



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
(JMEC)

OPENING STATEMENT

BY

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DURING THE PLENARY MEETING

OF THE

JOINT MONITORING & EVALUATION COMMISSION

22 NOVEMBER 2016

JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN



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Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I welcome you all to this JMEC Plenary here in Juba this morning. We have much to report and update. Some positive, some not so positive.
2. To set the scene, we meet here today amidst fresh public warnings of mass killings, a severe humanitarian crisis and constant news of unremitting violence perpetrated by all sides to the Agreement and by armed groups and criminals.
3. Public statements of such gravity made by the UN Secretary General and the Director of UN OCHA cannot be taken lightly.
4. At our last meeting, our primary concern was the immediate restoration of the ceasefire, and I am dismayed to report that no evident or meaningful progress has been made in that regard. Almost daily we receive reports of violence from around the country that serve to remind us of the enormity of our task and the very fragile nature of peace in the country.
5. However, I intend to take time today to note and recognise the re-emergence of cooperation and progress being made within the Peace Agreement by the Transitional Security Arrangement Mechanisms. I am also encouraged by the steps being taken to address the crisis in the economy and government finances.
6. Since our last meeting, there have been a wide range of high level briefings and meetings. I have met with the Ethiopian Prime Minister in Addis Ababa; the AU Peace and Security Council has visited South Sudan and received comprehensive briefings on the situation; the JMEC Partners Meeting took place in Kampala on 10th November, where I took the opportunity to meet with President Museveni.
7. In the past week I have consulted with the leadership of South Sudan, and held discussions with the President, the First Vice President and the Vice President.

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. The ceasefire that underpins the Peace Agreement continues to be challenged in some areas. The immediate cessation of hostilities and the restoration of the ceasefire remains our singlemost important priority. I am consciously and deliberately repeating my message from last month.
9. While CTSAMM will give a more detailed brief later, I note that violations of the ceasefire, perpetrated by uniformed armed forces of SPLA-IG and SPLA-IO, and acts of violence and criminality by other armed groups continue unabated.
10. In greater Eatoria fighting continues alongside the targeting of civilians, gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and continuing incidents of sexual violence.
11. In Central Eatoria, armed groups continue to target vehicles and convoys carrying goods and civilians in acts of retaliation against government operations. And there are reports of a



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rise in inflammatory rhetoric, which carries the potential for wider violent ethno-centric conflict.

12. Numerous clashes between IO and IG forces and other armed groups continue almost daily across Western Bahr El-Ghazal, Upper Nile, and Unity States.
13. There is little doubt that this continued and growing trend of violence is having a very negative effect on the hopes of the people of South Sudan, and on the partners and countries who invest so much to support this country.
14. All Parties and armed groups owe it to the people of South Sudan to renounce violence and I appeal to all communities and to the armed forces of the Parties to the Agreement to exercise maximum restraint.

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. We do, however, have some encouraging signs of cooperation and progress within the Articles of the Peace Agreement, and I wish to note and recognise these formally.
16. Within Chapter One, I welcome the approval by the TGoNU of the appointment of the Chairperson of the National Constitutional Amendment Committee, Mr Gichira Kibara.
17. Within Chapter Two, the Transitional Security Arrangement Mechanisms that I have previously described as “disintegrated” have now been revived and re-constituted. Whilst they are not all fully representative or inclusive, they are balanced and capable of driving this critical element of the Agreement forward.
18. The Joint Military Ceasefire Commission has met consistently each week for the past two months and is actively pursuing its terms of reference. It has fair representation from all Parties, with the notable exception of those forces who remain loyal to Dr Riek Machar.
19. Just last week, JMEC hosted a two-day JMCC workshop on the critical objective of cantonment with a clear aim of resolving key practical issues. I am pleased to report that participants from all Parties looked at the practical measures, approaches and principles that would be required to establish and prepare cantonment sites, with appropriate physical and logistic support. We will continue to support the JMCC in the execution of their task.
20. The Joint Integrated Police has in excess of 850 men and women currently positioned at the police training facility at Rajaf and has received approval from TGoNU to commence training. Various partners have indicated a willingness to help provide facilities and training support. Once underway, it is anticipated that the training programme will last up to six weeks and once completed they will deploy in and around Juba. It is encouraging that the trainees come from both principal Parties to the Agreement and that the female component of the trainees appears in excess of 25%.



