

PRESS STATEMENT (11)

July 30th: The MARTYR'S DAY

LET US REMEMBER OUR MARTYRS OF LIBERATION WITH HOPE AND DETERMINATION

This day, 30th July every year, is the day in which we light candles in memory of our Martyrs. It is the Martyrs Day. It is a day to remember the founding father of our great movement – the SPLM/A - **Dr John Garang De Mabior** and all his colleagues and comrades, those gallant men and women of our country who fought courageously and selflessly paid the ultimate price of freedom with their precious lives. They are the ones who made it possible for the Republic of South Sudan to be born as a free and independent sovereign nation among the free nations of the world.

Today is a day to light candles and glorify the memory of all our departed martyrs in the process of our long and heroic struggle for freedom and dignity that spanned many generations of our people. We solemnly stand today to tell them that we have not forgotten their sacrifices .We shall always remember them individually deep in our hearts as our gallant heroes and heroines as they have not died in vain.

Unfortunately, since 15 December 2013, our country for which millions of dear lives of our people were sacrificed has been engulfed in a deep national crisis that threatens its very existence, as many innocent people continue to lose their lives daily including women and children. Our country has become like a ship without a rudder as it tragically descends into the last depth of chaos and shamefully becoming a failed state. Today our young nation has become a pariah State among nations. Our people are now feeling safe only in the protection of the United Nations forces in their own country.

As we mark this Martyrs' day, we must not forget to remember all the victims of the brutal war imposed on the people by the government since December last year. The government bears responsibility for this national tragedy that has affected almost every family in the country and tainted the image of the country. Those lost on both sides of this destructive and unjustified war are all citizens of South Sudan who wanted to live in peace and harmony in a free and independent country.

In this time of national despair and suffering, we would like to rekindle hope and confidence among our people for peace and reconciliation to our war-torn nation. This hope is anchored on the commitment of the leaders of the IGAD, the AU, Trioka and the international community, who have promised to leave no stone unturned in the quest for a durable peace and political stability in our country. However, the challenge of bringing about peace to our country is first and foremost our responsibility and should not be left to IGAD and the international community alone. We the South Sudanese bear the greatest responsibility to

restore peace to our country by genuinely addressing ourselves to the root causes of the present crisis.

We the SPLM Leaders (Former Political Detainees) call for an immediate end to the war since there can never be a winner; it is our country that would be the loser itself. This 5th Session of the IGAD-led Peace Process which brings together for the first time, since the start of the peace process late last year, the Government of South Sudan, SPLM/A in Opposition (IO), SPLM Political Leaders (FPD), Political Parties, Civil Society Representatives and Faith-based groups, is the last chance for us South Sudanese to salvage our country from ruin and imminent disintegration.

During this session all the participants should respond to the Agenda items presented by IGAD while guided by the spirit of give and take, knowing that the principal objective is the achievement of durable peace for our country and not the satisfaction of individual political ambitions. The survival of our country as a viable nation will rest on how each and every one of us approaches the talks. Peace must be the take home for all the participants. The proposed Interim Government must not be seen as an end in itself but a means for restoring peace, stabilizing and preparing the country for a democratic and prosperous future under a new Constitution.

We would like to take this opportunity to announce to all our people that we shall be launching in the next few days, our vision and program for addressing the current issues of war and governance of our country. The Program will embody the following:

- i. Who We Are?**
- ii. Vision and Mission Statement**
- iii. The Program:**
 - 1. Ending the War**
 - a) Adhering to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoH) and Cease-fire;
 - b) An inclusive Political Dialogue;
 - c) Formation of an Interim Government of National Unity; Mandate, Structure, Composition and Leadership;
 - d) National Reconciliation and Healing;
 - 2. Building a Democratic Federal State**
 - 3. Security Sector Reform and Transformation**
 - a) Stabilization Measures for Restoring Law and Order;
 - b) Security Sector Policy;
 - c) Public Safety
 - 4. The Justice Sector Reform**
 - 5. Economic Policy**

- a) Macro-economic Reform Measures;
- b) Promotion of Private Sector and Investment
- c) Petroleum and Natural Resources Management
- d) Utilization of the Nile Waters
- e) Agriculture and Food security
- f) Wild life and Tourism
- g) The Fight Against Corruption
- 6. Revitalization of South Sudan's External Relations**
- 7. Provision of Basic Social Services**
 - a) Education
 - b) Health
 - c) Water and Sanitation
- 8. Building Physical Infrastructure and Secure Environment**
 - a) Roads and Bridges;**
 - b) Hydro-electric Power and Dams;
 - c) Airports, River Transport and Railways
 - d) Housing and Urban Planning
- 9. Civil Service Reforms**
- 10. Constitutional Review Process**
- 11. Population Census and General Elections**
- 12. SPLM Unity and Reorganization**

Finally, We appeal to all our people to embrace the message of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation and abhor violence as a means of resolving our national problems.

May God have mercy upon our martyrs and bless South Sudan.

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