



SUDAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

General Secretariat

Speech By
H.E. Comrade Salva Kiir Mayardit
SPLM Chairman and President of the
Republic of South Sudan



**In an address to the nation at a public rally on
March 18, 2015 at the Dr. John Garang
Mausoleum in Juba**

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Dear compatriots,

I would like to begin by thanking all of you; members of my government, youth, women, business community, religious leaders, chiefs, civil society organizations, artists, trade unions and the entire population of Juba for turning up in large numbers in support of, and solidarity with my government and I, which I deeply appreciate.

My fellow South Sudanese,

On 9th July 2011, we celebrated the birth of the Republic of South Sudan and closed the chapter in our history where we struggled and lost over two million lives. Our liberation demanded a lot from all of us; from those who left to fight and never returned; to those who were injured in the battle front, orphaned or widowed and those who supported the struggle with whatever resources they had.

Today we remember all of them in a spirit of gratitude.

Let us stand up and pay tribute to all of them.

Dear compatriots,

It is the memory of the losses endured by our nation and every South Sudanese family during the struggle that has strengthened my resolve to defend and protect the gains of our liberation struggle.

For the same reason, I accepted to negotiate peace with those who took arms against the state, under the auspices of IGAD and the INTRA-PARTY dialogue, facilitated by Tanzania's Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

Negotiations under the auspices of IGAD have been going on for over a year. I can understand why our people were very disappointed when the deadline of 5th March 2015 set by IGAD to sign peace agreement was not met.

This unfortunately means that we are still in a state of war; our people continue to suffer and die - something Riek and I could have ended on March 5th if it were not for his intransigence.

At the same time, and as a result of not reaching a peace deal by 5th March 2015, the international community is threatening to impose sanctions on us.

As your President, I feel that you the people of South Sudan deserve to hear from me about: my efforts to bring peace, why a peace agreement between the government and the rebels was not signed by 5th March, 2015, the impact of the proposed sanctions; and more importantly,

Where do we go from here?

My government has done everything possible to protect the gains of our liberation struggle and end the war. We have remained engaged with IGAD, AU, UN and members of the international community since January 2014, when I gave directives to my negotiating team to go to Addis Ababa to negotiate peace with the rebels; in good faith and without preconditions.

I am also sure that heads of other political parties can remember the number of times I have invited them to J1 and the Freedom Hall for consultations on the positions of the government on national issues prior to the return of the negotiating team to Addis Ababa.

Furthermore, I have allowed for the participation of a wide range of stakeholders in the IGAD peace talks; faith-based groups, civil society

organizations, youth, women and political parties to ensure inclusiveness and ownership of the peace process. I am glad that some of you who participated in the negotiations under IGAD are in the audience and can bear testimony to that.

Dear compatriots,

I would like to thank the IGAD and AU heads of state, particularly my brothers President Yoweri Museveni, Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, Uhuru Kenyata, Paul Kagame, Jacob Zuma, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, and other leaders in the region, for keeping peace in South Sudan at the top of their priorities.

My fellow country men and women,

I have lost count of the number of times our delegation has been to Addis Ababa since January 2014. And as your President I have not missed any meeting scheduled by the IGAD mediators or IGAD heads of state concerning peace in South Sudan.

During the first round of talks, the rebels demanded a transitional government, public sector reforms, Constitutional Review, federal system of government and security arrangements.

Our delegation agreed to these broad areas as a basis for negotiating peace.

However, in the course of the negotiations, the rebels kept changing positions on issues even after they have been agreed to and signed by Riek and myself.

My government made significant compromises on its original positions in order to reach a settlement with the rebels. A good example of my flexibility was accepting the portfolio of prime minister to be included in negotiations, a position that does not even exist in the South Sudan Transitional Constitution of 2011.

I also initiated the intra-party dialogue for all the SPLM groups (SPLM –IO and SPLM Leaders FD) to be facilitated jointly by the CCM of Tanzania and the ANC of South Africa, which was aimed at narrowing the gap between SPLM leaders, providing an opportunity for working together to end the war and agreeing on how to take the country forward.

The efforts of these sisterly political parties in the region made it possible for the SPLM reunification

agreement to be signed on 21st January 2015 by all three SPLM groups. On my part, and in the spirit of the Arusha agreement, I directed the implementation of the SPLM reunification agreement, and gave a general amnesty for all those waging war against the state.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome back the former spokesperson for the rebels, Brigadier General Lul Ruai Koang, the group led by Joseph Gwado Ador and the widow of our late hero Ngachigak Ngachiluk, Cde Bangout Amum, who responded to the general amnesty and returned to Juba.

Obstacles to peace

Dr Riek's ever shifting positions have been a real challenge to attaining peace, as this made it extremely difficult to reach consensus on contentious national issues.

When Riek refused to acknowledge the SPLM reunification agreement, which actually provided answers to political, leadership and organizational issues and proposed reforms in security, economic, social and public sectors, it became clear that Riek

and his group were only interested in negotiating themselves back to power and cared less about reforms.

In the last round of talks, the rebels demanded two armies during the 30-month interim period followed by amalgamation rather than integration of forces as should be the case. They also demanded in power-sharing the position of 1st Vice President and 50/50 share in government.

