

## A Clarion Call to Action

By Stephen Pande

Welcome to the first edition of SSANSA UPDATE! We hope you'll find this publication useful and informative and maybe you may even feel inspired to add a contribution to the next edition.

SSANSA UPDATE is a quarterly publication of the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA). Its objective is to create awareness about ongoing small arms issues generally and SSANSA affiliate programs specifically.

We have keenly considered the myriad pieces of advice that we received on how we can have a superb magazine with well done write-ups. Our editorial team indeed appreciate your concerns that, in the consequent issues of SSANSA UPDATE, we should have articles on: Some ongoing NGO/CSO/CBO programs (especially those that are SSANSA members or partners), GoSS perspectives on small arms/ community security concerns and socio-academic perspectives on various small arms concerns among others. Thanks a lot for your advice and for your encouraging comments about the initiative to start-up this magazine. We continue to welcome your views on how we can improve it.

In this first issue of SSANSA UPDATE, we are basically introducing the South Sudan Action

Network on Small Arms (SSANSA)—which is a consortia of civil society organizations involved in addressing small arms and related concerns in South Sudan.

SSANSA was conceived during a workshop that took place in Yei, South Sudan in September 2006, which aimed to address the proliferation of and trade in small arms and light weapons across the border regions of Southern Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The workshop identified the need to establish a network to strengthen civil society action on addressing small arms issues in South Sudan and

to represent South Sudanese Civil Society in regional and international small arms processes. (Bishop Paul Yugusuk, the chair person of SSANSA explains the rationale behind the formation of SSANSA in one of the articles in this issue)

Since its formation, SSANSA has made some significant progress. Nineteen civil society organizations (which include some research-based institutions) from various states in South Sudan are now active members of SSANSA. The network has at least one state-based focal person in five of the ten states of South Sudan. Several civil society and community based organizations from various parts of South Sudan have expressed interest in joining SSANSA—and we are

optimistic that the network will soon have a truly reliable and widely representative membership base.

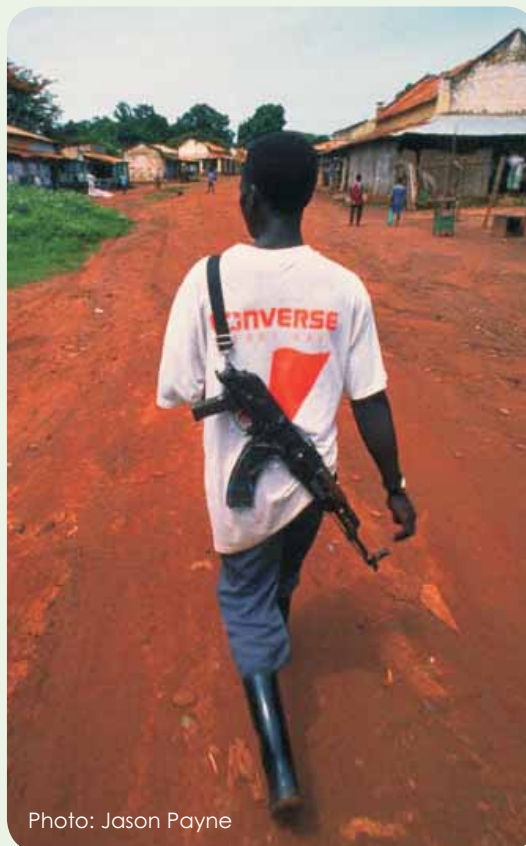


Photo: Jason Payne



SSANSA is slowly but steadily establishing linkages with similarly focused NGOs, relevant Government of South Sudan (GoSS) departments and regional/international actors in the small arms and community security agenda. We have sought the official recognition of SSANSA by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) - and now continuously receive updates and information from the IANSA information desk. Plans are under way for SSANSA to be a member of the East Africa Action Network on Small Arms (EANSA). In a nutshell, SSANSA has tried with considerable level of success to lay down its institutional foundation stone. What remains is to build the walls and have a complete house called SSANSA.

