

Hon. Rin Tueny Mabor
Governor of Lakes State,
Rumbek, South Sudan

02 Jan 2022

Subject: Letter of appreciation to H.E Governor Rin Tueny Mabor

Dear General Rin Tueny Mabor, Governor of Lakes State

On behalf of the sons and daughters of Lakes state in Western Australia, we the undersigned members take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude and appreciation for your relentless efforts in restoring the Rule of Law, peace and tranquillity to the citizens and other residents of our beloved state. You have exceedingly fulfilled the mission given to you by His excellence the President of the Republic, Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit who gave you a mandate “To go and protect people and their properties in Lakes state” when he appointed you as the governor of our restive state. Your deserved appointment by the President on 8th June 2021 to be the governor has restored hopes to the masses and has served as a beacon of hope to all of us and the entire country since Lakes state is geographically located in the centre of South Sudan. Hence any unaddressed insecurity in Lakes state is tantamount to our national instability. As the saying goes, If the centre cannot hold, things fall apart!

After nearly a decade of sad era of disdain given to Lakes state citizens due to the endemic cycle of communal violence and lawlessness, our people are once again revered for their peace-loving nature as evident by the recent arrival of thousands of Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Unity state who have been displaced by the catastrophic floods raging in their area.

As we are now expressing our gratitude and happiness to you Mr Governor, we also have to briefly acknowledge the ultimate source of our happiness. As citizens of Lakes state, we are equally grateful to (president) H.E Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit, the President of the Republic of South Sudan for appointing the right person at the right time. As we just learned from his remarks during the swearing in ceremony of the new National Minister of Interior, Hon Gen Mahmood Solomon Der, H.E the president disclosed that Lakes state politicians do not support one another politically. We Kindly urge you Mr President to give General Rin Tueny Mabor enough time to lay a concrete foundation of peace and stability in Lakes state. As the president of the Republic, you have also made a good observation and we have applauded your swift political reform in Lakes state, especially in your recent appointments of young and qualified sons and daughters of Lakes state to work with you in moving our country forward. It is our trust and belief that you will not listen to the enemies of progress who may be approaching you from time to time bringing you gossips about Governor Rin Tueny Mabor.

In the last six months as a governor of Lakes state, you have done an amazing job in restoring peace and security. As the citizens of Lakes state in Western Australia, we would like to thank you. You are a man with vision as seen in your rallies when you touch down in Lakes state, your message was clear and consistent that you are coming to protect the lives of the people and their properties.

This is a formal thank you letter to you as the Governor of Lakes state, your state cabinet members and organised forces who have assisted you in keeping the machinery of complex state functioning in the face of challenging security hurdles and other more complex and often unreasonable demands due to economic downturns facing the country.

Your strong leadership is supported by the people of Lakes State. As a results of having peace and stability in the state, people are now moving freely from Cueibet to Shambe, and from Maper to Wulu. There is also free moment of cattle from one place to another without fear of being attacked. In the recent election that took place in Maleng-Agok payam in Rumbek East county, a large crowd participated peacefully in a free and fair election. For the first time in the last decade, a group of young men in different payams celebrated Christmas in one place, which was unusual before your appointment.

The state has witnessed a relative peace, where families gather outside their compound to late hours. It is delightful to have you in our state at this critical time. We are confident in your creative political and military abilities. Your ideas and skills are unique, which shows your quick problem-solving ability to various security problems. Your team performed exceptionally well in organizing the armed forces, delegating tasks to the 8 County commissioners, chiefs, and overseeing the entire security mission to successful completion. For instance, the exchange of raided and stolen cattle across the state and the silent of guns in the state.

Dear Mr Governor, as delighted citizens of Lakes state who are thrilled by your security achievements in the last six months, we would like to make the following recommendations to assist you in maintaining the long-term stability of Lakes state and secure a permanent peace and harmony among our people.

Recommendations/ Way Forward:

Below are the recommendations put forward to you as the Governor and your state authorities:

1. Peaceful disarmament: will help restore a lasting peace and a return to rule of law, to maintain the calmness and peaceful situation we have now in Lakes State, peaceful collection of firearms in the hands of civilian need to continue as we believe those young men are still in possession of massive firearms. Collection of firearms in the hands of civilian has been done many times in Lakes State and those guns quickly returned in the hands of those civilian. We believe your strong leadership will stop the source of firearms supply to the civilian. We thank you a lot for involving members of parliament both State and National level in this process of bringing lasting peace and security in Lakes State. Members of parliament especially National level can play a

vital role to stop the flow and sell of firearms from Juba to civilian youths in the State. We are aware that established resolution covers this issue very well. If your leadership find it challenging to store the collected firearms in the State, we encourage shifting the storage of collected guns to the army headquarters in Juba to stop the recycled of firearms to civilian.

