

Ottawa

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Article 41 on South Sudan

Developments in South Sudan Conflict: Is it not overdue for the 3 envoys to dismount and go home?

Our Articles 1 to 3 and 5 to 40 were situation analyses of the conflict in South Sudan. Our articles 4 (A), 4 (B) and 4 (C) were the first of our series on “Who is Who”. We were taken away by the 13th International Conference on Nubian History held in Neuchatel, Switzerland for 6 days. It was a totally different wavelength and enjoyable African Majesty.

This article 41 is dedicated to exposing the miserable failure of the IGAD, its incompetent mediation and 3 political envoys (Wrongly termed Mediators) and its superficial and responsibility-lacking presidents. We call on the two parties (GRSS and the SPLM/A-IO) to demand that the 3 hopeless envoys dismount and go home or go to a much hotter place where they really belong!!

We call on the IPF, UN and the AU to stop lip-service and the “Politically Correct” hollow comments and call a spade a spade. They should no longer fund or support a process that does not deliver peace to the People of South Sudan.

Background

A very good, well informed young man of African origin working within the sphere of IGAD commented on some of our articles as follows:

“.....the difficulty I am getting with your missives, is that they are somewhat inflammatory. I would understand it, given my background but they don't fly in these territories. If you can make the articles more positive, without losing your point, it will make it easier for me to initiate a conversation about you coming over....”

We replied:

“There has always been a tension between my role as an African Elder and on the side of the people; and the contractual interests in the business I do. I have always sided with the interests of the people. Otherwise I will find it difficult to sleep at night; which has never happened before. I have lost so many opportunities of financial gain but that has not deterred me. “Yes men” will not be able to firm up the IGAD Process.”

We added

“But I take your point especially if Mesfin or the Envoys are subjective and cannot take an honest analysis in good spirit. One will have to weigh the good that one can do by being close to the talks and balance it with the value of analysis we are doing and informing about 160 stakeholders.”

As time went on, it transpired that it would be a shame, indeed a crime, to be near any of the “envoys” even in a Sunday Church Prayer.

Just look at the mess and mismanagement:

The first big scandal:

The document titled” Protocol on the Agreed Principles on Transitional Arrangements Towards Resolution of the Crisis in South Sudan”. Look at that title: “agreed” and nothing was agreed in the talks. “Principles” and the two parties were supposed to form a transitional government on “principles” not agreed and no framework in the negotiations and given 45 days to do that but then the talks are adjourned. “Towards” thus we are not there yet. “Resolution” and the talks are adjourned, the naive presidents sign and go home and nothing is resolved.

The second big scandal¹

1. Ethiopia’s PM makes a statement on August 25th that the hurriedly cooked document is not to be signed by the two parties as they needed time to study it. Rare intelligent comment! He is admitting that the document was cooked only by the 6 presidents and one VP. We will write soon on the massive hegemony of Ethiopia on IGAD.
2. Sumbeiywo to President Kiir “sign here” and he signs. No content, just the last page. Then to Machar (who is not a president)”Sign here”. Machar “Hell no” (hell is from us!).
3. **“You and Salva were not supposed to sign”** says Sumbeiywo to Machar. Just like that. The Kenyan General, who had his diplomatic passport stripped by his government years back and who owns an oil services company in South Sudan and is up to his ears in “Conflict of Interest” did not know who was supposed to sign.
4. Machar “But Salva has signed”.
5. “I will cut Salava’s name and your name out of the document” says the general. Just like that. A retired general calls a president of a state by his first name. Not only insolent, but he goes on to say he will cut his name and signature out. Pathetic to say the least.
6. And then the master of all bullies Ato Seyoum Mesfin comes out in the press conference asking the SPLM/A-IO to sign the document! Where was he during the above scandals?
7. All that Mesfin and his presidents can now do is to soak the document in water (or Tej) and drink it!

The third scandal

1. IGAD and its mediators push for and bring in small opposition parties and CSO. “Multi-stakeholders” they say. We do not believe they ever heard of or knew the difference between “Primary Stakeholders” and “Secondary Stakeholders”. Now the mess is amplified. GRSS bans the Opposition from travelling.
2. The opposition parties are fighting over who is to lead them.

¹ Some excerpts are from an article by Dr. Dhieu Mathok

3. The talks are moved to Bahir Dar and three pivotal members of the negotiating team from the SPLM/A-IO are in China (until today whence they communicated with us by e-mail). Do they really care? Does GRSS care?

