



The Southern Sudan Referendum Act

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Southern Sudan Referendum Act?

The Southern Sudan Referendum Act of 2009 provides the basic legal framework for conducting the Southern Sudan referendum (on whether the north will remain united with the north or secede) in the region and other locations.

Who is responsible for implementing the Act?

The Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) develops the regulatory framework to implement the law and clarify issues related to the referendum process.

The referendum law states that the SSRC shall be financially, administratively and technically independent and have the authority to organize and conduct the referendum in Southern Sudan and other locations as specified by law.

What is explained in the referendum law?

The law spells out:

- Legal requirements for being included on the referendum register in Southern Sudan and other locations;
- Who is eligible to vote in the referendum;
- Conditions under which the referendum may be delayed or postponed, and actions to be taken to reschedule;
- Corrupt and illegal practices and offences;
- Appointment of an independent media committee to launch a media campaign to

educate Sudanese people in general and Southern Sudanese in particular;

- The referendum question;
- The approval level by which the referendum will be binding;
- The process for counting of votes and declaring results.

What else does the law stipulate?

The law provides for:

- The rights of Southerners to freely express their will by secret ballot;
- A voter registration exercise in which voters establish their eligibility to vote and have their names included on the referendum register;
- A display of the preliminary referendum register to allow for revision of voters' details and objections to names on the register;
- Publication of the final referendum register;
- A campaign period for supporters of a ballot option;
- Basic polling procedures (SSRC is to set the rules for the conduct of the poll and details on the procedures);
- Observation of the referendum and rights of observers to be present during the process.

Who can vote in the referendum?

Eligible voters who live in the south, north and other countries may register and vote in the referendum, provided they meet the legal conditions.

To vote, a person must be registered and have

his/her name included on the Referendum Register. A person must also be at least 18 years old at the time of registration, and be of sound mind.

What are the legal conditions for registering and voting in the south?

A person registering and voting in the south must have a parent from one of the indigenous communities residing in Southern Sudan before 1 January 1956, or whose ancestry is traceable to one of the ethnic communities in Southern Sudan.

Voters can also be permanent residents without interruption, or whose parents or grandparents are residing permanently without interruption, in Southern Sudan since 1 January 1956.

Where can eligible Sudanese vote outside Southern Sudan?

Eligible Sudanese can also vote in North Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Australia, Britain, the United States, Canada and Egypt.

Who may register and vote in the referendum outside Southern Sudan?

A voter whose parent is from one of the indigenous communities that settled in Southern Sudan on or before 1 January 1956 may vote in any referendum centre inside or outside Southern Sudan.

A person whose ancestry is traceable to one of the ethnic communities in Southern Sudan, but who has not resided permanently, without interruption, in Southern Sudan before 1 January 1956, must register and vote in the south.

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