

Comrade D/Chairman Gen. Alfred Lado-Gore
Comrades, Chairpersons of the National Committees
Comrades, Military Governors
Commanders of the Army
Compatriots Delegates to the SPLM/SPLA Conference
Traditional Leaders
Invited Honourable Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

I salute you all in the name of the people of the Republic of South Sudan. This SPLM/SPLA conference could not have come at an opportune time. South Sudan and its people are at a precarious crossroads between being and not being. The gains our people scored throughout the six decades of relentless struggle against the oppressive regimes are at now at dire risk. There are people plotting to rob us of our independence and sovereignty. We must resist this attempt. To prevent this from happening and in order for us to save our people and country, we must seriously look for ways to achieve peace. We must be ready to exercise magnanimity. We must forgive atrocities committed against us and likewise ask forgiveness from those we have harmed.

We are holding this conference when we are about to mark the first anniversary of the Juba genocide carried out by President Salva Kiir against his people killing over 20,000 innocent lives of Nuer people in less than a week. The massacres against Nuer in Juba triggered the present civil war, which Kiir feigned as a coup against the state. Our people and the whole world know there was no coup. It all started as a political dispute within the SPLM Governance. It escalated into a political crisis because Kiir refused to discuss the reforms needed to democratize the system. It is my belief that we must rise above this genocidal act for us to be able to unite our people, recreate the social capital and for us to create a peaceful, multi ethnic, prosperous and democratic federal state of which all of us will be proud of.

The SPLM political dysfunction started with Kiir's assumption of SPLM leadership in 2005. This situation obtained and endured, however, Salva Kiir while knowing that things were not going right, would not allow

his colleague to intervene to rectify that situation. Over the eight years of working together, President Salva Kiir thwarted our efforts to correct things on suspicion that we wanted to supplant him. This attitude of not recognizing and accepting his failure while at the same time preventing others to function where he failed is at the core of the current situation in South Sudan. I have characterized this failure in seven areas namely:

1/Concentration of powers in the hands of the President, at the eve of the independence in July 2011, the CPA based democratic constitutions were thrown out and replaced with another concentrated powers in the hands of the President namely "the Transitional Constitutional of South Sudan, 2011;". The President abused these powers and ruled by issuing decrees contravening the very constitution. He dismissed elected governors at will, etc.

2/Insecurity and ethnicized conflicts ubiquitous throughout South Sudan but more particularly in Jonglei, Upper Nile, Warrap, Lakes, Western Equatoria and finally in Western Bahr el Ghazal where in December 8, 2012 the police massacred unarmed demonstrators;

3/Poor Economic Planning Implementation - the government did little to stimulate the economy by implementing the planned programmes and its absolute dependence on oil revenues led to the neglect of other sectors of the economy particularly agriculture which is the mainstay of majority of South Sudanese. As a result South Sudan became a net importer of food commodities from the neighbouring countries;

4/Corruption in government - the practice of nepotism in dishing of inordinately overvalued government contract to relatives and people hailing from particular areas and to those who gave bribes was a major source of corruption. The Dura saga epitomizes the corruption in government;

5/Tribalism or ethnicization of government - President Salva Kiir appointments whether in government, civil service or in the party do not reflect the ethnic diversity of South Sudan but tilted in favour of particular states.

6/SPLM dysfunction - instead of leading and directing the government, the government directs and leads the SPLM Party. Government decisions in the executive and legislature are not party decisions. This prompted grassroots verdict that the SPLM leaders have abandoned the SPLM vision and direction.

7/Regional and international isolation - the GRSS pursued an ineffective foreign policy which resulted to isolation of the country from friends. South Sudan is unable to stamp its presence in the IGAD, African Union and other regional or international bodies.

President Salva Kiir instead of opening up debate on these issues decided to stifle the discourse. In November 2013, he surprised every body by declaring that the party institutions and structures have been dissolved automatically except his office on the pretext that the convention was not held on time. Consequently, he resorted to issuing presidential decrees which culminated to launching the **military campaign on December 15, 2013**. The objective of the military action was to stifle democracy and to eliminate his opponents in the part, and to institute a totalitarian regime. This act has now plunged South Sudan into a civil war.

It is unfortunate that President Kiir involved foreign troops in the war to fight on his side. The Ugandan Air Force has bombed our civil population in villages using internationally outlawed cluster bombs. The UPDF is still occupying South Sudan. Also on the side of the government, the Darfuri and the SPLM-North rebels groups are in active combat operations against our forces. President Kiir has regionalized the civil war. He has also trained, armed and turned ethnic communities against each other. He is definitely striving to erode the social capital that bounded together our people for centuries.

Within the week of the rapture of violence in Juba, the IGAD region intervened to bring peace to South Sudan by offering its mediation. Despite the fact that the Nairobi Communique of the IGAD Heads of State and Government dated December 27, 2013 reflected an implicit support for Kiir's coup narrative by endorsing Ugandan military intervention in what was essentially an internal matter, **we accepted the IGAD mediation**. We sent a high-powered delegation to Addis Ababa under the lea-

dership of Cde Taban Deng Gai. The last eleven we have witnessed a lot of difficulties in the IGAD peace process, however, the talks have now reached a stage which prompted the convening of this conference. Before I proceed I want to congratulate our negotiating team under stewardship of General Taban Deng Gai for their tireless efforts that made us reach to this stage.

