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WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) today released its policy report on Southern Sudan with recommendations for President Obama regarding development in the region. The following is an excerpt from the report:

USCIRF concludes that, should the South vote for independence in the January 9, 2011 referendum, it will be vital to develop the Government of Southern Sudan's capabilities to effectively govern a stable South to ensure regional stability and the protection of human rights. Failure by the Government of Southern Sudan to provide stability will lead to only more insecurity and increased human rights violations, and will make it difficult for service providers to access populations in need of assistance. Limited capacity and infrastructure development also will hinder the GoSS' ability to adequately respond to conflicts and provide services to its population, hurting its credibility. Furthermore, failure to govern in an inclusive, transparent, and democratic manner could inflame divisions within the South, thereby creating challenging conditions for the new nation-state to overcome.

Key findings

- The findings and recommendations found in this report reflect the information gathered during the development forum, Juba trip, and USCIRF's longstanding work on Sudan. Among the key findings include: Southern Sudanese expect the Government of Southern Sudan to provide security, meet citizens' education and health needs, and offer opportunities for economic development;
- The GoSS has little governing capacity, with technical assistance needed at all levels of administration from the GoSS level to state level to address security and basic services needs;
- The international community and Southern Sudanese expect the GoSS to govern in an inclusive and democratic manner, respecting political competition, freedom of association, and freedom of speech;
- Inadequate attention is paid by the international community and the GoSS to developing and working with the Southern civil society, including indigenous non-governmental organizations and religious communities; and
- There is poor international donor coordination and poor coordination between international support and the GoSS.

[Click here to view the entire report.](#)

USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission. USCIRF

Commissioners are appointed by the President and the leadership of both political parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives. USCIRF's principal responsibilities are to review the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally and to make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and Congress.

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