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21. The Chairperson of the SDRS Board is working closely with JMEC to continue the establishment of the Secretariat and Board. JMEC is confident that the previous work on Security Sector Reform in accordance with the Articles of Chapter Two can continue.

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22. We continue to place great emphasis on the issue of political inclusion. There remain notable gaps in representation within the political process and the Institutions and Mechanisms of the Peace Agreement.
23. The sustainability of the Peace process is of paramount importance. Our emphasis therefore remains on the need to re-establish an environment within which all the people of South Sudan, irrespective of their ethnicity or background, can safely return and engage in constructive and peaceful dialogue.
24. We urge the TGoNU and all Parties to the Agreement to create an environment conducive to inclusivity and constructive dialogue. We commend those who continue to bring a spirit of engagement and cooperation. All Parties must be included and must include themselves.
25. We urge all Parties, and most particularly the TGoNU, to demonstrate leadership and campaign for peace confidently. I appeal to the President of the Republic of South Sudan and the TGoNU to assume a higher profile and a more visible stance in propagating peace among all communities and citizens of South Sudan.
26. The only offensive South Sudan needs right now is a Peace Offensive. A nationwide campaign of visits and speeches, standing side by side with civil society leaders and speaking words of togetherness, forgiveness, and a unified future.
27. The voice and contribution of faith based leaders, women, Elders, private sector, civil society and youth cannot be understated. Their voice must be heard without fear of oppression or constraint.
28. We welcome the amnesty granted to the SPLA/IO soldiers who had crossed into the Democratic Republic of Congo. We support and encourage all such examples of reconciliation.
29. We further encourage the TGoNU to expand the democratic space in South Sudan, rather than reducing it. A responsible and ethical media can facilitate a culture of open dialogue. There can be no justification for shutting down and intimidating media simply for reporting divergent views.
30. On an internal note of inclusivity, I am concerned that the replacement of representatives by the legitimate bodies of Civil Society Organisations and Youth has had the effect of dramatically reducing the participation of women in JMEC. I therefore propose that both appointing bodies be allowed two representatives – one male and one female.



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Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

31. An inclusive political process can only be sustained within a secure environment. The deployment of the Regional Protection Force is a critical element within the establishment of a conducive environment that encourages and strengthens confidence in the implementation of the Agreement.
32. Last month we welcomed the commitments made by the TGoNU to review the transitional security arrangements for Juba in light of the agreed deployment of the Regional Protection Force. I find it regrettable, however, that final consent has not yet been given. With a minimum lead in time of six months, every day's delay sets us back. We must all continue to work with UNMISS and TGoNU to expedite this matter to a swift conclusion.
33. I must also express my regret that the participation of one of our key partners has been disrupted. In light of the important role played by Kenya throughout this peace process, I hope and trust that the Government of Kenya will remain engaged and that we can work together for the greater good.

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34. Violent conflict and the attendant insecurity has deepened and widened the humanitarian crisis. Thousands of people continue to flee into exile. The influx of South Sudanese refugees (188,133) has turned Bidibidi refugee camp in Uganda into the third largest refugee camp in the world. I commend the international community for responding positively to appeals to fund humanitarian aid.
35. The numbers of Internally Displaced Persons has increased particularly in Eastern Equatoria and parts of Western Bar El Ghazal as people flee fighting and insecurity. The majority (over 80%) of IDPs are women and children. Additionally, a large percentage of the population remains food insecure as the economic situation worsens.
36. I welcome the release on 26 October of 145 children who had been conscripted into armed groups as child soldiers and urge that all parties end the illegal practice of recruiting children into fighting forces. I commend UNICEF and all partners working towards ending the use of child soldiers.
37. The immediate and constant Government facilitation of unhindered humanitarian access across the country is essential in relieving this dire situation. But humanitarian suffering and human rights violations in South Sudan are a direct product of the violence we are seeing. Only when the violence ends will the suffering stop.
38. On behalf of JMEC, I would like to offer our immense thanks for the exceptional service of the departing UN SRSG, Mrs Ellen Loej. We owe her a great debt of gratitude for her two years of commitment and we wish her well in her retirement.



