

**ADDRESS BY SALVA KIIR MAYARDIT, PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN TO THE NATIONAL LEGISLATURE
ON THE OCCASION OF The INAUGURATION OF THE THREE
YEARS EXTENSION OF THE TENURE AND MANDATE.**

8TH JULY, 2015.



- **Your Excellency, Hon. James Wani Igga, Vice President of the Republic,**
- **Rt. Hon. Speaker of the National Legislative Assembly, Mr. Manasseh Magok Rundial,**
- **Rt. Hon. Speaker of the Council of States, Mr. Joseph Bol Chan,**
- **Hon. National Ministers,**
- **Hon Members of the National Legislature,**
- **Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On the 24th of March this year, this august House decided to extend the tenure and mandate of my office, and by implication my term as President, as well as that of this august House, the State Legislative Assemblies and the Constitutional Review Commission for three (3) years, from the 9th July 2015 to 9th July 2018.

This extension, Rt. Hon. Speaker and Hon. members, has been necessitated by the need to fill the institutional vacuum that would have resulted from the expiry of the tenure and mandate of these two critical institutions of our Government, because the National Elections Commission could not conduct the elections as planned.

So on this great occasion, on the eve of the 4th Anniversary of our national independence, I have the distinct honour to salute you in the name of our freedom and dignity.

It is important to note that we are inaugurating the three years extension of the presidency tenure and mandate, after I have completed the five (5) years term of office as the President of the Republic of South Sudan, having won the 2010 Presidential Elections. Therefore, it is incumbent on me to reflect back, state the present and outline the future for our country in the three year period ahead.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

Throughout the Interim Period of the CPA, 2005, I concentrated on making sure that the referendum on the Right of Self-determination for our people was conducted on time. Today, I want to thank God for guiding and helping me navigate through a complex political environment and ultimately making it feasible for our people to determine their destiny despite the many obstacles Khartoum had laid to sabotage that provision of the CPA.

This day also is an opportunity for me to express by profound gratitude to my late brother and hero Dr. John Garang who sacrificed his life to achieve the liberation of our people. I also want to appreciate our people for voting overwhelmingly for their own freedom and independence.

They have made us proud. For me as a person, the opportunity to lead my people to freedom and independence at last was the greatest achievement and privilege that I felt and I am deeply humbled by that gift from the almighty God.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

I knew that Khartoum had no intention to develop South Sudan. Similarly, it was obvious that our partners in the CPA, the National Congress Party (NCP), had no intention to implement the referendum on the right of our people to self-determination as scheduled.

Economically, Khartoum controlled all the resources and made sure that the 50% oil revenue allocation that was meant for the then Southern Sudan under the CPA was out of an unknown total oil revenue. However, confronting them politically and risking the CPA altogether was not an option for me.

What was important, for me as a liberator, was to make sure that our people got the opportunity to decide their destiny as it happened. Although no development took place and we were cheated economically, our strategy earned the long-sought freedom and independence for which millions have sacrificed their precious lives.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

Let me be honest and say that since we became free and independent on 9th July 2011, our country has not achieved economic independence. As a result our financial situation fluctuated between bad to worse. Therefore, all the plans that were compiled by various institutions of my government for major infrastructure development, service sector transformation and the development of strong governance institutions failed to materialize, to a large extent.

In addition, I must admit that the governance system exhibited weakness across the board due to poor human resource capacity, lack of relevant sectoral laws, failure to enforce laws and lack of credible operational procedures. These challenges indicated that there are shortcomings in our governance system that has encouraged corruption and wastage of public funds.

To make matters worse,, we have been very unlucky in economic terms. Just five (5) months after independence we were forced to close down oil production from January 2012 to April 2013 as a way to stem the looting of our resources by Khartoum.

