

**Republic of South Sudan
Office of the President
Abyei Joint Oversight Committee**

**Press Release
Abyei is Being Invaded Again by the Sudan
Abyei, 10th January 2013**

The Sudan Government has made it clear during the meeting of Dr Nafai Ali Nafai, the Vice President of Republic of Sudan, with the leaders of Misseryia in Khartoum on 8th January 2013 to settle the Arab nomads in the Abyei Area so that they can take part in the Abyei Referendum and to change the outcome of Abyei to be part of Sudan. Sudan has come out with a clear plan to abstract the conduct of Abyei Referendum by settling the Arab nomads not in their traditional lands but in the land of the Ngok Dinka as defined by the Permanent Court of Arbitration. By settling the Arab nomads in Abyei area, the Government of Sudan will use the settlers to create confusion during the entire process of referendum in the Abyei Area, particularly during stages of registration, voting and declaration of results as echoed by some leaders of Misseriya.

While Sudan has been asking the AU Peace and Security Council for more time to engage with South Sudan over Abyei, the time requested by Sudan was only meant to take the parties to migration season during which the Sudan Government will directly assist in the settlement of the Arab nomads in the lands of Ngok Dinka. During my recent visit to the northern areas of the Abyei Area on 10th January 2013 the Arab nomads have already started with their normal migration season in Abyei Area and their settlement as declared by Khartoum will be seen during this month and when nomads return to their homelands in May.

This settlement of Arab nomads in the Abyei Area and the abstraction of Abyei Referendum will be happening in the presence of the United Nations unless efforts are exerted now to avert this anticipated chaos that might be caused by Sudan during the conduct of Abyei Referendum. Also, while the Sudan component of AJOC refused to sign the terms of reference for the Inter-Governmental Taskforce to coordinate the humanitarian assistance in the Abyei Area, a delegation from the Government of Sudan and the UN organizations in Khartoum visited Abyei without coordination with the South Sudan component of the AJOC to allegedly assess and coordinate the humanitarian assistance for the returnees. This trip was actually just a pretext to mobilize the humanitarian organizations to support the settlement plan of the Government of Sudan. In addition to this visit to Abyei area and in order to implement this settlement plan, the Government of Sudan has unilaterally formed the Abyei Commission for Humanitarian Affairs.

The timing of this visit by the Government of Sudan with UN organizations to the Abyei Area notably coincided very well with the declared policy of Khartoum to settle Arab nomads in the land of Ngok Dinka. Knowingly or unknowingly, under the pretext of humanitarian assistance to the returnees, the UN organizations and some international organizations from Khartoum are likely to take part in this settlement plan of Arab nomads in the area. While Khartoum has started

mobilizing international assistance to support its plan of settlement of Arab nomads in Abyei area, the international community is unable to assist the return of the Ngok Dinka to their home areas. The result, those that were violently displaced remain displaced while others unjustly benefit from this crime with the support of members of the international community.

Equally, this settlement plan will be supported by the current presence of Sudan Armed Forces in Abyei Area in the form of oil police force that have become a source of insecurity in the area. This settlement plan by Khartoum with its military presence in Abyei may provoke reactions from the Ngok Dinka and the conflict that Sudan is to generate by its actions may undermine the period of relative peace in Abyei area after the deployment of the UN forces. Indeed it is likely that the presence of UN forces in the Abyei Area and the peace they provide to the area may be exploited by Khartoum to actually settle the Arab nomads rather than concentrate only on ensuring access of their livestock to water and pasture in the area. If this misuse of the UN forces occurs, the mandate of the UN forces will be undermined and its credibility will be tainted in the eyes of the Ngok Dinka and the Republic of South Sudan. The UN and the UN forces have a mandate to facilitate and provide humanitarian assistance in Abyei, not help from the Government of Sudan that furthers the fruits of its policy of forced displacement and abuses of human rights.

Given this serious development in the Abyei Area, I call upon the international community not only to condemn but also to stop this settlement plan of Khartoum through a clear mandate to the UN forces in the area. The AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council are to ensure the immediate withdrawal of all armed forces of Sudan from Abyei area and to call the UN forces in Abyei area to provide not only security to the people, but to protect their properties including oil installation as per the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1990. I call upon the members of the AU Peace and Security and UN Security Council not to allow Sudan to continue with its delay game of not resolving the issue of Abyei, while it continues to take advantage of the international communities' patience and presence and commit more human rights abuses in the area by changing the demographic reality of the Abyei Area in favour of Arab nomads.

I call upon the UN and international organizations operating in the Abyei Area to distance themselves from this settlement plan of Khartoum by not engaging in any humanitarian assistance that may directly or indirectly support this settlement plan. Instead, their efforts should be to fulfill their existing commitments to aid the return of the Ngok Dinka displaced in May of 2011. It would be extremely difficult under such declared settlement plan by Khartoum to create the conducive atmosphere of trust required to establish a functioning administration in the Abyei Area and without clarity of the final status of Abyei area.



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