

OFFICE OF THE GEOGRAPHER AND GLOBAL ISSUES  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

GUIDANCE BULLETIN

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**SOUTH SUDAN – SUDAN BOUNDARIES**

*Background:* The Office of the Geographer and Global Issues prepared this guidance in coordination with the U. S. Department of State Office of the Special Envoy for Sudan. The Republic of South Sudan became independent from Sudan on July 9, 2011, and the United States established diplomatic recognition with the new state on that date. ***This guidance supersedes Guidance Bulletin No. 29.***

**1. Sovereignty status:**

- a. Identify the new state as ***South Sudan*** (short form) or ***Republic of South Sudan*** (long form) in a typeface used for independent states.
- b. Use OD as the USG country code.
- c. Continue to use SU as the USG country code for Sudan.

**2. South Sudan – Sudan boundary and names**

- a. Configure the international boundary along on the January 1, 1956 north-south alignment.\*
- b. Where scale and context permit, include the following note: *South Sudan-Sudan boundary represents January 1, 1956 alignment; final alignment pending negotiations and demarcation.*
- c. Use an international boundary symbol between the two countries (see also Abyei Area, below).
- d. Where this boundary appears on maps at a scale of 1:500,000 or larger, place the word “Approximate” along the boundary.
- e. Use either the standard disclaimer, *Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative* or, as required: *Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative.*
- f. After 1956, the boundary between the former provinces of Darfur and Bahr el Ghazal shifted southward. As a result, upon its independence a portion of Southern Darfur State fell south of our assessment of the January 1, 1956 line, and this portion is disputed between the two countries. **When** showing administrative (state) boundaries in South Sudan, continue to include the boundaries for Western Bahr el Ghazal State as they existed before independence and, where scale permits, label the area in South Sudan west of Western Bahr el Ghazal State “In dispute” (see the lower of the two accompanying maps).
- g. Names and standardized spellings for some features in South Sudan, as well as in the Abyei Area, have yet to be determined. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names will provide toponymic guidance as authoritative sources become available. As a general rule, Arabic-language names no longer have official status in South Sudan.

**3. Abyei region boundaries and names**

- a. Identify the disputed area as ***Abyei Area*** in a typeface distinct from that used for administrative divisions or independent state or dependencies.

- b. Where scale and context permit, render the contested Abyei region within the limits defined by the 2009 Permanent Court of Arbitration’s (PCA) Arbitral Decision: \*
  - i. North parallel: 10° 10’ N, bounded by two meridians running south:
    - a) west meridian: 27° 50’ E south to the intersection of the Southern Darfur – Southern Kordofan boundary, then along this line southeast to the international (January 1, 1956) boundary;
    - ii. b) east meridian: 29° E south to the international (January 1, 1956) boundary. These lines should be rendered with an “other line of separation” symbology distinct from and subordinate to either a standard administrative or international boundary.
    - iii. The January 1, 1956 boundary forms the southern limit of the Abyei Area.
    - iv. Do not depict the 2005 Abyei Boundary Commission limits unless required for historical context.
- c. On maps using color tinting, tint the Abyei Area with a neutral shading (e.g. grey), indicating that its sovereignty status is yet to be determined
- d. Where scale and context permit, include the following note: *Final sovereignty status of Abyei Area pending negotiations between South Sudan and Sudan.*

**4. Other boundaries:**

- a. Make no changes to the depiction of international boundaries with the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Ethiopia.
- b. Continue to depict the disputed Ilemi “triangle” between Kenya and South Sudan:
  - i. With an administrative boundary symbol and label representing the demarcated 1938 administrative line;
  - ii. plus an international boundary symbol representing the 1914 provisional boundary, and;
  - iii. on maps using color tinting, extend the Kenyan color tint on political maps up to the administrative boundary symbol.
- c. Continue to show the inherited administrative (state) boundaries of Sudan with the standard boundary disclaimer. Use the state names as found on the accompanying map.

**ACTION:** Please disseminate this guidance to all personnel in your organization concerned with cartographic production.

\*Shapefiles of the new South Sudan – Sudan boundary and Abyei Area limits are posted in the Department’s Boundary and Sovereignty Encyclopedia (BASE) at [<http://base.us-state.osis.gov>] or [<https://www.intelink.gov/basestate>] → International Land Boundaries → South Sudan – Sudan\*\*

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\*\*and the NGA “Boundaries, International” pages on JWICS and SIPRnet



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