



SUDAN PEOPLES' LIBERATION MOVEMENT/ARMY
CHAIRMAN & COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

South Sudan's Third Independence Celebration
July 9, 2014

Esteemed Compatriots, the people of South Sudan
Members of the Press
Ladies and Gentlemen

This day, July 9, 2014, marks the third anniversary of the hard won independence of South Sudan. I take this opportunity to salute the memory of all those who laid down their lives for this independence. I salute the memory of Dr. John Garang de Mabior the founding father of the SPLM/SPLA and the martyrs of the war of National Liberation spearheaded by the SPLM/SPLA and the martyrs of the current war against dictatorship. I congratulate our people and the members of the SPLM/SPLA, the resistance movement, on this occasion.

This anniversary comes seven months into the civil war which was unleashed on our people on December 15, 2013 by President Salva Kiir and his cohorts. In this short period, tens of thousands of lives has been lost, nearly half a million fled to the neighboring countries and 1.1 million internally displaced. I want to avail myself of this opportunity to refute the falsehood of Salva Kiir's coup attempt narrative. The coup story that has plunged our country into abyss was a plot by Salva to do away with his political opponents by instilling fear in our people through targeting killing of one ethnic group and now also targeting citizens of South Sudan who express their views on Federalism in the country, in an attempt to assert his rule of dictatorship.

In all honesty, it is difficult to mark this day this year as a joyous occasion because of the prevailing situation caused by the "uncalled for war" which our people are subjected to now; and because of the serious undermining of our hard earned sovereignty as evident by the presence of foreign forces and mercenaries in our country and by again experiencing similar ills of the decades that we and our

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forefathers rose against in the long relentless struggle and sacrifices of our people for justice, peace, freedom, equality, democracy and prosperity.

In the last three years of our independence, Salva kiir used state power and resources to establish dictatorship and pushed the country into what has become a civil war. His visionless leadership is endangering the very future of our country. Our country witnessed nothing but dictatorship, anarchy, corruption, tribalism and lack of development and service delivery. South Sudan is now ranked a failed state.

Ladies and gentlemen, The SPLM/SPLA emerged as a resistance movement to Salva Kiir's military action against us on December 15, 2013 when he decided against the political dialogue that was ongoing within the SPLM on issues of democracy, freedoms, justice and governance. We, the survivors of that military onslaught, decided to turn the tragic genocidal act to be an opportunity for fostering unity of our people, transforming and restructuring our country into a state that will accommodate our diversity by introducing a federal system of governance that shall meet the aspirations of our people on issues of democracy, freedoms, justice, peace and prosperity.

There is no doubt that the regime has divided the country, created ethnic animosity, suspicion and distrust and economic marginalization of the majority of the South Sudanese people. Cognizant to these divisive issues, the SPLM/ SPLA is committed to a process of Reconciliation, Healing and Accountability in order to foster the unity of our people and to preserve the territorial integrity of our country.

We welcome the interim report of the AU Commission of Inquiry and we urge the commission to complete its work before the completion of the peace talks as it is a vital component to a final peace agreement!

We encourage all South Sudanese to join in the struggle for the transformation and establishment of a democratic federal state. We regret that we are celebrating the third anniversary under the tyranny of Salva Kiir. However, it is our desire that we will all celebrate the fourth anniversary in a peaceful federal state.

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The way forward

We appreciate the efforts made by the IGAD countries under the able leadership of H.E Haile Mariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and are fully committed to the IGAD peace process under the leadership of Amb. Seyoum Mesfin and the other Special Envoys, which allows for the participation of other stakeholders as we believe this process offers the best chance for transformation and restructuring of South Sudan into federal state. We envision a state that ensures that never again shall a dictator be allowed to thrive in South Sudan nor take the country to a civil war or target any ethnic group. However, we demand upon IGAD Mediation to review the selection of the stakeholders so that it is transparent, representative and inclusive. In the light of this demand, we call upon the IGAD Mediation to resume the peace talks.

Finally we congratulate our people in South Sudan, UNMISS protection Camps, the Displaced, the refugee Camps and the Diaspora. We take this opportunity to thank all international and regional friends, particularly IGAD countries and partners who supported us through our struggle for independence and who continue to support us to achieve a lasting and sustainable resolution to the current crisis.

In conclusion we would like to recognize the great work done and role played by the UNMISS under the able leadership of Madam Hilde F. Johnson in protecting the lives of the people of South Sudan in UNMISS camps. God bless you all. God bless South Sudan.



Dr. Riek Machar Teny
Chairman and Commander-in-Chief
SPLM/SPLA

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