



**SUDAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT/ARMY
SPLM/SPLA (IO)
CHAIRMAN & COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

**TALKING NOTES IN THE TELECONFERENCE WITH THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON
THE CONFLICT IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**

Ladies and gentlemen, friends and colleagues, distinguished guests and participants in this engagement:

I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you today, even if it is from a distance – a very long distance – via teleconferencing technology. My host here in South Africa has been hospitable. I would like to thank the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the former UN Secretary General and others for extracting me from the forest of the DRC while I was being chased out of my home in South Sudan.

All of us participating today share some experiences but our perceptions may vary. What I wish to do is to present, as best as I can in the time allotted, the perspective of the leadership of the SPLM-IO. My aim is to be frank and truthful – and, to be perfectly candid, the principal obstacle to peace and stability in South Sudan is President Salva Kiir, who has embarked on a campaign of genocide, government-induced famine, and terrorism that can only undermine efforts to instill democratic governance, the rule of law, and peaceful coexistence among our country's various social and ethnic groups. The lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people are at risk because of the current Juba regime's kleptocratic practices and political myopia.

Our task is to address three related topics: First, what are the root causes of the conflict in South Sudan?

Second, what are the realities on the ground impeding progress in the peace process?

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And third, what actions does the UN Security Council need to take to be more effective in ending the violence?

On the first question, I will draw upon a document issued by the SPLM/SPLA-IO on April 23, 2017, entitled "Challenges to Peace and Security in South Sudan," which was a response to a report written by the American policy analyst Kate Almquist Knopf.

What sparked the December 15, 2013 crisis that plunged our country into this tragic civil war? For you to fully appreciate what really led to the December 15, 2013 violence, we would briefly share the background of the root causes dating back to the interim period (2005-2011) of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) era.

The disagreements within the leadership of the SPLM began to manifest during the interim period (2005-2011) when the movement was undergoing reorganization for the purpose of restructuring and transformation from a liberation struggle to a political party. The Chairman of the SPLM, President Salva Kiir adamant to assert his dictatorship in the party, interfered with the process using state power and resources. The Movement nearly split during the 2008 convention.

Areas of disagreement during the convention included the party constitution with regards to party structures, internal democratic processes and devolution of power to the lower levels of the party. The encroachment by the Chairman into the political space of the party organs continued in violation of party constitution. By 2010 elections, all decisions including approval of party candidates for the general elections were decided by the Political Bureau (PB). The end result was that the SPLM candidates approved by the PB were challenged in more than sixty percent of the constituencies by SPLM members selected by the membership at the constituency level.

After the successful conduct of the internationally monitored referendum in January 2011, the country embarked on the process of constitutional amendment in preparation for independence.

The SPLM members disagreed on fundamental issues with regards to the nature of the state and transitional constitution that is needed to translate the aspirations



and the long desire of the people of South Sudan for a democratic, prosperous and peaceful state.

There were key ideological differences over the system of governance, where many were for a federal system of governance, devolution of power and resources to different levels of government. Undermining the values and principles of democracy and self-rule that the people of South Sudan struggled to attain for over five decades, President Salva and his supporters on one hand were for maintaining the status quo of a unitary state. President Salva threatened Parliament with dissolution if it were to disagree with him on constitutional matters. President Salva declared that I, who was then vice president, was running a parallel government.

This was because I expressed my views on the need to restructure the government institutions and to institute a federal system of government to reflect the aspirations of the people expressed in the 1947 Juba conference.

President Salva steamrolled, through the intimidated parliament, the transitional constitution grabbing more powers to himself and producing a far more inferior constitution in comparison to the Interim Constitution of 2005 that enabled South Sudanese to successfully conduct the referendum that led to the independence in July 2011. However, President Salva did not even respect his imposed constitution, he violated it at will and embarked on dismissing elected officials such as the governors of the states.

In 2012 the SPLM leadership went around the country to thank party members and the public at large for their role in supporting the referendum and independence. The feedback from the people of South Sudan was that the SPLM has lost vision and direction. Senior members of the party suggested dialogue within the Party to address these concerns. However, President Salva did not take the initiative as a genuine process for corrective measures in the party but rather an attack on his leadership. He sharply disagreed and rejected the results.

Other issues that were raised for discussion in the party included rampant insecurity, corruption, tribalism, deteriorating economy, poor external relations and the fast disappearing political space and free expression.

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The widespread insecurities which prevailed was characterized by intercommunal conflicts and armed rebellions springing up in many parts of the country. President Salva heavy-handedly responded to intercommunal conflicts and in many occasions the army ended up in bloody confrontations with civil population and often civilians were killed. This resulted in communities not trusting the government with their security. President Salva and I frequently disagreed on the approach to resolving intercommunal conflicts. My approach was usually to initiate dialogue amongst communities and I often went into conflict areas in attempt to reconcile communities.

President Salva is on record on his violent approach to intercommunal conflicts, his statement in Wau on 24 December 2012 in which he shocked the nation when he announced that eight civilians were killed by SPLA on 8-9 December 2012 -- quote "I would have fought with people who refused transfer of the administrative headquarters from Wau to Bagari if it was the reason of fighting" -- end quote.

