



OFFICIAL STATEMENT

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IGAD Executive Secretary

Peace and Security Coordination Group Meeting

Hilton Hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

March 4, 2025

- Our Distinguished Co-Chair, H.E. **Sune Krogstrup**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, and Sudan, as well as the Permanent Representative to the African Union (AU), IGAD, and UNECA,
- Esteemed IGAD Peace and Security Sector Partners,
- Honourable IGAD Special Envoys:
 - H.E. Amb. **Mohamed Ali Guyo**, IGAD Special Envoy for Somalia, the Red Sea, and the Gulf of Aden,
 - H.E. Amb. **Ismail Wais**, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan,
 - H.E. Amb. **Lawrence Korbandy**, IGAD Special Envoy for Sudan,
- Distinguished **Directors** and **Heads of Programs** of the IGAD Peace and Security Division,
- Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Welcome to this revitalized meeting of the Peace and Security Coordination Group. I begin by extending my heartfelt gratitude to our Co-Chair, H.E. Ambassador Sune Krogstrup, for Denmark's steadfast leadership and commitment as the lead partner in this forum.
2. Your unwavering support exemplifies the spirit of partnership that underpins our collective efforts to foster peace and security in the IGAD region.



3. To our long-term partners, both present and engaged bilaterally, your dedication to the Institutional Strengthening Action Plan and the Joint Financing and Program Arrangements remains the bedrock of our shared mission.
4. As we convene today, the IGAD region stands at a critical juncture. We are living in extraordinary times where the geopolitical landscape is undergoing seismic changes.
5. We are beset by conflict and confrontation simultaneously in the geographical, ideological, economic and ecological theatres. We are grappling with persistent challenges and seeking to identify solutions and emerging opportunities, placing a significant demand on our collective resolve and ingenuity.
6. Allow me to invite us to reflect briefly on the peace and security situation across our region and outline our strategic priorities for 2025 and 2026, as we consolidate gains and align our efforts with the evolving dynamics of the Horn of Africa.

The War in Sudan: A Regional, Continental and Global Imperative

7. The ongoing conflict in Sudan remains a paramount concern for IGAD and its partners. The protracted war has not only inflicted untold suffering on the Sudanese people but has also heightened the risk of fragmentation, with the emergence of parallel administrations threatening the unity and sovereignty of the state.



8. This instability poses a grave risk of conflict spillover into neighbouring countries, notably South Sudan and further undermining the fragile ecosystems of peace in the region. IGAD remains deeply alarmed by these developments and reaffirms its commitment to a coordinated regional response.
9. Through the expanded IGAD-AU-UN mechanism, we have intensified shuttle diplomacy to ensure an all-inclusive yest Sudanese led and owned approach to the anticipated Jeddah II talks.
10. This initiative seeks to bring all relevant stakeholders to the table, including Chad, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Sudanese civilian groups, alongside the principal parties to the conflict.
11. Our goal is unequivocal: a comprehensive, locally driven peace process that restores stability and preserves the territorial integrity of Sudan. I call upon our partners here today to lend their diplomatic and material support to these efforts, as the consequences of failure extend far beyond Sudan's borders.

Transition in South Sudan: Sustaining the Momentum

12. In South Sudan, the pace of the transitional process remains a focal point of IGAD's engagement. While progress has been made under the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), significant hurdles persist, particularly as the country approaches critical milestones in its transition timeline.



13. IGAD, through the diligent efforts of our Special Envoy, continues to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders to ensure the implementation of agreed benchmarks. We urge our partners to sustain their support for capacity-building and resource mobilization to bolster South Sudan's journey toward sustainable peace and governance.

Somalia: Tensions, Terrorism and Truces

14. In Somalia, the relationship between the Federal Government and regional states remains pivotal as the country prepares for upcoming elections. These elections represent a litmus test for Somalia's state-building efforts and its ability to consolidate democratic governance.
15. IGAD remains steadfastly committed to supporting an inclusive electoral process that reinforces national cohesion especially in the face of the continuing threat posed by non-state armed groups such as Al-Shabaab and ISIS that continue to pose a major security threat.
16. Simultaneously, we welcome the re-emerging rapprochement between Somalia and Ethiopia, a development that holds immense potential for regional stability. IGAD stands ready to facilitate dialogue and confidence-building measures to nurture this positive trajectory.



Red Sea and Gulf of Aden: Strategic Considerations and Coordination

17. The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden remain critical arteries of global trade and security, yet they are increasingly contested spaces.
18. IGAD continues to advocate for a coordinated regional approach to maritime security, counter-terrorism efforts and security sector reform under the auspices of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) as well as environmental sustainability in this vital corridor. Our partnership with the international community is indispensable to safeguarding these shared interests.

Northern Ethiopia: Reconstruction and Reconciliation

19. In Northern Ethiopia, the cessation of hostilities has paved the way for reconstruction and reconciliation efforts following the Pretoria Agreement. IGAD acknowledges the resilience of the Ethiopian people and government in this endeavour.
20. However, the scale of humanitarian and infrastructural needs requires sustained multilateral support. We call upon our partners to align their contributions with IGAD's regional framework to ensure a coordinated and impactful recovery process.

Reflections from the 38th AU Summit and IGAD's Leadership Role

21. The recent 38th Ordinary Summit of the African Union, held in February 2025, reaffirmed the centrality of regional economic communities in advancing Africa's peace and security agenda.



22. IGAD welcomes the election of a distinguished leader from our region as Chairperson of the African Union Commission, a testament to the Horn of Africa's growing influence. Moreover, IGAD's assumption of the chairmanship of the Inter-RECs Coordination and Cooperation Platform positions us to deepen collaboration across Africa's regional bodies.
23. These milestones enhance our mandate and responsibility to deliver tangible outcomes for our people in tackling the entire spectrum of peace and security concerns at regional, national and sub-national levels.

Multilateral Engagement and the Path Forward

24. Looking ahead, IGAD remains committed to robust multilateral engagement. In the coming two weeks, we will convene the IGAD-EU Partners Dialogue to further align our peace and security priorities with those of our European counterparts.
25. Additionally, we are preparing for a proposed IGAD Summit, where our Heads of State and Government will address these pressing issues and chart a unified regional course.
26. Today's meeting lays the groundwork for these engagements by revitalizing the Peace and Security Coordination Group as a dynamic platform for reflection, resource mobilization, and security partnerships.



27. IGAD sincerely appreciates the current levels of institutional support for us to anticipate, prevent respond and to security challenges and calls for increased diplomatic, political and material commitment especially during these severely constrained times for our institution, for our region and for global security at large.

Conclusion

28. Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the challenges we face are formidable, ranging from those issues that dominate the headlines to more insidious security challenges such as transnational crime, including AI cyber-insecurity, violent extremism and insurgencies as well as limitations on conflict early warning.
29. Nevertheless, our collective resolve remains strong. The revitalization of this Group underscores our shared belief in the power of transformative partnership.
30. IGAD warmly welcomes new and returning partners who are committed to making a contribution in support our efforts towards delivering peace, stability, and prosperity.
31. I therefore urge you to endorse the 2024 report and the 2025-2026 work plan presented today and together, let us strengthen the Joint Program Arrangement as a vehicle for expanded collaboration and resource mobilisation. We can and should us seize this opportunity to work in partnership to shape a future worthy of the aspirations of our people.
32. I thank you, and look forward to our fruitful deliberations.