The fourth scandal

1. The said miserable protocol was belittled by the SPLM/A-IO as follows: 1) They do not accept Kiir approving the nomination of the proposed PM. 2) They do not accept the notion that the said PM is not to run for any office after the interim period. 3) The PM must work harmoniously with the president. 4) The president remains as president with the original draft on Justice in the document diluted.
2. “As far as we are concerned, IGAD negotiated the protocol themselves and they said they will sign it and own it. May be it is good for their files and for future reference as some people learn through mistakes” How clearly put by Oyet Nathnaniel Pierino.²

The fifth Scandal: Ato Mesfin once more

1. August 24th and Mesfin commenting on the death of ceasefire monitor in Bentiu. “The violators of the cessation of hostilities agreement and those responsible for the death will bear the consequences³”. He says. How and when were impossible to identify as he has nothing but the hollow words. No force, nor support and no tools. But he does not seem to realise that. More seriously, he does not seem to realise that he is a “mediator” and not a civil servant (Ambassador) of the Government of Ethiopia and not even IGAD (or may be there no difference?)
2. “We cannot continue to treat this matter with velvet gloves...”. Another poor mediation comment that is not really his business.
3. Mesfin goes on “.....The cessation of hostilities, if the parties are committed to end the war, they **“must”** be “prevailed upon” to sign the matrix”. Well the matrix was prepared by mediation and not negotiated by the two parties. That is why it was not signed. But look at the language “Must be prevailed upon”.

The sixth scandal: Guess who?

1. “The stick is raised” says Mesfin as quoted by World Bulletin before the summit meeting in August. That was his start. Well he is still holding a raised stick and nothing has been signed and nothing that was signed before is holding⁴.
2. And then the cycle and machinery of mediation (As rusty as it is) stops and the 6 heads of state and one VP take over-completely, the mediation process and space with Kiir in! The two generals and Mesfin turn into secretaries shuttling papers.
3. Nothing is signed and the presidents go home and recess is declared. Over \$250,000 is spent on the event and dashed into oblivion. Part of it is my money as Canadian tax payer.

² Sudan Tribune Sept 6th 2014.

³ Xinhua of China

⁴ World Bulletin News desk

The big bluff and lie

1. John Kerry meets with PM Hailemariam Desalegn and other IGAD leader in Washington DC.⁵
2. They talk big! Desalegn said” The region would take strong and punitive action *immediately* after convening the next IGAD meeting.....”. Well it has been one month today now since the Summit meeting. Nothing!! No action by anyone on any front on anything.
3. Do you still remember the noise, rumbling and tough words by the visiting delegation of UNSC? Does anyone know where they are now?
4. The people of South Sudan and their predicaments are now left all by themselves. No one really cares. Peanuts are given to keep the wheels of mediation greased. The 3 envoys and their entourage are paid lavish per diems. Aid donation is still short of needs. As long as there is noise and people are seen to be doing something, let the status quo prevail.
5. Depending on why the SPLM/A-IO was invited to Beijing and what they come back with, the West may move to undermine China or match it.

Conclusion

1. We have a team of mediators who do not know what they are doing. Arrogant and insolent
2. They do not want to learn even from their costly mistakes
3. We have a team of 7 heads of state that care less for positive results
4. We have a small and incompetent IGAD organization fully dominated by Ethiopia
5. We have stakeholders that are secondary and ineffective in negotiating, closing or implementing peace who are now disturbing the process, as poor as it is
6. We have a host of Western Diplomats who take the conflict and process as part-time
7. We have two warring parties who take the Addis Process as Public Relations and go about fighting
8. We have donors and INGOs who are frustrated and fatigued
9. We have UNMISS who have turned as department of WFP sheltering IDPs.
10. We have communities who have learned to live with violence, death, displacement and disease and the “Khawajas” come and go, feels sorry for them, utter a few words of sorrow and fly back first class.
11. We have oil that is still flowing and funding war machines. Good for Sudan jacking up the rights of passage fee.
12. We have people who are so hurt that revenge may be their sole objective now.
13. We have 7 heads of state engaged in the process who do not care a damn about South Sudan and each has his own agenda
14. Agreement after agreement that have no legs to stand on
15. We have corrupt and hopeless African ex-presidents who are thriving on per diems and do not know what to do.
16. We have a noble and proud nation that only has “hope” to hang onto.

GOD! Where on earth are you?

⁵ Tesfa Alem Tekle August 7th.

Recommendations:

1. It is no good beating about the bush on IGAD Envoys (Mediators).
2. Both the GRSS and the SPLM/A-IO need to sack the three envoys and stop going to the talks until competent mediators are appointed. This wretched team “works for” and paid on behalf the two parties to the conflict. The parties should not give them more weight or value beyond that.
3. If not, then IGAD itself can be abandoned and the file goes to a more competent organization for oversight. Darfur, GOS and the SPLM/A, Ethiopia/Eritrea and scores of other conflicts moved from one venue to another.
4. A clear set of Declaration of Principles (DOPs) is to be developed by the two parties (Not IGAD) and its issues prioritised.
5. Without dealing with Security Arrangements first and foremost, no agreement can be reached on any other file. This must be researched as it is far more complex than the Security Arrangements of the CPA.
6. While IGAD can still be “Track I” if reformed, there has to be “Track II” process (s) to deal with intertwined issues and sticky hard positions.
7. Develop a process and forum for humanitarian issues and leave the Peace Process ONLY for the political settlement.

President Kiir and Dr Machar: Why do you not tell IGAD to go and fly a kite?

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