In addition they demanded Federalism to be implemented at the start of the 30-month interim period. In regard to the political system South Sudan will adopt, we believe this should be dealt with in the permanent constitution following broader consultations with the people.

Riek also introduced a new formula for wealth sharing and demanded that South Sudan pay the debts the rebels incurred during the war.

My question to you South Sudanese is: How would you feel if I had signed an agreement for two armies in the country? Would you be happy?

The way forward

Dear compatriots,

In my way forward I would like to emphasize that when we set out to liberate this country, we were fighting for a better South Sudan and I believe this is still our ultimate goal!

And liberation as we know it is not a single event, nor does it stop at independence. Each milestone we reach allows us to do more to confront other challenges, overcome them and take us closer to our goals.

I therefore would like you to see the challenges this country has been going through since December 15th 2013, as challenges of transition that together we will overcome.

I am therefore calling upon all of you; political parties, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, artists, the business community, farmers, youth, women and chiefs not to despair but to join me and my government in the efforts to unify the internal front through national dialogue, forgiveness, reconciliation and building consensus

on a development path that will lead to harmony, political stability and an economy that allows all of us to prosper.

I call upon the SPLM General Secretariat to support the SPLM leadership to lead this process.

As for community dialogue, reconciliation and harmony among our people, the faith-based organizations have always taken the lead. My special message to you religious leaders is that our people need to embrace a culture of tolerance, peaceful co-existence and hard work, so that they can be at peace with themselves and their neighbors.

I also know that every citizen and particularly our private sector have been hit hard by the economic conditions caused by the ongoing conflict as well as global economic conditions.

I want all of you to know that even if we were to sign peace today, the economic conditions in our country would not improve automatically, because it will take some years to reach the level of oil production before the war.

The oil prices are likely to remain low for some years to come, as the supply of oil in the world is high and demand is low. This leaves us with few options for addressing this economic hardship.

We need to look to what we can do by ourselves. I urge our people and private sector to double their efforts in tilling the land – starting from this agricultural season - and to earn our living from our land rather than depending on oil and importation of food from the neighboring countries.

Our Ministry of Finance must also double its efforts in mobilizing non-oil revenues and use wisely such revenues for making our economy to function, particularly investment in agriculture and facilitating credit to our private sector firms interested in agriculture, as well as settling their debts.

On my part, I promise to do everything possible to ease hardship on our people. But peace remains the only option for alleviating the suffering of our people.

I am also aware about the demand of lecturers

in our public universities. But I expect them to understand better than the rest of us, the conditions facing our country. This is the time our intellectuals and elites need to show us how we can address the challenges facing our country.

I call upon our lecturers to call off their strike, as this is hurting our country and affecting our students, who are the future of our nation. Let me assure the lecturers that their demands can only be fully addressed when our country has recovered from the impacts of war and global economic conditions.

I am asking the people in UN camps to return to their homes, where they will be assisted to resettle by relevant government institutions. At least, the situation outside the UN camps is more conducive for bringing up your children. The same appeal goes to refugees and IDPs. Come home let us work together to make South Sudan a safer, better and more welcoming place for our children.

On the other hand, I know some of you are bitter against the people who took up arms against the state, but we should be ready to accept ourselves and to make more sacrifices for the sake of peace.

Let us be ready to forgive and work together, if we want to see peace in this country.

I am therefore reiterating my call to all those who have taken up arms against the state to take advantage of the general amnesty I declared on 24thFeb 2015, which ends on 31st March 2015.

I particularly call upon SPLA officers and NCOs who joined the opposition to take this golden opportunity of general amnesty to return back to their units with their previous SPLA ranks. I know you must be facing a lot of hardship in a war that does not have any meaning to you; and I know as well that your families and children must be suffering.

I have ordered General Malong Awan, the SPLA Chief of General Staff, to send clear directives to all SPLA units to receive you back to your former units and provide you with the necessary assistance.

To Riek Machar; I say, peace in this country lies in your and my hands and the men we command. In the spirit of the SPLM reunification agreement

which we both signed, let us end the suffering of our people and reward them with peace. What good is power to you if what it does is to finish our people?

To the Former Detainees; I say come home and let us implement the SPLM reunification agreement which we signed on 21st January 2015 in Arusha, Tanzania.

To the international community; I want to confirm my government's commitment to end the war in South Sudan. I look forward to your continued effort to bring peace to my country and I am ready to negotiate peace with Riek Machar anywhere and anytime appointed by IGAD or the AU.

But while I very much appreciate the efforts of the international community to bring peace, I am disappointed in the mobilization by some members of the international community to impose sanctions, rather than encouraging peace building processes after failure to meet the deadline of March 5th 2015.

My concern is that sanctions at this time will not only devastate the economy, but increase economic pressures on people who are already suffering and are desperate.

I want to conclude by thanking all of you for coming.

Let's reject war and choose harmony, peace and coexistence, and
Let's dialogue and agree on how to build this country

Long live the people of South Sudan!
Long live the Republic of South Sudan!
Long live the spirit of our revolution!



