

**STATEMENT BY HON. NHIAL DENG NHIAL, CHIEF
NEGOTIATOR, GRSS DELEGATION AT THE LAUNCH OF
THE FINAL SESSION, PHASE III SESSION II OF THE IGAD-
LED SOUTH SUDAN PEACE PROCESS**

Monday, 23rd February 2015.

H.E. Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin, Chairperson, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan;

H.E. General Lazaro Sumbeiywo, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan;

H.E. General Mohammed Ahmed Mustafa El Dabi, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan;

H.E. Eng. Mahboub Maalim, IGAD Executive Secretary,

Gen. Taban Deng Gai, Chief Negotiator of the SPLM/A (In Opposition);

Members of the delegations of the Parties;

Members of the SPLM Leaders (FDs);

Eminent persons;

Stakeholders to the Peace Process;

Representatives of the African Union;

Representatives of the UN;

Representatives of the TROIKA;

Representatives of the EU;

Representatives of the Peoples' Republic of China;

Representatives of the IPF;

All other distinguished stakeholders and guests represented here;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me to begin by quoting a verse in St Matthew chapter 5 verse 9, which says **'Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called sons of God'**. I believe all of us in this Hall have the burning desire to make peace to be called the sons of God.

It is now one year one month and 20 days to the day that we have been negotiating for peace but peace has eluded us. I do hope that this time, for the last time, we shall be able to reach a genuine peace to take to our people. In this regard, I would like to restate that the Delegation of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan is, as always, committed to the peace process and has come with an open mind, fully mandated by the president and the people of The Republic of South Sudan to seriously negotiate with the opposition to reach a just and lasting peace for our people. It is my sincere hope that the SPLM/A (In Opposition) too, has the same commitment and determination.

Excellences,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

We are here today for a very important stage of the IGAD-Led Peace Process, a stage that will either bring success to our efforts over the last year, or continued suffering for our people. It is my sincere hope that this time we shall be successful. I therefore welcome the opening of this 2nd Session of Phase III of the IGAD-led South Sudan Peace Process and congratulate the Special Envoys for their tireless efforts, dedication and commitment to bring peace to the people of South Sudan and for successfully organising the 27th Extra-Ordinary Summit of the IGAD Heads of State and Government, which removed some of the stumbling blocks and shaped the way forward through the Protocol on Agreed Principles and the CoH Agreement Matrix.

It is however regrettable that violations of the Cessation of Hostilities (COH) Agreement continue unabated to this day and the promised action by IGAD on those violating the COH has not materialized. Similarly, the planned workshop on the CoH Agreement Matrix scheduled for the first week of

September 2014 failed to materialize for reasons unknown to this Delegation. Consequently the operationalization of the CoH Agreement Matrix that would have ensured humanitarian access to the civilians in dire need of assistance and services was put in jeopardy.

**Excellences,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I want to re-emphasize the commitment of the Government to negotiate and conclude an agreement with the opposition. These commitments have been demonstrated by the number of concessions made by the Government; chief among them are the concessions made in the 9th May Agreement and the release of the former detainees, (a key demand of the opposition). It is now time for the opposition to make some concessions in order to hasten the pace of the negotiations. They could for example stop attacking our positions to demonstrate their commitment to the peace process.

In this final session of the talks, it is very important that we are guided by these historical agreements:

1. The Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement of 23rd of January, 2014;
2. The Implementation Modalities in support of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) dated 24th February, 2014;
3. The Re-commitment to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on Humanitarian Matters dated 5th May, 2014;
4. The Agreement to Resolve the Crisis in South Sudan of 9th May, 2014;
5. The Re-dedication to the Implementation Modalities for the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and the annex (matrix) of 25^h August, 2014;
6. The Protocol on Agreed Principles on Transitional Arrangements Towards Resolution of the Crisis in South Sudan dated 25th August, 2014; and
7. The Decisions and Communiqués of the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th Extra-Ordinary Sessions of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

Excellences,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I cannot end this speech without appreciating and commending the commitment of IGAD, the AU Peace and Security Council, the International Community, the UN, the People's Republic of China, Denmark, Japan, the European Union, the TROIKA, the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), friends of South Sudan and the Aid Agencies for their dedication and tireless efforts to this peace process and in meeting the humanitarian needs of our people. I call upon all these groups to continue, the good work they have been doing for the people of South Sudan.

Excellences,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to conclude by reiterating our commitment as a Government to fully abide by the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement and the CoH Agreement Matrix and to seriously negotiate with the opposition to reach a just and lasting peace for our people. It is my sincere hope that the SPLM/A (In Opposition) stops fighting and concentrates on talking peace so that no more lives are lost. Enough is enough let us together stop the suffering of our people in the displaced camps, in the bushes and instead give them a gift of peace. We can no longer afford to waste any more time wrangling over issues that we all know too well can only be appropriately addressed and disposed of by citizens of South Sudan themselves during the Transitional period.

We should not expect to solve all South Sudan's problems here in Addis Ababa in the course of the next two weeks. Instead, we should focus our undivided collective attention on those issues that we deem are absolutely indispensable to achieving the Peace Agreement that all our people yearn for by next month. Once we achieve such a peace agreement that guarantees that all of us play a role in implementing the comprehensive reforms we have agreed to carry out, then we can resolve all the other issues.

Let us stop this senseless war now and ensure that no more innocent civilians continue to pay the price for this conflict.

Thank you for listening,