



**SUDAN PEOPLES' LIBERATION MOVEMENT**  
**GENERAL HEADQUARTERS**

**SPLM LEADERS (FPD)**

---

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT SALVA KIIR'S LAUNCH OF NATIONAL DIALOGUE**

It is now three years since beginning of the crisis in December, 2013. The crisis which was political in nature quickly degenerated into ethnic targeting and mass slaughter of civilians in Juba, Bor, Baliét, Malakal and Bentiu. Over the years it has regressed into full-blown ethnic cleansing which has brought the country to the edge of genocide. As we speak, the country is teetering on the brink of catastrophe and collapse including a dire humanitarian emergency. We take this opportunity to convey our sincere condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims of this senseless war.

During the buildup of the current crisis in 2013, the forces of reforms in the SPLM had consistently called for constructive engagement amongst all stakeholders as the only risk-free mechanism for resolving any disputes. In this vein the press conference of the SPLM reformists on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 called for dialogue to reconcile the differences in the leadership. These efforts were not heeded then. Instead President Kiir chose violent confrontation which plunged the country into civil war. Even when the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCISS) was reached, President Kiir refused to implement it; he undermined ARCISS at every opportunity, and finally plunged the country back into full scale war in July, 2016.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, 2016, we released a concept document: **A New Roadmap to Rescue and Restore Hope in South Sudan**, in which we categorically called for an all-stakeholders' Roundtable Conference. We therefore welcome President Kiir's call for "National Dialogue," though belated; and we hope it is a serious call. We are happy that he has finally listened to the yearning of the people of South Sudan for dialogue and broader engagement to resolve the current conflict, heal and reconcile our nation.

In our view, meaningful dialogue will be possible if, and only if, certain principles are adhered to as has been suggested by many experts and those



concerned about the situation in South Sudan. These include, among others, transparency and public participation; credibility of the convener (preferably an institution with political and moral clout); the agenda to address the root causes of the conflict; clear mandate that appropriately tackles structure, rules and procedures; and agreed objectives and outcome of the dialogue. The aim of this broadened discourse should not be designed to bolster the political elite's efforts to maintain the status quo; nor should the platform and opportunity of national dialogue be misused for derailing consensus building; there should be no patronizing over the forum. These, in our view, are the major defects and pitfalls that have been built into President Kiir's NDSS proposal/launch. They need to be corrected. President Kiir has even appointed himself as a patron of this noble initiative while we all know that he is the principal protagonist who should only engage in NDSS or Roundtable in his capacity as a stakeholder participant, directly or through representation.

We encourage all the political actors and stakeholders to come up with their view on the dialogue being proposed. In the end, our objective is to pull our country out of the present quagmire and put it back on the track of state and nation building on a new basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kosti Manibe', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

**Kosti Manibe**  
**For/ SPLM Leaders (Former Political Detainees)**  
**18 December, 2016**