***SSANSA's ongoing and projected programmes are developed from the following priority areas:***

- ***Capacity building and Networking;***
- ***Research and Information Sharing/ dissemination***
- ***Influence on policy formulation and implementation.***

Since its formation SSANSA's inspiration has always come from its founding members as well as from some international NGOs working on small arms concerns in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. We have as well been greatly motivated by some officials from governmental sectors involved in tackling small arms and security. SSANSA's representatives have held meeting and workshops with some

of these stakeholders. We have consistently had very constructive consultative correspondences with them. These stakeholders have in the process advised and encouraged us. Just to mention a few, we indeed feel indebted to; Bonn International Center for Conversion BICC (our partner in doing this magazine), Pax Christ Horn of Africa, Saferworld, UNDDR, FECLAHA, Norwegian Church Aid, Pact Sudan, Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC), Project Ploughshares, Africa Peace forum, Seeds of Peace international, South Sudan DDR Commission, Small Arms Survey and several other organizations that have, in various ways, helped in baby sitting SSANSA at its infancy stage—and enabled it reach what I wish to call SSANSA's crawling stage. We continue to appeal to these organizations to hold our hands as we strive to stand up and walk so that we don't fall.

Lastly, allow me to say, and without fear of contradiction, that SSANSA is actually on the move. Yet this is not without bottlenecks. Perhaps the phrase “teething problems” surface to be a kinder one in reference to SSANSA's current challenges—and just to mention a few of these challenges; First, the regionally based SSANSA steering committee, which was formed in May last year has often found it difficult to convene consistent steering committee meetings due to the long and expensive travels that some committee members have to make from their various states to a central meeting point. Meetings have at times been difficult to convene due to slow information flow caused by the poor infrastructure and an unreliable organizational communication system. Secondly, SSANSA has had difficulties in maintaining existing members, especially because of changes in personnel of member organizations. Third—and perhaps the most tricky challenge at this point in time when there is a lot to be done is that SSANSA lack a coordinating office and its executive personnel work on voluntary basis.

These challenges account for the sluggish pace of SSANSA and it is our hope that this magazine will provide an opportunity for our members and partners to address these concerns. Above all, we continuously welcome similarly focused indigenous and international organizations as well as relevant state sectors to work with SSANSA. Your involvement is our strength for there is much to be done. Let us do it together because together we will achieve the SSANSA vision: An Arms Free South Sudan That is A Celebration of Peace, Security, Respect For Human Rights and Socio-economic Prosperity

The writer is the Editor of SSANSA UPDATE and can found on: [ssansa2006@yahoo.com](mailto:ssansa2006@yahoo.com)

## Introducing SSANSA: The Rationale Behind its Formation

By Bishop Paul Yugusuk

In many countries, civil society organizations play a significant role in tackling issues of arms proliferation and trade. Civil society action on arms is coordinated by action networks on different levels ; Globally by International Action Network on small Arms (IANSA) and countrywide by specific country based action networks such as the Uganda action Network on Small Arms (UANSA) and Kenya Action Network on Small Arms (KANSA). There are regionally based networks—and in the Eastern Africa region, countries that are signatory to the Nairobi Declaration are member of the East Africa Action Network on Small Arms which has its base in Kampala.

In Sudan, we have the Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SANSA). It is distinct from South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA). The former supposedly focuses on the entire Sudan

while the later specifically focuses on Southern Sudan.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement there was the need to start an action network on small arms in the semi autonomous South Sudan. This was necessitated by the fact that arms concerns in the South are radically different from those in the North. The twenty one years of war in South Sudan resulted in a scenario completely different from that in the north. The patterns and trends on availability, movement and use of arms in South Sudan were completely altered by the war. All these factors necessitated the formation of an action network in the South. The need to establish a network to strengthen civil society action on addressing small arms in Southern Sudan and to represent South Sudanese Civil Society in regional and international small arms processes necessitated the formation of SSANSA. The founders of SSANSA keenly considered the fact that South Sudan and Northern Sudan have different socio-cultural, socio-orientation and socio-political worldviews—and that the two semi-autonomous locations are geographically at quite a distance from each other. These differences and factors make it practically impossible for Sudan Action Network on Small Arms to address arms concerns in South Sudan.



Women participating in small arms control workshop in Nimule, Magwi County





SSANSA looks forward to making more linkages with prospective member organizations during the forthcoming workshop on Small Arms Control and the role of civil society—which is being organized by Saferworld in Juba and scheduled for 11–13 March 2008. We will be sharing much about the outcome of the workshop in our next edition

- Georg Ogutu—Cush Community (CCRI) and Jongole state)
- Frazer Andrea—Amadi Institute (Western Equatoria)

The formation of this committee was considerate of the various regions represented at the said workshop. The steering committee members had divided roles as indicated here below;

- Rev. Paul Yugusuk—Committee Chair
- Chuol Toang Dutch—Vice Chairperson
- George Ogutu—Treasurer
- Stephen Pande—Secretary for information and outreach
- Rev. Toby Oduho—Secretary for research
- Frazer Andrea—Secretary for publicity.

