmarks — remains stalled. These include security-sector reform; the formation of unified forces; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; arms and ammunition management; and efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence.

According to the Secretary-General's latest report on the key benchmarks (document [S/2026/330](#)), the period from 2025 to 2026 has been the most difficult since the agreement was signed, marked by stagnation and troubling reversals.

In today's decision, the Council requested the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Panel of Experts, "to conduct, no later than 15 April 2027, an assessment of progress achieved on the key benchmarks established in paragraph 2 of resolution 2577 (2021); including recommendations on appropriate updates to the benchmarks". It also requested South Sudanese authorities to report, by the same date, to the Sanctions Committee on the progress achieved on the key benchmarks.

Sanctions continue to divide the Council. When the regime was [last renewed](#) through resolution 2781 (2025), nine members voted in favour while six abstained —a similar voting pattern to today's.

The representative of the United States, while welcoming today's adoption said her delegation is "disheartened by the lack of progress on the benchmarks and the continuing deterioration of the political and security situation" in South Sudan. This is due to the lack of political will in the country, she said, calling on President Salva Kiir and other South Sudanese leaders to return to direct dialogue to de-escalate the violence.

"It is farcical to suggest that such dialogue is occurring" when one of the signatories to the peace agreement is under house arrest, she added. Urging the Transitional Government to take steps to restore peace, including by declaring a national ceasefire, she said public revenues must be used support the citizens of South Sudan.

Bahrain's delegate expressed hope that the adoption would promote a conducive environment that would enable the transitional arrangements and building of State institutions. Stressing the need for constructive dialogue among all parties, as well as regional and international partners, he reaffirmed the need to respect South Sudan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

## **Abstainers Question Effectiveness of Sanctions**

The representative of the Russian Federation said “these sanctions hamper the successful unfolding of the political process in South Sudan, as well as the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement”. She denounced the text as overly critical of the Government and dismissive of proposed revisions. Stressing that South Sudanese can resolve their own challenges, she said sanctions also undermine economic development and prevent Juba from obtaining even basic military supplies ahead of December’s planned elections. While not calling for an immediate lifting of sanctions, she urged a “significant easing”, in line with the African Union’s position, which she said Western countries continue to ignore.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo’s delegate spoke also for Liberia and Somalia to explain that the three African members abstained due to long-standing doubts about whether the current measures can contribute to lasting peace and stabilization of national institutions in South Sudan. He reaffirmed the need to re-examine the arms embargo, which poses challenges to the implementation of transitional security arrangements and the unification of forces.

The representative of China, Council President for May, spoke in his national capacity, noting that the resolution exerts excessive pressure on South Sudan. “The current text contains several unbalanced statements,” he added. The arms embargo has been in place for nearly eight years and has constrained the Government’s capacity to protect civilians and maintain domestic stability. The Council must listen to the legitimate concerns of Africa.

Pakistan abstained on last year’s draft, its delegate recalled, stating that its position has not changed. Sanctions “should be used judiciously, reviewed periodically and should not become open-ended or punitive in nature”. The deteriorating political and security situation raises important questions regarding the effectiveness of the current sanctions regime.

## **Juba Presses Council to Lift Outdated Arms Embargo**

“The continued maintenance of the arms embargo is increasingly inconsistent with the realities and challenge facing the country today,” South Sudan’s representative said, citing “the obvious lack of consultation” on the text and expressing regret over its adoption. The resolution limits the legitimate capacity of the Government to protect its civilians, secure its borders and respond effectively to threats posed by armed groups and other non-State actors. A case in point is the tragic loss of five civil engineers killed while undertaking road construction in Central Equatoria State.

“Sustainable peace is best advanced through strong national institutions, effective security arrangements and genuine national ownership of the peace process,” he stressed, reiterating a call for the Council to consider the position of the African Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other regional stakeholders that have repeatedly advocated for the lifting of the sanctions regime and arms embargo on his country.

South Sudan

 **For information media. Not an official record.**

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