

South Sudan Civil Society Alliance

The Alliance's Press statement: For immediate release; July 7, 2012

In an emergency meeting held today Saturday July 7, 2012, in Juba, the South Sudan Civil Society Alliance leadership would like to make public its resolutions and explanation on how its chairperson Mr. Deng Athuai Mawiir was kidnapped and later found. **How incident happened:**

Deng Athuai Mawiir, the leader of the South Sudan Civil Society Alliance, was kidnapped at 8:30 pm on Wednesday, the 4th of July at Nile Beach Hotel where he was staying and the facts were as follows:

Athuai came from South Sudan hotel in Juba where he held an Executive meeting with the Alliance's Board and having reached the Nile Beach hotel, he decided to get out of the hotel to a nearby market to buy something for his sick nephew who was staying with him. However, on starting getting out, at the gate of the hotel, he met five men one of whom called him by name. "Mr. Deng Athuai, how are you and where are you going?" Deng responded he was going out and one of the men said, they were willing to take him out there. Then Mr. Deng got into the car that he described somehow "green-blue". On reaching inside the car, he said, one of the men caught his hands, held them firmly while shaking them too much as if in harmless greetings. In a few seconds while the man still holding Deng's hands, a black nylon paper bag was put into his head and had all his hands pulled backward and immediately, his hands were tied behind him and few minutes soon, he felt unconscious and he was driven away and stayed with his kidnappers from that day July 4 to night of July 7, 2012 in unknown location.

The questions the kidnappers asked the Alliance's leader were as follows:

1. Who gives you the mandate to speak on behalf of the people of South Sudan?
2. Who funds you to mobilize all civil society members to cause crisis in South Sudan and what do you want to do with this nation?
3. You have been talking about the money being stolen in corruption, is it your father's money that was stolen?

4. Why do you like to speak every time on all these issues and who mandates you to speak on behalf of the people of South Sudan?

In all the responses, the Alliance's leader gave; he was saying simply, it is the civil society who elected him to speak on their behalf and on behalf of the people of South Sudan. That the Alliance has no money and it is just a voluntary coalition of the civil society of South Sudan which speaks on behalf of the people of South Sudan. That the issue of the stolen money is a public concern that matters to the civil society members to talk out on behalf of the public.

In all the ongoing discussion, the kidnappers as Mr. Deng narrated, warned him to speak the truth or else he would be finished.

In the evening of July 6, as Deng narrated, his kidnappers told him that they were taking him to another office for more investigations. Later Deng found himself somewhere in Juba-Bor road beyond the main Bridge along River Nile. He said he heard the noise of soldiers coming in cars along that road and as they were so near to the road, his kidnapers might have got very scared and they then ran away and left Mr. Deng alone. He managed to get back to the main road after he was able to press his head against a tree and he could see with one eye where the nylon used to blindfold him had small part open. He moved towards Gumbo for about 40 minutes until he reached a police station in Gumbo and the police stopped him and investigated him though he was not able to speak properly because of pains on his throats due to how he was tight firmly. The police untied him and they called their seniors in Juba and among the team who came to see Deng, included the Deputy Minister of interior General Salva Mathok Geng who took him to Juba Teaching Hospital.

After our leader has been found and now taking treatment, the Alliance's leadership has made the emergency meeting in Juba today and made the following resolutions:

1. The Alliance condemns in strongest terms possible the kidnapping of its leader Mr. Deng Athuai Mawiir. This is an act of cowardice unknown to South

Sudanese culture and an activity of terrorists which South Sudan fought for against Khartoum.

2. The Alliance appeals and urges the family members and relatives of its leader to remain calm and also appeals to all civil society fraternity to remain calm and united while its leader gets recovered.
3. The Alliance though resolved not to finger-point to anyone as per now but strongly believes that the act must have been done by individuals within the government who have their own evil intentions against the Alliance's leader or the civil society as a whole and therefore, the Alliance on behalf of Civil society resolves to write a letter to the Minister of Interior to carry out thorough investigations as to who was behind the kidnapping of the Alliance's leader. The questions asked by Mr. Deng's kidnappers are clear that it was because of Alliance's outspokenness towards just and democratic governance including a fight against corruption which Alliance leadership under Mr. Athuai has been spearheading.
4. The Alliance decides that it would wait for a week for the findings from the government and by next week, its leadership will meet and also would call all civil society members to decide on the way forward on its leader's ordeal.
5. The Alliance is determined to go on with fight against all evils that consume our new country and it calls again more strongly on the office of the president and Anti-Corruption Commission to reveal the names of the 75 corruption suspects and be taken to face justice in the Court of law.

Finally, as South Sudan celebrates its first independence anniversary and while Mr. Deng gets recovered, the Alliance leadership will continue appealing to the family, relatives, all civil society members and the general public to remain calm as investigations are still going on over the incident.

Thank you.

On behalf of the Alliance, signed by Biel Boutros Biel, Secretary General and spokesperson of the Alliance. Dated July 7, 2012, Juba, South Sudan, For The Alliance's contacts in Juba: Tel. 0955300382, 0955363383, 0955255539,

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