I find it necessary to also mention the current SSANSA member organizations. They include: Sudan Evangelical Mission (Mundri), Catholic Diocese of Yambio, ECS Diocese of Yambio, Small Arms Control South Sudan (Nimule), Shalom Sudan (Juba) ECS Diocese of IBBA (Ibba), Yei Christian University (Yei), Kush Community Development International (Jungley), Dry lands Pastoral Mission DPMS (Kapoita/Torit) and Lomega Rural Development Urgency (Lomega/Nimule) among others. There are other organizations that have been involved in SSANSA programs but have not formally joined the network. As we continue to encourage them

SSANSA'S focus and vision was re-affirmed and strengthened at another workshop that it convened in Juba on 14–15 May 2007 in Juba. The workshop, which was promised on the theme: Enhancing Civil society Efforts on tackling Small Arms in South Sudan was a land mark event for SSANSA—thanks to Pax Christi Horn Of Africa and Saferworld which did not only co-fund the workshop but provided and continue to provide the much necessary advice to SSANSA. This particular workshop strengthened SSANSA in a number of ways. Noteworthy is that it ended with the formation of a SSANSA steering committee which continues to oversee SSANSA's programmes to date. The committee comprised of:

- Rev. Paul Yugusuk Shalom Sudan (Central Equatoria)
- Mr. Toby Oduho—Dry lands Pastoral mission Sudan (Eastern Equatorial)
- Stephen Pande Shalom Sudan (Central/Equatoria)
- Chuol Toang—Ulang Development Agency (Upper Nile)

to do so, I wish to thank all the network member organizations who have strived on to keep the SSANSA wheel on track. I thank the SSANSA Steering committee for all they have been doing since its formation. I am indeed grateful to Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)—our partners in the production of this magazine and to all those who have worked tirelessly to see to it that we have a forum where SSANSA members and organizations involved in or intending to be involved in addressing arms issues in South Sudan through which they can voice out their views and share information/experiences.

Lastly I call upon all SSANSA members and specifically the steering committee to take up their respective roles and forge ahead as a united and committed SSANSA. I wish all a Happy New Year and Gods blessings.

The writer is the Assistant Bishop of Episcopal Church of the Sudan, Lomega Area Diocese. He is the chairperson of SSANSA. His email address is: [shalomsudan@yahoo.com](mailto:shalomsudan@yahoo.com)

## Civil Society Action on Small Arms Control in South Sudan

By Joseph Dube

Small arms make a bad situation worse: they increase the lethality of violence in the home, they make armed crime more deadly, and they make peace processes more fragile. And since they are portable and easily smuggled across borders, governments and NGOs need to work multinationally to prevent this man-made disease. Global civil society has recognized this problem and organized into IANSA, which represents 800 groups in more than 100 countries.

It is well known that civil society has a vital role to play in maintaining the security of post-conflict societies such as South Sudan. But sometimes the small arms issue is regarded as something that can only be addressed by military or security experts,



not civil society. IANSA members are working in almost every African country proving that they can play as important a role in promoting human security as in the broader development and humanitarian sphere. IANSA members are involved in the peace process in Congo (DRC), establishing community peace commissions in Mali, small arms destruction in Mozambique, gun-free zones in Namibia, researching routes of illicit small arms in Nigeria, arms for development in Sierra Leone, awareness raising in Somalia and linking armed violence with public health in Zambia. There are many more examples, including the Control Arms campaign for a global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that is slowly starting to bear fruit at the United Nations. Recently, civil society has been part of government delegations at UN small arms meetings and they are also participating on National Commissions or Focal Points on Small Arms.

Post-conflict countries typically suffer high rates of armed crime and violence, fuelled by the proliferation of small arms during the conflict. Many people do not want to dispose of their guns while the security situation is fragile. But strategies to reduce gun deaths and violence can be successful, as they have been in South Africa, where I have been campaigning on this issue for 8 years. South Africa experienced some

of the highest rates of recorded gun homicides in the world. Civil society took action, in partnership with the government. Gun Free South Africa campaigned for a stronger, modernized gun law; the creation of gun-free zones; greater resources for the police, but only combined with greater responsibilities and accountability; gun buybacks and amnesties to drain the existing pool of weapons; and greater awareness of the true dangers of gun possession. This strategy is working. The gun homicide rate is falling in the major cities, and there is an improved climate of security.

