

South Sudan to Seek International Arbitration Over Disputed Borders - Salva Kiir
By Sudan Tribune
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[Tim McKulka/ UN Photo](#)

A young girl rests on the way to seek shelter after fleeing heavy fighting in Abyei

Juba — South Sudan's President, Salva Kiir informed the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) that South Sudan will seek international arbitration over the disputed border area if the ongoing talks fail.

In his speech to the National Legislature, the two chambers, on Monday President Kiir told the MPs that he is determined to not give up claims to any land south of the 1956 border.

"South Sudan has never relinquish claims to Pantou, homeland of the Panaru Dinka. So the record is clear, we also unequivocally claim Magenes-Jida, Kafia Kingi, Hafra Nahas, Kaka Tijariya, Wheatly Monroe Strip and all territories south to the 1956 border."

Kiir who accused Khartoum of "playing games" told South Sudanese lawmakers that he has written to member of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) over the possible involvement of the Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), if the ongoing post-independence discussions on the matter fail.

"We are prepared to subject our claims to scrutiny. I have now written to the members of the African Union Peace and Security Council to consider this position," he added.

Sudanese and South Sudanese delegations are expected to resume talks on 19 June over security matters particularly the creation of a buffer zone along the border.

Addis Ababa talks brokered by an African Union mediation team failed last week to finalize a deal because the two parties came with different maps.

UN Security Council adopted on 2 May an AUPSC road map to end difference between the two countries over the border and oil fees and other outstanding issues after the capture of Heglig/ Pantou by the South Sudanese army.

The road map gives the parties a three month period to end the talks and threatened to impose economic sanctions.

Last Friday after his return from the meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, in Addis Ababa, Sudanese defense minister told reporter that Juba wants to fail the talks and brings the border dispute before the international justice.

Khartoum and Juba despite the resumption of talks kept troops mobilizations and continue to carry out hostile media campaign against each other.

Salva Kiir, defended his country's decision to halt oil production, saying it was not anger-driven, but done in practical terms to protect the interest of the people and defend the foundations of independence for which lost their lives.

"We offered almost \$3bn [dollars] in assistance for Sudan [to] offset its revenue losses resulting from our independence. We paid all operating fees for oil transport. We offered to negotiate a transit fee above and beyond fair market rates," Kiir told a fully-packed assembly.

"There was no lack of generosity in our dealings with Khartoum. Even so, Sudan wanted more," he added.

"Having exhausted all efforts of diplomacy with, we could no longer secure delivery of crude oil to buyers through the territory of Sudan," said Kiir as lawmakers applauded.

Revenues from oil, prior to the shutdown, accounted for nearly 98 percent of the South Sudan's annual budget.

The President also briefed MPs of events that transpired during their recess period, particularly on the AUPSC communiqué, which was later adopted by the UN Security Council (UNSC) in its resolution 2046. The resolution, he said, called for the complete withdrawal of both Sudan and South Sudanese troops from the disputed oil-producing Abyei region.

According to the President, while South Sudan complied and withdrew its forces 10km away from the 1956 border, Sudan reportedly disagreed, which culminated into last week's deadlock on the ongoing talks facilitated by the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP).

The President also said his office, through the country's Vice-President, Riek Machar is currently looking at the possibility of renewing the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), which on 9, July this year. He said more attention will be focused on the renewal of Chapter Seven mandate of the UN, a decision, which he noted was taken after a careful study.

"We are confident that the Security Council will consider our views with full respect for the sovereignty of South Sudan," he observed.

Meanwhile, Kiir also told MPs that government has put in place a modern financial management information system as part of efforts to improve accountability and transparency all at state finance ministries in South Sudan.

The system, he noted, reportedly tracks records of all revenues generated, what goes out inform of expenditures and these are electronically reflected within the finance ministry at the central level. Such a system, he added, will "discourage fraud, waste and abuse."

Last month, the President wrote to 75 former and current officials asking them to account for at least \$4bn believed to have been misappropriated in dubious dealings, or directly stolen from government coffers. The South Sudan leader also wrote to eight governments in various countries seeking assistance to recover these funds.

