



## **Will of the People of Southern Sudan Credibly Expressed Through Southern Sudan Referendum**

*SuNDE and SuGDE Release Preliminary Statement on the 2011 Southern Sudan Referendum*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The Southern Sudan referendum allowed the free expression of the will of the people for self-determination. Turnout was massive, in a peaceful environment, and administrative procedures met national legal requirements in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation.

Though the counting and tabulation stages of the referendum have yet to be completed and the final results are still awaited, our observations show that voter participation far exceeded the required 60 percent threshold and indicated that the final official referendum results will show that people chose a peaceful secession.

While there were important shortcomings, noted in the full statement, none of the shortcomings undermine the credibility of the referendum process.

SuNDE and SuGDE congratulate our fellow citizens in the South and North for this historic accomplishment. We express our appreciation to the referendum officials and government and political leaders of Sudan and acknowledge the support of the international community. We hope and expect that in the immediate period ahead in completing the CPA's agreements, throughout the transition process and beyond that the peoples of Sudan will continue to cooperate peacefully.

This factually-based statement is supported by the more than 11,000 observer reports already received, aggregated and analyzed on the polling, counting, and tabulation processes.

The Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections (SuNDE) is a coalition of over 75 civil society organizations based in all ten States of Southern Sudan whose objective is to promote and protect citizens' participation in electoral and democratic processes. The Sudanese Group for Democracy and Elections (SuGDE) is a joint effort of six independent, non-partisan organizations working with civil society organizations (CSOs) across the North of Sudan to encourage free, fair and non-violent elections and democracy in Sudan. Together, SuNDE and SuGDE organized the largest and only Sudan-wide domestic monitoring effort.

SuNDE and SuGDE deployed over 3200 trained and accredited observers in all 25 states of Sudan and in 6 out of the 8 out-of-country voting locations.

The full text of this statement can be found on SuNDE's website [democracy.sudan.org](http://democracy.sudan.org).