2. Accountability and Appeal court: we are aware that your leadership is doing a great job when it come to criminals who killed people, robbed cattle and other properties. These people were untouchable and were roaming in the community only to repeat their unpunished crime as much as possible. Well done for bringing most of them to justice and setting up the mobile court unit in each Payam to deal with these issues, but we recommend a regular review of the cases handled by those courts to make sure justice is fairly done. There should be thorough consultation to the parties involved in cases that involve a loss of life in order to avoid revenge killing.
3. Organised forces, recruitment of special mobile forces in addition to the existing forces, these will deter help deal with regular crimes occurring in rural and cattle camps and this will subsequently give security assurance to the bordering communities/counties like Yirol East (Kerer), Amokpiny, Paloch, Maper and Gok (Gok-Toich) from facing insecurity and communal violence.
4. Neighbouring states security engagement, signing of memorandum of understanding with all the neighbouring State authorities is also crucial to identification and apprehension of criminals. This will help to control the moment of cattle theft and all suspected persons of murderer cases who run and hide in other States.
5. The long-standing violence and insecurity that cost thousands of lives greatly affected the people in diaspora both economically and emotionally. The massive internal displacement of Lakes state citizens due to insecurity led to a heavy burden of financial responsibility which fell on most diaspora members in Australia, Canada and the USA whose family members were uprooted from their ancestral land.
6. Local Truth, Healing and Reconciliation committee to be formed by the governor to help in bringing together the most affected families after court ruling. That is, the victims and offenders should be helped to reconcile and heal their differences as prescribed in our traditional customary law. Our traditional customary upholds the virtue of admission of guilt and then followed by healing and forgiveness. This has maintained peace and harmony for in our society for countless generations. This point is quite critical especially in some of the longest standing conflicts in our state.

7. Land issues: selling and reselling of land to many people, collecting money from everyone is a crime that the government must put an end to through lawful means, on the other hand some sections have composed songs of reclamation of disputed communal lands/cattle camps which other groups/sections also claim to have stake in, this songs can be very provocative to the families of deceased and have been the sources of fuel to the killing, hence banning of such activities would add value to your effort in ascertaining the conflict.
8. Ban/prohibition of provocative songs in the states. To maintain the peaceful environment in Lakes state, we recommend the government to intervened and ban incitement songs that were composed during the conflict. Communities that were in conflict and live away from each other for long time composed songs that are inciting and now these communities will live together in one camp as part of peace process. One example was recently seen in Pacong, where these young men sung some of these songs.
9. Disciplined armed forces, unreasonable use of force by some of the police and other armed forces towards civilians must be abolished as all civilians are protected by law. Therefore, a firm reminder to state organised forces to avoid abuse of power especially on innocent civilians and youths as this had repeatedly been the case in the past which had led to a terrible backlash from the civilians. There was an incident that happened in Maleng-Agok where one of the young men blow the whistle and one of the army officer aggressively approached the civilian and used force in trying to removed the whistle. Such cases can easily cause confrontation between the army and civilians.
10. Food security, this is the next phase which needs to be addressed through massive campaign by the Governor through local radio stations to create awareness and encourage the population to prepare for the rainy season and training of the youth with agricultural technical knowledge through available NGOs.

Dear Governor, we are aware that you and your administration have started working on some of the mentioned recommendations, however, we strongly felt to emphasis some of the key recommendations to your esteemed authority. By restoring the rule of law, peace and tranquillity, the citizens of Lakes are living their normal lives where people and livestock are moving freely without the fear of being attacked and raided respectively. You

have fulfilled your mandate given to you by H.E president Kiir to go to Lakes state to protect people and their properties. Once again, we would like to express our gratitude formally and sincerely for the amazing security work you accomplished over the last six months. Thank you for your hard work. We look forward to working with your administration to achieve successes in Lakes State and South Sudan in general.

Kind regards

Happy new year

Undersigned by the following:

Makur Maker Tulba – Chairman, Rumbek community, Western Australia

Maker Jok Mabok – Secretary General Yirol community, Western Australia

Bol Makoi Marial – Cueibet community member, Western Australia

Eng. Maker Madit Maluach – Deputy Chairman, Rumbek community, Western Australia

Thomas Puourac Maker – Secretary General, Rumbek community, Western Australia

Mary Nyibol Maker – Information Secretary, Rumbek community, Western Australia

Jok Meen Jok – Chueibet community member, Western Australia

Rev. Matthew Mading Malok – Founder of Konybai Peace Initiative, Western Australia