After the elections of 2010, many felt that the SPLM rigged the elections and those SPLM members who contested as independent candidates were targeted by security agencies, some took up arms against the government. The communities from which the leaders of those rebellions hailed were targeted and massacred by the government. The Dinka Luach from which General George Athor came were targeted in 2011 and George Athor himself was killed. The Shilluk community was also targeted in 2010, similarly the Murle and the Fertit in 2012. Some of your Excellencies will recall that South Sudan was frequently discussed in the UN Security Council, way before the eruption of violence in 2013. Conflicts in states of Jonglei, Warrap, Lakes, Western Bahr el Ghazal, etc. were subjects of discussion at your forum.

It is worth mentioning here that by 2011 a police state was fully pledged and operational. Security agencies were engaged in crackdown of journalists, politicians and citizens for expressing opinions on government's mismanagement.

In April 2013, President Salva aborted the process of National Healing and Reconciliation that offered an opportunity for the people of South Sudan to address and overcome war trauma and the grievances of the 21 years of the long struggle for self-determination and independence.

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It is important to mention that due to these problems, the SPLM leaders split into two camps one for reform and the other for maintaining the status quo. Mediation efforts during the period between April - December 2013 by well wishers namely UNMISS, American, Ethiopian and South African leaders failed. The period after the independence and before the crisis represented a struggle, by many including political and civic leaders, and communities, to build a strong democratic state based on constitutionalism and the rule of law.

On December 15, 2013 violence erupted in the capital Juba which spread very fast to other parts of the country. In less than two weeks of the crisis in South Sudan, the leaders of IGAD countries and Troika took charge and kicked off peace talks in Addis Ababa. Tanzania and South Africa on the other hand conducted in Arusha parallel talks between the SPLM factions. On January 21, 2015, we signed the Arusha Agreement for Reunification of the SPLM. On August 17, 2015, I signed the IGAD mediated Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS). On August 26, 2016, President Salva signed the said agreement attaching a list of reservations. He further declared on signing that the Agreement was neither the Holy Bible nor the Holy Koran. In actual fact, the two agreements were road maps for resolving the root causes of the conflict at government and party levels. The report of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on the Conflict in South Sudan is another noble attempt to stem out impunity in the country.

The events that lead to the collapse of the August 2015 Agreement in July 8, 2016

1. President Salva and his regime belligerently defied the guarantors of the Agreement and insisted on non implementation of the articles of the agreement such as the transitional security arrangements including the demilitarization of the capital Juba and other major cities, cantonment of forces and the democratic process for selection of the speaker of national assembly.
2. Targeted killings of SPLM/SPLA(IO) officers in Juba.
3. Continuous violation of the ceasefire by the regime's forces.
4. Creation of 28 states on October 2, 2015 in violation of the Agreement and the Transitional Constitution, 2011.
5. Assassination attempt on my life on July 8, 2016.

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Current situation in the country since July 8, 2016:

With regard to the current situation, I am sure you are fully aware of the dire humanitarian situation as stated by the many UN reports and the role of the regime in obstructing humanitarian access resulting in famine. I will not say much on that, I will however speak a little on what some of the UN reports and statements refer to as a looming genocide. We, as SPLM(IO), are in agreement with the UK Secretary for International Development who stated, during her visit to Juba, that what is happening in South Sudan is genocide and nothing else. It is important to recall that the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry on the conflict in the Republic of South Sudan has earlier established a case of ethnic cleansing during the December 2013 Juba crisis. Also the team of UN experts have since predicted that if South Sudan continues in the current trajectory, half of its population will perish in four years. The situation undoubtedly is dire.

The war has engulfed the whole country and the regime's scorched earth policy of targeting civilians has affected nearly all South Sudanese communities resulting to:

1. 250,000 citizens seeking refuge and protection in UNMISS Protection of Civilians' sites (POCs).
2. Over 2 million people seeking refuge in the neighboring countries. Uganda alone is hosting nearly 1.2 million, Sudan 600,000, Ethiopia 500,000, Kenya 100, 000 and DRC 10,000. Some refugees particularly in Sudan have not registered at UNHCR.
3. Abuse of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Political Parties have gone under ground. More than 10 journalists and 82 humanitarian aid workers were killed by the regime.

The economy has collapsed with hyper inflation of over 900%.

The way forward: Ladies and Gentlemen

We are calling upon the UN to:

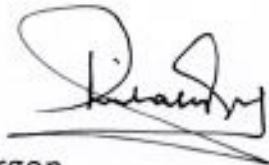
1. Urgently convene a humanitarian forum to immediately establish a humanitarian mechanism to enable unhindered humanitarian access, ensure security of humanitarian aid workers and to provide for a mechanism to make accountable those who violate or interfere with humanitarian access. The forum should include all the stakeholders.

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2. Initiate a political process for peaceful settlement of the conflict using the Agreement (ARCSS) as the basis.
3. Review the status of the UN Peace Keeping forces to enable it carry out its mandate effectively. It is important to note that during the July crisis, I engaged the Special Representative of Secretary General of the UN (SRSG) and I proposed creation of a buffer zone in the capital Juba and the UN Peace Keeping forces to provide security as a neutral third party force, the SRSG was unwilling because she claimed that the UN forces were ill equipped compared to the SPLA. The deployment of the Regional Protection Force should be done after the review of the status of the UN forces and when an agreement on the resuscitation of the Agreement (ARCSS) is concluded.
4. End the international policy of isolating the SPLM(IO) including my release from confinement and detention so as to enable our full engagement in finding a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

Thank You.



Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon
Chairman and Commander-in-Chief, SPLM/SPLM(IO)
31 May 2017.