Some of the approaches we used in South Africa might be appropriate in South Sudan, some of them might not. In our experience, a good first step is developing a strategy addressing both supply and demand for small arms, and the critical role of action-oriented research when starting to implement the strategy. The 2008 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence, 2–9 June is an opportunity for South Sudanese civil society to link into the global movement. Last year there were events in 65 countries, with

civil society urging their governments to put the safety of their citizens first.

When Gun Free South Africa started, it was rare for governments to partner with civil society on the small arms issue. But since 2001, all UN member states have acknowledged the vital role of civil society on this issue through the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms. Across Africa, governments have established National Commissions to address the problem of small arms control, and most of them have included IANSA members as partners in this campaign. The civil society network in South Sudan may be just starting its work on small arms control, but we at IANSA stand ready to provide whatever support we can.

For more information on civil society activities, visit [www.iansa.org](http://www.iansa.org). Activities by region at [www.iansa.org/regions/](http://www.iansa.org/regions/)

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## Keeping Children Safe From Small Arms

By Lydia Stone

Both in times of conflict and times of peace, children are often the victims of small arms violence. Much has already been said and written about the impact on children when they become child soldiers. However, children in all kinds of situations can come into contact with guns and be injured, either on purpose or by accident. Children are naturally curious (especially when they're told not to touch something!) and accidents can happen when guns fall into young hands.

In November 2007, a group of education experts gathered together in Bor to begin the process of creating a state-wide primary school curriculum on the dangers of small arms for Jonglei State. A three day workshop was organised by Pact





Sudan and facilitated by Elvan Isikozlu and Lydia Stone of the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), a German-based NGO that works on issues of peace and security. Expertise on curriculum creation was provided by Mr. Manasseh Mudanyi, an international educational expert who has been working with the Jonglei Ministry of Education on the creation of a general primary school curriculum. The workshop participants consisted of teachers, head teachers, and state administrators.

During the workshop, participants learned about the definition of small arms and light weapons (SALW), where they come from, the regional and international laws that regulate their use, the dangers they pose to children and youth, and how they can be controlled. Using this information the participants created model lessons and activities that could be used to educate children about the dangers of small arms and help them find other ways of resolving conflict rather than resorting to violence. Participants identified the following subjects as areas of particular concern with regard to children and small arms in Bor County:

- The risk of growing exposure to violent behavior in movies
- Natural curiosity toward guns and explosive remnants
- The risk of using guns for power and revenge



Using the outcomes of the workshop, BICC plans to work together over the coming year with the Education Department of Jonglei State to create a workbook for teachers that will enable them to teach awareness of the dangers of small arms throughout the primary school curriculum. This workshop will be tested for effectiveness in Bor County and we hope that it can be used throughout Jonglei State. We look forward to making the children of Jonglei State safer from small arms!

The writer works with Bonn International Center for Conversion which undertakes various projects in partnership with some organizations in South Sudan. Her email address is [stone@bicc.de](mailto:stone@bicc.de)

## Empowering Community Small Arms Committees: A Grassroots Undertaking of Some SSANSA Member Organizations in the Eastern Bank

By Bishop Paul Yugusuk

Since October last year, SSANSA, in liaison with Shalom Sudan and Small Arms Control South Sudan organized meetings with community

leaders in some parts of the Eastern Bank, at which the community leaders were facilitated to form Community Small Arms Committees. In these meetings, the community committees are capacitated and introduced to SSANSA programs and vision. The objective of this project is to eventually involve the Community Small Arms Committees in addressing critical small arms issues and especially processes of formulating and implementing policies on disarmament and arms control. The conviction is that, if empowered, the Committees are expected to work with and enhance the action of grassroots community based organizations that are already members of SSANSA, most of which are not yet vibrant and organized enough to properly take up advocacy and policy influence endeavors on the otherwise complex subject of small arms and citizen security. These Community Small Arms Committees have successfully formed among the Lulubo, Madi, Acholi and Pari communities. It is expected that the Community Small Arms Committees will not only be effective players in addressing small arms concerns but a major back up to SSANSA member organizations.

