

Launch of the South Sudan Orthopaedics and Trauma Society

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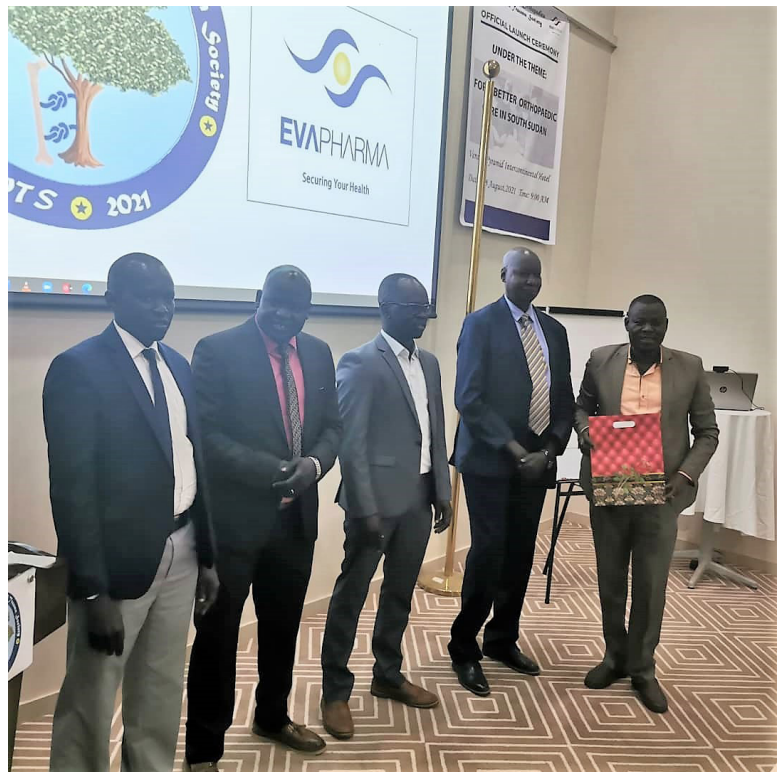
The South Sudan Orthopaedics and Trauma Society (SOTS) was officially launched on the 28th of August 2021. See Figure 1. The event brought together many stakeholders involved in the field of orthopaedics and trauma. In attendance were the Undersecretary in the Ministry of Health, representatives from professional medical associations, NGOs active in orthopaedics and trauma, and health insurance and pharmaceutical companies. The meeting was honoured by the presence of His Grace Santo Loku Pio, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Juba. He assumed the role of the Patron of the Society.

The Society constitutes a group of ten Orthopaedic Surgeons, some with subspecialty training in arthroplasty, limb reconstruction and deformity correction, pelvis and acetabulum trauma surgery, and spine surgery. The membership also includes orthopaedic trainees and general practitioners with an interest to specialize in orthopaedics.

“Our vision of establishing and maintaining a vibrant and cohesive orthopaedic community that is well placed to deliver quality, accessible, and affordable care can only be achieved through partnerships”, said Dr Brian Madison, the President of the Society, in his inaugural speech. The society aims to encourage local and international partnerships to deliver orthopaedic care to remote areas in South Sudan that have no access to this service. We are in the process of joining the International Orthopaedics and Trauma Association (IOTA), a body of twenty orthopaedic associations that promotes international orthopaedic and musculoskeletal trauma care.

In line with the above, and as a continuation of the launch programme, the Society conducted a surgical outreach camp at Juba Military Hospital on the 11th of September 2021. The activities of this one-day event included free orthopaedic consultations, surgeries, and medications. That day, over 200 patients were evaluated and seven were surgically operated on. The numbers were overwhelming, a clear indicator of the viability of such activities.

To achieve its objectives, SOTS decided that it should adopt a hands-on approach. The Society is a registered NGO. This gives it more clout to design and implement projects that will tackle the neglected pandemic of trauma in South Sudan. The Society emphasizes the huge impact of disability from untreated orthopaedic problems on children, women, and the youth who are at the height of their productivity. Through partnerships, we want to help solve this problem.



At the launch of SOTS. Dr. Mapuor Areu, SOTS Secretary General, Dr. Omojowk Bachay, Vice President, SOTS, Dr. Brian Madison, President, SOTS, Dr. James Alphonse, Senior Consultant Orthopaedics and Trauma Surgeon, and Dr. Stephen Akeri, Representative of the South Sudan Society of Anaesthesiologists. (credit Dr. Aguer Werebek)