The first revenue from oil production was only earned in May 2013. Again just over five (5) months later the *failed Coup* of 15th December, 2013, occurred, closing down production in Unity State, reducing trade across the whole country and disrupting development projects by forcing the government to shift funding to maintain security. In between these misfortunes, there was a sharp decline in oil prices: from 140 to 40 dollars per barrel. This has compounded our financial difficulties and destabilized our economy further.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

Despite this trail of economic challenges, some institutional reform and successes have been recorded in the past two years. All the institutions of government have developed five (5) year policy-frame-works and strategic plans relevant to their responsibilities and mandates. Each institution also scored achievements within the limits of our economic challenges. It is not possible to mention every achievement in this speech, but I want to thank all the ministers and their civil service staff for the work they have done for South Sudan even without regular and adequate provision of operational funds.

In the governance sector, our collective Cabinet decision-making process has been improved tremendously.

For the first time a 'Government Directory' is now being printed for distribution to all public institutions. This will mark the end of using private e-mails and telephones for government business.

Further, in collaboration with the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource Development has modernized the filing and indexing system. A Registry Section has been introduced to replace the old clerical section so that filing, archiving and retrieval of documents is improved. The much-awaited Public Service Reform proposals are also complete and the requisite forms developed ready to be rolled out at all levels of government.

With these achievements, the initial stages for an 'E-government System' and the establishment of 'Government Command and Control Centre' have been set. This, no doubt, will enhance transparency, accountability, effective coordination and information sharing. We believe that is the best way to combat inefficiency and corruption in our government and we are determined to complete this process during the extension period.

In laying the foundation of our Country, this august House has enacted one hundred and twenty two laws and conventions, twenty-seven of which were ratified in the last two years.

The August House is still deliberating on another twenty two. Rt. Hon. Speaker and Hon. members, I thank you very much for your determination to build South Sudan on a strong ground despite the financial hardship that we are all facing.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

In the Economic Sector, the Non-Oil Revenue Taskforce launched measures which have raised non-oil revenue collections from under 10% to over 40%. We are confident that collections in this neglected sector will rise to more than 70%, especially when the 'National Revenue Authority' is established after the ratification of the respective bill by this parliament.

A credit line from the Qatar National Bank (QNB) was successfully negotiated to help traders import essential commodities at low cost. Some unprincipled and corrupt individuals have abused the system. I have now ordered the Ministry of Finance, Commerce, Investment and Economic Planning to make effective changes and dismiss those involved in abusing the facility.

With government in control of the oil fields in Unity State, efforts will be made to resume oil production. The diversification of our economy has always been our desire and it has finally started in earnest.

Towards this end, the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining has launched the issuance of licenses for the exploration of mineral deposits in South Sudan to boost the economy.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

At the moment, the agricultural sector is not contributing economically and its impact on food security is negligible and requires a lot of government support. We are committed to inject funds into this sector. As you all know the South Sudan Food Security Council, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, has undertaken to establish Agro-mechanical Centers in all the ten (10) states of South Sudan, utilizing the 1000 tractors contributed by my office to kick-start agricultural productivity. If this programme is implemented correctly it will put the agricultural sector in the core of our economic growth and prosperity.

Our Country has really never had any Telecommunications and Postal Services infrastructure to speak of. These have now been rehabilitated and South Sudan has acquired an International Gateway, a Satellite HUB, Country Code and Country Domain and is ready for digital Migration like any independent country in the **dot-dom-world**.

In the health sector, effective transformation has been achieved. The current status where millions of dollars are spent on medical referral for treatment abroad is being changed through domestication of the health services at all levels within the boundaries of our country. This policy means everybody qualifies for better Health Service regardless of his or her status.

Already the Ministry of Health, with the support of our sector development partners, has embarked on the implementation of Boma Health Initiative as the best strategy for universal health coverage in South Sudan.

Juba now has a blood bank and a modern laboratory named after our hero and liberator Dr. John Garang De Mabior. Although we are only four years as an independent country, South Sudan has been awarded a certificate of excellence and rated number five in Africa for successfully controlling important endemic diseases that constitute health problems in the continent.

A lot of positive achievements were also recorded in our education sector, both General and Higher Education. In General Education, enrollment increased from 918, 117 learners in 2007 to 1.64 million in 2014.