Certainly, if equipped with the necessary information and advocacy skills, the Community Small Arms Committees will be effective actors in addressing small arms issues at this point in time when the citizens' voice on issues of disarmament and/or arms control should be

an important aspect of consideration. We look forward to reaching out to and facilitating the formation of Community Small Arms Committees among the other communities in the western parts of Eastern Equatoria, and eventually to communities in other states.

## Some Challenges Faced by Indigenous South Sudanese NGOs Involved in Tackling Small Arms and Community Security Concerns

By Florence Peace Asienso

NGOs experience numerous challenges in their endeavors to organize community based working groups to address small arms concerns. First, they lack adequate information and skills necessary for this endeavor. Second, grassroots based NGOs lack funds to organize themselves in order to address arms issues. Third, indigenous NGOs have the challenge of addressing complex cross-cultural factors intertwined with small arms. It is evident that some NGO workers trying to address arms issues in various parts of South Sudan are handicapped by culture and language barriers. They can as such not be able to source enough information at the grassroots. This is worsened by cultural rigidity evident among some communities especially pastoralist communities—who can hardly be convinced to disarm as they need arms to involve in or prevent cattle raiding. Last but not least, NGOs interested in addressing arms concerns in remote parts of South Sudan cannot easily make inroads because of poor infrastructure generally and inaccessible roads specifically.

Due to such obstacles, most NGOs end up exhausting their budgets before they engage in the actual work of tackling arms concerns. I was glad to hear about the initiatives of the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA), especially their drive to have a South Sudan-





wide network of NGOs involved in addressing small arms concerns. SSANSA should be able to link up involved NGOs and usher them into a joint programme. It should be able to disseminate relevant information to interested NGOs and provide guidance on how the general civil society sector can take up the task of addressing the above mentioned challenges among others. That way, we can together contribute to making South Sudan a safe place to live in.

The writer is an intern at New Sudan Indigenous NGOs Network (NESI). Email address flopeacy@yahoo.com

## Peace-Building Through Organized Traditional Leadership in Controlling Small Arms & Light Weapons

By Dr Alfred Sebit Lokuji, PhD

The use of small arms and light weapons (SALW) among members of traditional societies has reached alarming proportions in recent years. From largely defensive as well as status and

prestige uses, such weapons have become the premier tools for property acquisition, recourse to personal justice, and the weapons of first recourse in any conflict—personal or collective. Prior to the war-induced proliferation of these weapons, they had been tools for personal defense, rather than offense. They were often used ceremonially, such as being fired in funerals, weddings, or other gatherings to signify the importance of the occasion and those in attendance. They were largely owned by elderly people who had acquired the means and the necessary contacts to obtain such a weapon. Obtaining a small arm was of social significance and its owner was recognized as having attained a new level of social standing and statesmanship.

The engulfment of the entire region in wars in Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, DRC, and even Kenya drastically eliminated the problem of supply by making SALW widely available. Ready availability, affordability and free access by membership in a warring faction meant anyone could now own a weapon. Pre-existing hierarchical preconditions for ownership of such weapons were washed away overnight, and the socially acceptable patterns of usage gave way to personal preferences and whims. This is the crux of the problem of small arms and light weapons.

The proliferation of SALW dealt a death blow to traditional authority when military hierarchy became the dominant form of social control—rather than age and wisdom. In this manner, forms of social organization and behavior control that developed over centuries of limited and simple weaponry collapsed under widespread and more potent firepower.

A general awakening to the dangers of the proliferation and usage of SALW is taking root after decades of wanton destruction. Naturally, the first order of business had to do with the restoration of law and order, giving rise to “Rule of Law” (ROL) intervention programs by many actors. However, the focus on state actors as the main players in the ROL ignored the more



Photo: Jason Payne

subtle quasi-software aspect for the success of ROL—the restoration of traditional authority.

With the goodwill and generosity of international friends, the anxiety of traditional authority itself, and the try-it-all attitude of Southern Sudanese authorities, an attempt is taking place to restore traditional authority to where it could begin to re-assert itself as an effective agent for peace and tranquility within traditional communities. Policy Analysis and Strategic Studies (PASS) is an indigenous Southern Sudanese organization that has opted to organize traditional leaders into state organs that can have “bite” in their work. Being the most visible and recognized authority at the village level, it is believed that the chief is in a better position to monitor and guide members of his community and sustain peace much more effectively than any external agent—governmental or NGO.