The 28th Extraordinary IGAD summit convened on November 6, 2014 focused only on the structure and functions of the leadership of the would be Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) but also made undiscussed resolutions that were carried in a statement on November 9 to the effect that **“the IGAD region shall, without reference to the warring Parties, take necessary measures, if need, to directly intervene in South Sudan to protect life and restore peace and stability,”** should the parties fail to reach an agreement. This is a dangerous trend that we must resist. We cherish our hard won independence and sovereignty. We vow to defend it.

In that Summit, we maintain that any peace agreement must tie the two principals with the responsibility of implementation of the would be peace agreement so that the reforms required to address the underlying root causes of the conflict are undertaken during the transition period. We also accepted that the President shall chair the Council of Ministers against dropping the position of the Vice President, which could be a complicating factor in the relations between the President and the Prime Minister in as far as state protocol is concerned. We objected to the proposal of creating positions of two deputies to the Prime Minister because we believe it is a deliberate attempt to destabilize the TGoNU and to prevent it from concentrating on the reform agenda. We also objected to the retention of the position of the vice President for the same reasons. As you well know, we stand for inclusivity, and as such we think that other stakeholders can and shall participate in the TGoNU as ministers without necessarily enjoying special status. I wish to remind you that the CPA and its implementation modality did not give the other political forces in the country any special status equating them with the NCP or the SPLM. You will discuss these matters in this conference as IGAD Peace Talks outcomes are the first topic in our deliberations.

At this juncture, I want to reiterate that we in the SPLM/SPLA, the resistance movement, are for a just peace. However, just peace comes consequent to addressing the root causes of the conflict. The root causes lie in the governance system as I stated above. You know that concentration of powers in the hands of one person - the leader - created personified, rather than, institutionalized power resulting to bad governance and in actual fact it reflects lack of internal democracy in the ruling party. This leads to building a cult of personality, consequently creating frictions and conflict in the system. The SPLM had experienced several splits because of this practice.. In brief, allow me to enumerate these splits so that we learn and guide against repetitions of such practices..

The first conflict occurred in 1983 just at the inception of the SPLM. The resolution of that conflict led to reunification of the SPLM/SPLA with Anya-nya II in 1987. However, this reunification left the SPLM intact without changes to accommodate the new reality. It was just a return to the fold. This generated contradictions leading to the Nasir Declaration of August 1991 on the Right of Self Determination for the people of South Sudan and another split within the SPLM/SPLA. The reunification of the SPLM/SPLA in 2002 still did not address the structural reorganization of the SPLM/SPLA. It generated the Yei crisis in 2004. The Rumbek conference was called to resolve what appeared to be personal differences between Dr. Garang and Salva Kiir Mayardit but did not address the structural causes of the contradiction.

President Salva Kiir has refused to learn from these experiences instead he has now instituted a security system to buttress his fascist rule. The Republic of South Sudan has now become a police state characterized by disappearances and assassination of dissenting voices and emasculated state institutions.

We, in the SPLM/SPLA, constitute an armed and political resistance to South Sudan sliding into anarchy and total failure. In this respect, our political programme shall entail the following:

1/The SPLM/SPLA calls for the institution of *federal system* of governance in which the states and the local governments shall be devolved more political, judicial and economic powers. We have renamed our

country the Federal Republic of South Sudan and immediately establish 21 states based on the former districts during the colonial period instead of ten states;

2/The SPLM/SPLA shall implement Security Reforms affecting the Armed Forces, the National Security, the Police, the Correctional Services, the Civil Defence Services and the Wild Life Services in terms of their philosophy, mandate, mission and objectives to reflect the ethnic diversity of South Sudan in terms of the officer corps, men and women in them;

3/Undertake radical reforms in the judiciary and the justice administration system that will make the courts and dispensation of justice fair and accessible to the citizens;

4/Administrative reforms at the local levels to dovetail the traditional institutions of governance with the state governance institutions for peace and harmony in society;

5/Institute reforms in the political parties system to render them national rather than ethnic or regional in character. The SPLM/SPLA stands against politicisation of ethnicity or ethnicization of politics as means or ladder to power and wealth;

6/Reform the civil service by depoliticizing and professionalizing it. The civil service is the backbone of the state. Recruitment, appointments and mobility within it shall be on basis of merits, experience and qualification;

7/Promote economic growth by investing the petrodollars in agriculture to stimulate the surplus potential in mechanized crop production, modernize animal husbandry to transform the enormous livestock from cultural to economic wealth. Introduce modern methods of fisheries and aquaculture in the rivers and wetlands. Organize and develop forestry and related economic activities including protection of Wildlife and other fauna for tourism and recreation;

8/Build modern physical infrastructure in cities, towns and villages. Construct inter- and intra-state highways, feeder roads, railways, high tension power transmission grids, fibre optics lines and microwave li-

nes for telecommunication linking the different parts of the country and regionally;

9/Construct dams and hydroelectric power generation in addition to exploit the solar and wind energy to generate electricity for speedy industrialization of South Sudan and;

10/Encourage private sector as well as private public partnership to drive the development of South Sudan.

In conclusion, this is our party's political programme for transformation and modernization of our society. I hereby open this conference so that you can deliberate on all issues in the agenda. Thank you.