Capitation grants for 2718 Primary and 184 secondary Schools was implemented with more than 3000 grants approved. Now South Sudan has 19,872 primary Schools and 861 secondary schools. In the Higher Education Sector, the government secured more than 2063 scholarships in several friendly countries for diploma, degree, masters and PhD specializations . This is a very important sector and we will need to do more to cover the whole country.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

It is now almost 19 months, since the rebellion started on 15thDecember 2013, unleashing an internal war, characterized by unprecedented violence. Even Riek's own 1991 rebellion that nearly wrecked the SPLM/SPLA and set back the liberation clock by not less than ten years was less destructive by comparison.

As we inaugurate this transitional period, it is incumbent upon me to outline to you what I intend to do, together with you and the executive team that will be charged with the responsibility to implement these plans. Obviously, there is so much to do during these three years, considering the enormous challenges which the current state of affairs poses for our country. And it goes without saying that the greatest of these challenges is how to end the war.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

Shortly after leaders of our neighbouring countries intervened in an effort to stop the fighting, we have reiterated over and over again, our commitment to ending the war and reaching a peaceful resolution of the conflict with the rebels. Our negotiating team signed an agreement on cessation of hostilities on 23rd January, 2014. But you all know how that agreement has been rendered meaningless by the rebels who continue to attack towns and outposts held by the National Army of this country throughout the Greater Upper Nile states. The ceasefire has been persistently flouted by the rebels, leading to the loss of many innocent South Sudanese lives on both sides.

Nevertheless, we are totally committed to pursue peace through the IGAD mediation process, the Arusha SPLM Re-unification Agreement and through the unity of the internal front. As President, I am determined to strengthen our Peace and Reconciliation Commission to have the capacity to seriously undertake issues of peace in South Sudan. My commitment is to hammer the 'Culture of Peace in our people so that we accept dialogue and reconciliation, and reject violence that has now become widespread in our communities. We must find ways and means to accept each other as South Sudanese: **One People One Nation.**

The peace process, under the stewardship of IGAD and the support of the AU, UN and Troika, has made appreciable progress and achievements. The very three years of extension of tenure and mandate, which we are inaugurating today, were agreed upon with the rebels in the early phase of this process in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as part of the features of the proposed Transitional Government of National Unity.

Rt. Hon Speakers, Hon. members,

Many of you must have come across a peace proposal by the IGAD mediators for the "Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan". We have reservations about many aspects of that proposal. It is now being subjected to a critical review and appraisal by the SPLM leadership, our Negotiating Team and other stakeholders.

But you can be sure that proposals such as the one on 'demilitarizing the national capital' and bringing in third party units under a UN, AU or IGAD mandate will not be entertained by this Government. Nor shall we accept the maintenance of two armies for 18 months and the surrender of the three Greater Upper Nile states or any state in Bahr-el-Ghazal or Equatoria as demanded by Riek's rebel movement. These proposals are so arbitrary in nature that you wonder what criteria or justifications the IGAD proponents considered.

However, we will continue to negotiate and pursue peace at any cost and we will travel wherever we can to bring peace to our people sooner rather than later. Under the Arusha Peace Agreement, the SPLM held two meetings with the Group 10 and good progress has been made. We are serious about the reunification of the SPLM in accordance with the commitments we made under the Arusha Agreement. In my capacity as the chairman of the SPLM, I have already reinstated Dr. Riek Machar in his position as deputy chairman of the SPLM, Mr. Pagan Amum as Secretary General and some members among the Group 10 in the positions they held in the party before the outbreak of the crisis.

Rt. Hon. Speakers, Hon. members,

Your government is diligent enough to recognize the damage that the war is inflicting on our country. We recognize and deplore the bloodshed and we hate the loss of life. We regret the destruction of our physical infrastructure and the deterioration in our environment. We feel and experience on a daily basis the economic hardships facing our people. Yet it is neither reasonable nor acceptable to expect the Government to forego its prime responsibility of maintaining security and preserving the territorial integrity of the Republic of South Sudan.

