



2011 Referendum – Steps in the voting process

A key provision of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is the holding of a referendum in Southern Sudan in 2011. In this referendum, the Southern Sudanese decide whether Southern Sudan should remain united with North Sudan or secede from it. They will make their choice by participating in a vote.

Polling will take place over a seven-day period starting on 9 January 2011 and ending on 15 January 2011. Voting is from 8.00 a.m to 5.00 p.m each day.

Some key points on the voting process

- Voters will vote at the Referendum Centre where they have registered;
- Only registered voters who have their Voter Registration Card are allowed to vote;
- Each voter must vote in person. Voting on behalf of another person is not allowed;
- Each voter must mark his/her ballot in secret behind the voting screen provided for this purpose;
- It is not permitted to have more than one voter behind the voting screen at a time, except when a voter with special needs is being assisted;
- To prevent double voting, voter registration cards will be punched and indelible ink applied on voters' fingers;
- The elderly, people with disabilities or special needs and pregnant women will be given priority;
- Those who are already queuing when the Referendum Centre closes that day must be allowed to vote.

The following steps must be completed by each voter in order to vote in the Southern Sudan Referendum.

Step 1: Queuing

- Voters with a Voter Registration Card enter the station one at a time;
- Elderly, disabled, sick or pregnant voters will be directed to the front of the queue;

Step 2: Identifying voters

- The voter is checked for traces of indelible ink on his/her fingers/hand. A voter who has visible trace of ink is not allowed to vote;
- The voter must show his/her Voter Registration Card to the Identification officer. If a voter does not have a Voter Registration Card, he or she will not be able to vote;
- The serial number of the Voter's Registration Card is used to find that person's record in the Final Referendum Register;
- If the serial number of the Voter Registration Card is found in the Registration Book, the voter will be allowed to vote;
- The voter applies his/her thumbprint in the designated space on the Registration Book's Entry and proceeds to the Ballot Paper Issuer.

Step 3: Issuing ballot paper

- A hole is punched through the Voter's Registration Card on the top left corner (on the SSRC logo);
- The voter is then issued with a ballot paper which must be stamped on the back with an official SSRC stamp;
- The voter takes the ballot paper to the voting screen to mark the ballot paper in secret.

Step 4: Marking the ballot

- The voter marks the blank circle that corresponds to the symbol of his/her choice. He/she should put his thumbprint in that circle;
- The voter must make only one mark in one circle;
- The voter then folds the ballot paper, leaves the voting screen and deposits the ballot paper in the ballot box;



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- The voter must dip the left index finger in the indelible ink bottle and hold the finger in the air for 10 seconds so that the ink can dry and then immediately leave the Referendum Centre;

Note: If a voter inadvertently spoils a ballot paper or makes a mistake, he/she should request a new ballot paper from the person who issued them with the original ballot paper.

You should ask for a new ballot paper if:

- There is no official SSRC stamp on the back of the ballot paper;
- You have made more than one mark on the ballot paper. You must be careful not to put more than one mark (even accidentally) on the paper;
- Your ballot paper is torn or damaged.

Daily Closing of the Polling Process

The Referendum Centre closes at 5.00 p.m each day. Those voters who are still queuing at the Referendum Centre before the close of the polls will be allowed to vote. Voters that arrive after 5.00 p.m should be advised to return the next day if it is not already the last day of voting (15 January 2011).

Assistance for Voters with Disabilities and Special Needs

It is the policy of the SSRC to make the voting process as easy and convenient as possible for persons with disabilities. Voters with a disability (and their escorts, if any), old people and pregnant women should be given priority and allowed to go to the front of the queue.

Voters who may need assistance to vote include:

- The blind;
- Persons who are physically unable to mark the ballot paper;

- The elderly.

Such persons can be assisted by their escort or by a person of their choice. If a person having no escort requests assistance, the Chairperson of the Referendum Centre can assist the person to mark the ballot in accordance with the preference of the voter they are assisting. The names of the persons who have been assisted by an escort or the Chairperson of the Referendum Centre will be recorded in the Referendum Centre journal.

Assistance for Illiterate Voters

Illiterate voters may ask the Ballot Paper Issuer to read out and point to the two options upon issuance before going behind the voting screen, but they should not be accompanied behind the screen when actually choosing and marking their option.

For further information:

www.ssrc.sd