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39. South Sudan is going through a deep economic crisis, the roots of which lie in a protracted war and previously poor fiscal and economic management.
40. The economic situation deteriorated markedly with the violence in July. Monthly inflation averaged 41 per cent over the three months June - August and as of October the annualized inflation rate is 835%.
41. The economic situation interacts directly with the security situation. Security is a pre-requisite for a stable economy which is in turn a prerequisite for peace and prosperity. For any economic progress to occur, the security situation must be stabilized.
42. High levels of food insecurity now prevail due to low agricultural production as people continue to abandon the rural areas to flee the violence. Insecurity on major roads has disrupted transportation of goods to market. All these factors create inflationary pressures. With greater insecurity, international aid is increasingly diverted from development projects to humanitarian relief, further weakening the prospects of growth.
43. The TGoNU should be commended for the Draft Budget for 2016/17 tabled in Cabinet in October, which has cut expenditures by 50% in USD terms from the previous budget. Despite these deep cuts, however, only half of the spending is financed by revenues and grants. Only a small part of the remaining deficit is covered by the present financing plan. We hope that the TGoNU will come up with a plan to cover this shortfall.
44. The TGoNU has recently implemented two promising initiatives to better manage public finances. First, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has introduced a cash budget which means spending is related to and controlled by actual cash available.
45. Second, the Bank of South Sudan has established a Treasury Single Account into which all government revenues are to be deposited and from which all government disbursements should be made. A Treasury Single Account is a key provision of Chapter IV of the Agreement and is a pillar of international good practice in financial management. Revenues and expenditures are now to be clearly and transparently presented and monitored.
46. Going forward, a long term horizon in economic policy is needed. The government sector will need to be downsized to a level that can be financed sustainably.

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

47. This Peace Agreement and pursuit of its articles and instruments remains our best hope and opportunity to make progress towards a sustainable settlement.
48. The security and humanitarian situation is precarious but there are areas within the Agreement where progress is being made, however slight.



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49. I make the following recommendations:
- a. Hostilities must end and the ceasefire must be observed by all Parties and armed groups with immediate effect;
 - b. Inclusivity and representation within the political process and representation of all Parties within the Institutions and Mechanisms of the Agreement must be credibly and actively re-established as quickly as possible;
 - c. The TGoNU is encouraged to assume a higher profile and a more visible stance in campaigning for peace among the citizens of South Sudan;
 - d. The progress of the Transitional Security Arrangement Mechanisms, the Ministry of Finance and Bank of South Sudan is noted, recognised and further encouraged;
 - e. The institutions of the Agreement and the formation of those envisioned should be expedited;
 - f. The Regional Protection Force should be deployed as quickly as possible to establish a neutral and secure environment within which implementation of the Peace Agreement can continue.

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50. In conclusion, my expectations of this Plenary meeting are that:
- a. We continue to pronounce our commitment to this Peace Agreement and call upon all Parties to continue its implementation;
 - b. We receive a detailed briefing from the TGoNU on progress made in implementing the Agreement to date, and in particular how they intend to make the process more inclusive;
 - c. We receive an update on the current humanitarian situation from UNMISS and a clear commitment from the TGoNU to enable unhindered humanitarian assistance;
 - d. We receive reports on the status of the various boards and commissions (JMCC, SDSRB, CTSAMM, JIP-MT) and their progress towards implementation of their tasks.
51. I must take this opportunity to thank all our partners in TGoNU, the other South Sudanese stakeholders, IGAD, AU, Troika, EU, China, UNMISS, the International partners and friends of South Sudan for their commitment and continued support.
52. The people of South Sudan look to us all to resolve the differences that will end this conflict and bring about a real prospect of peaceful and sustainable national development.
53. May God bless us all and guide us in the relentless pursuit of peace.

H.E. Festus Mogae
Chairperson
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