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U.S actor advocates for peace in war-torn South Sudan

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Hollywood actor, Forest Whitaker has openly appealed for peace in South Sudan, a country hit by war since 2013.



A crowd gathers outside a UN IDP camp in Juba to welcome US actor and UNESCO special envoy Forest Whitaker on 23 June 2014 (AP)

In his remarks at the World Economic Forum Africa in Durban, South Africa, Whitaker called for international intervention in negotiations to end the war, which has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions of people.

Whitaker, also the United Nations Global ambassador for peace, said it would cost an estimated \$4.4 billion to avert a full-blown famine that could claim six million lives in South Sudan.

"1.8 million people have already been displaced while 1.7 million people are refugees," he told the forum on Friday.

In February, three U.N agencies and the government declared an outbreak of famine in parts of South Sudan, as violence escalated.

"The food insecurity in South Sudan stands at almost 50% and the U.N has to step up in terms of negotiations to try and bring peace and stability to the area," stressed the U.N ambassador for peace.

South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011 after years of civil war, but conflict out in December 2013 after disagreements within its ruling party.