Into this theater comes SSANSA—adding value to the work of organizations such as PASS by focusing on the SALW problem! The combined efforts of such organizations can hasten the achievement of a number of objectives: increase sensitization about the forms of danger imposed by SALW, rehabilitate the role of traditional

leaders in maintaining the ROL in their societies; and maintain a monitoring and evaluation function for peace in society.

The immediate benefits of such ROL programs through the combined efforts of such organizations include the guarantee of an institutional presence for peace! With the urge for disarmament, the cooperation of traditional authorities—with their powers and status restored—is facilitated and that helps to make any disarmament program a community initiative rather than a violent imposition by external authority or forces

The potential benefits from cooperative ventures by peace-seeking organizations as those alluded to above are too numerous to enumerate. Certainly outstanding is that resources are not wasted in uncoordinated replications. No less important is the potency of the combined knowledge data base and human resources brought into play. One can only expect wider program impact, and ultimately, a return to peace and tranquility in increasingly wider areas of Southern Sudan until total peace prevails.

The writer is a scholar involved in social research and several socio-academic pursuits in South Sudan. He can be found on: [wanioro@yahoo.com](mailto:wanioro@yahoo.com)



## Letters to the Editor

### Let's address these arms

By Silvano Yona (silyona@yahoo.com)

Left and right I saw  
Best and bright thy land  
Yet arms behold though here  
Lots have borne the harm  
Set a break that holds,  
Let's address these arms.

Join the start to peace,  
Just in time to move.  
Pump in that new boost,  
Plan is now on board,  
Part of which is you.  
Let's address these arms.

Together strong we are,  
To stand and walk alert.  
Try some work with us,  
To stop the war at heart.  
Time to start has come,  
Let's address these arms

You and me need do,  
Yearn to make new dreams.  
Set to tell the doubter  
"Your arm must now discard"-and  
You must move the drive.  
Let's address these arms.

SSANSA's pedal is on.  
Civil society's propeller.  
Soon to have the programmes,  
So, join to be pioneer -and  
See the policies improved.  
Let's address these arms.

The writer is an official of Lomega Rural Development Agency (LORDA) A SSANSA member organization based in Lomega Payam, Juba County

## A Piece of Advice by Dr. Simons Simonse

Congratulations for the birth of SSANSA UPDATE—and for the new partnership with Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). You have taken up an important challenge but it will demand a good portion of your time—as you may very well remember from the days we were publishing the Drylands Journal. (Drylands Journal was a publication of the Drylands Pastoral Mission Sudan (DPMS)—now a member of SSANSA. It is based in Eastern Equatoria)

Allow me to give you some advice. I believe you have an interest in focusing on events and factual information concerning citizen security. The information should be collected by creating antennas—run by civil society activists trained in playing this role—that report periodically from different geographical areas and administrative divisions in South Sudan. The bulk of the journal should, in my opinion, consist of; news, updates and analyses of these updates. Otherwise, you will find yourself under pressure for each successive issue, to identify authors and issues.

The magazine will be very useful for all actors in the field of DD&R and Security Sector Reform, government as well as civil society. As a custodian of factual information, the awareness raising messages and advocacy that the journal will put in circulation will have more authority. Government and UN programs should have their own 'corner' in the SSANSA UPDATE.

I will be happy to contribute to a coming issue with a general message.

The writer works for Pax Christi Horn of Africa and has been an adviser to SSANSA since its formation. His email address is simonse—paxchristi.co.ke.



## How do I join SSANSA?

A point of concern from Jonglei

I am a younger person whose interest is to see Sudan become a safe and peaceful country free from small arms which are used to destroy innocent and precious lives.

Due to my interest and concern I wish to join SSANSA as an individual. I knew about SSANSA through its official based in Twic East County Jongli State who also told me about SSANSA UPDATE.

I have interacted with people of diverse backgrounds and know much about community arms concerns. I therefore feel obliged to share some useful information regarding the recent disarmament process in parts of Jonglei State. We can share information on this issue with SSANSA member network through a joint email address. What do you think?

Thank you so much and I am looking forward to your response.

Sincerely

Peter Bior Makuach  
Email: [petermabior@yahoo.com](mailto:petermabior@yahoo.com)

REPLY: Dear Peter, you can join as an individual and please contact the SSANSA secretariat for information and details about this. Joining is free. Contact details can be found at the end of the newsletter.

With regard to sharing information, thanks for your question, I will address this in more detail in the next issue of SSANSA UPDATE.



Photo: Jason Payne

### SSANSA welcomes your requests and contributions to SSANSA UPDATE:

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