The infamous failed *coup de'tat* of 15th December 2013 has not only caused insecurity in our nation but has also triggered an enormous economic crisis, crippling underdevelopment and unbearable shortage of essential commodities, including petroleum products. In many cases these commodities are not just scarce, they are also too expensive for people to afford, particularly in the face of the current challenging financial situation.

We have dismissed those who were entrusted with the management of the concerned agencies and we will do it again if anybody attempts to violate my directives to reform the letters of credit (LC) system. Equally, I have directed that those engaged in the abuse of LCs and other malpractices in the government be brought to book without fear or favour, and that key civil servants be routinely transferred to curb corruption in our institutions.

Rt. Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members,

I sincerely recognize the difficulties our people are facing and do honestly appreciate the patience they have demonstrated in support of my leadership over the past few years, particularly after the challenge of 15th December 2013 *failed coup*. To this end, I feel it is in order for us to remember the extraordinary men and women in uniform who have paid the ultimate price and those who continue to fight serving so that the rest of us can have peace.

Today, we want all of our troops to know that they are in our thoughts as they face huge challenges in the defense of our nation. We want them to know that we greatly appreciate the sacrifices they are making and we promise to do everything possible to ensure that they perform their duty efficiently and effectively.

Rt. Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members,

The three years of extension give us the opportunity to seriously seek peace at any cost, accomplish unfinished government tasks that were stipulated for by the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011, before Amendment (2015) as follows:

- (i) **On Peace, Dialogue, Reconciliation and Reconstruction;** I declare before you my full commitment to achieve peace, healing and reconciliation among our communities. In this regard, the Peace and Reconciliation Commission will be strengthened and empowered to undertake its full responsibility and become the center for building the 'Culture of Peace' in South Sudan.
- (ii) **The National Constitutional Review Commission** will be capacitated to complete its mandate of reviewing the Transitional Constitution of the South Sudan, 2011, which will be deliberated upon by all the stakeholders before its enactment by the National Legislature and subsequent adoption as the permanent constitution of the Republic of South Sudan.
- (iii) **The National Bureau of Statistics** will be fully supported and funded to conduct a Population and Housing Census and map the geographical constituencies for proper and fair representation in the future general elections.
- (iv) **The National Electoral Commission** will be funded as a matter of high priority to establish itself and prepare to carry our general elections in 2018. Also the Political Parties Council will be funded to organize the Political Parties so that they prepare to participate in the general elections in 2018.
- (v) **The Pension Fund** will be attended to so that those who have served our people and have reached retirement age can rest comfortably, thereby paving the way for the younger generations to do their part.
- (vi) **When peace is achieved,** resettling IDPs and Refugees will be critical and the government will shoulder its responsibility of rebuilding our social fabric.

- (vii) **Again when peace comes**, major reforms will be absolutely necessary in the entire government in accordance with the provisions of the peace agreement that will be reached. In particular, the Security Sector will be reformed and disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation carried out. Children and the elderly who have been unduly forced to take up arms will be discharged, resettled, rehabilitated and re-integrated into their Community.

Rt. Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you to declare that what I have outlined to you constitutes part of the three-year development plan, which my government has undertaken to implement. I am fully aware that you extended the tenure and mandate of my office for three years in order to enable me bring peace to our people and country.

I know that peace is very expensive and yet absolutely critical for us to build our young country, explore its natural resources for economic growth and achieve prosperity of our deprived people. I promise the people of South Sudan, through this August House, that I will bring peace sooner rather than later.

Finally, I have taken the liberty to remind you about how we became independent and the challenges we faced before reaching there. Independence alone has no meaning unless the people benefit from its fruits in the form of services and infrastructure development. We must, therefore, work together to develop our country and people.

Tomorrow, 9th July 2015, we will celebrate the 4th Anniversary of our Independence. May I take this opportunity to congratulate the entire population of South Sudan and wish them a peaceful and happy commemoration which, despite everything, I believe, will be truly festive and colourful, even better than that of the previous years.

Thank you, Rt. Hon. Speaker and Hon. members for listening and for giving me the opportunity to serve my people for three more years.

God Bless South Sudan