



SUDAN PEOPLES' LIBERATION MOVEMENT
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SPLM LEADERS (FPD)

PRESS RELEASE

**SPLM LEADERS (FORMER POLITICAL DETAINEES) CONDEMN THE STATEMENT ON THE
STATUS OF DR LUKA BIONG DENG**

We note with utter disbelief and deep dismay the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation that Abyei is not part of the Republic of South Sudan. This came in the **Response of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan to the Report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Assessment Mission to Improve Human Rights, Accountability, Reconciliation and Capacity in South Sudan** ((AHRC/31/49) issued on 9th March, 2016.

In Section (5) para two of the Minister's **Response to allegations of violations of freedom of opinion and expression and assembly** the Minister wrote: "In the case of Dr. Luka Biong Deng, the University of Juba is an independent academic institution which employs nationals and non-nationals like Dr. Luka Biong who is a citizen of the Republic of the Sudan."

The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan 2011 states in Article (1 (2) B) that Abyei is part of South Sudan. Our brothers and sisters from Abyei who belong to the nine (9) Ngok Dinka Chiefdoms transferred to Kordofan in 1905 for administrative purposes are recognized in the Constitution of South Sudan as full citizens with rights and obligations like any other citizens of South Sudan. They struggled alongside the rest of Southern Sudanese during the wars of liberation. Dr. Luka Biong Deng himself served as Minister in Office of the President of Southern Sudan and other executive capacities and an SPLA veteran during the CPA period. Many distinguished sons and daughters of Abyei have served and continue to serve in high offices in the Republic of South Sudan. So, since when did the sons and daughters of Abyei cease to be part of South Sudan?

It is our considered opinion that the statement presented to the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights is inconsiderate, ill-advised unconscionable and certainly unconstitutional, and ought to be challenged. It is a gaffe that has not only rubbished our brothers and sisters from Abyei unfairly but has also brought embarrassment and shame to the President, Government and people of South Sudan at large.

We call on the Ministers who are responsible for this saga to voluntarily resign their positions or else be dismissed by the President. Otherwise, Parliament should summon these ministers for grilling and possible sanction, including withdrawal of confidence in them for bringing the country into disrepute.

Madut Biar Yel

For Spokesman, SPLM Leaders (FDP)

Juba, 22/03/2016