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Your Ref:

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2016

**SOUTH SUDAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES' (SSCC) MESSAGE TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL DELEGATION TO SOUTH SUDAN.**

The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) welcomes the United Nations Security Council delegation under the co-chair of the USA and Senegal to South Sudan during this crucial phase of the implementation of the peace agreement. Your visit is significant as it may allow for a better understanding and reinforcement of collective strategies from various Peace Partners for the realization of the peoples' peace.

**Situational Updates:**

The three Months of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) initiation drove South Sudan to another state of violence and its post violence impacts. Subsequently prior to the July 2016 fighting and crisis in Juba, similar violence had already occurred in Wau, Malakal and other places throughout the Country. Notably, the repetition of the 2013 violence in the Month of July 2016 in Juba has had a serious setback to the Church and the entire population of South Sudan.

The moral of our People and Nation is very low and bad due to the conflict incident that happened in the National State House on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The incident caused a stigma of fear, insecurity and humanitarian suffering and trauma. The incident caused killings, lootings, rapes, intimidation, displacement, refugees across the boarder, breakdown of law and order, and closer of Non Government Organizations (NGOs) projects. Above all, there is loss of faith, confidence, hope, trust in the Nations' Government promises, security forces, freedom of speech and movements.

As Religious concerned citizens of the very young Country, we must sincerely confess as part of our belief that alone we cannot come out of this mess and put our Nation on the right track. This Country, South Sudan must be assisted in any way both politically and economically. There is no humiliation at all; we all belong to the weak family of human race. All of us must accept correction from one another.

The violence has had enormous consequences ranging from high death and more lives being lost due to violence and other related concerns including hunger and diseases as well as human displacement seeking for refugee status and re-ignition of the inter-ethnic animosities.

The fighting in Juba forced thousands of people to flee for protection in Churches, Mosques, Schools and UN Protection of Civilians sites. These protection sites were filled up with over 35,000 people. This fighting that involved the use of heavy weapons in the social-economically busy and populated place in Juba resulted to, but not limited to, loss of lives and equally leading to destruction and loss of properties: business centers, installations, residential facilities, among others. Such physical, psychological and spiritual effects inevitably led to a weighty and high despair of the people and the loss of hope for the workability of the peace agreement.



Pertinently, the economic situation moved from bad to worse each day with rising food prices besides the already high poverty level of the majority of the population. Insecurity has caused fear and destruction of farm crops and these have attributed to very poor agricultural performance among the farming communities. The severe shortage of commodities, especially food, coupled with a severe lack of necessities like medicine have compounded the humanitarian situation of the majority poor population of South Sudan. These are due to the fear of violence within and insecurity along the roads leading to the importing societies and the farming communities.

Finally, numerous services relevant to health and educational institutions are either closed down or reduced full operation(s). Many young people who should have been involved in meaningful social-economic activities or continued education for basic knowledge, apprentice skills amongst others are conditionally forced to fight in such senseless, unfruitful and destructive war game.

### **SOUTH SUDAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (SSCC) Action Plan for Peace (APP):**

In June 2015, SSCC heads of Churches met in Kigali – Rwanda and committed to an Action Plan for Peace. The Action Plan for Peace implemented by SSCC identifies the following three strategic areas of action that directly contribute and compliment the formal implementation of the peace agreement.

- **Advocacy:** change the narrative within the country at the national, regional and the international levels for a negotiated peace agreement including its implementation.
- **Neutral Forums** to bring together stakeholders in a less politically-charged atmosphere with an aim of overcoming mistrust and disagreement on critical national peace issues and processes;
- **Reconciliation** and Healing through leveraging the church values of forgiveness and reconciliation.

### **Over the past month, the Action Plan for Peace involved in:**

A Delegation of Eleven (11) Church Leaders visited Wau after violence had broken out there, to show solidarity with the people and to determine how the SSCC could contribute to non-violent conflict resolution and the dialogue between the conflicting parties. A Neutral Forum is now planned and is underway to be held in Wau to address the root causes of the violence.

Throughout the recent period of the violence, the CHURCH created and shared various messages of hope and statements condemning the breakdown of peace. These statements were widely shared in the Republic of South Sudan and also taken up by our Ecumenical Partners and Churches all over the globe. The spiritual messages also gave much hope to the people. Prayer services have been held on a number of occasions.

Although the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) Action Plan for Peace (APP) was never designed to deliver humanitarian relief, this came into action when Church premises were flooded by displaced people; and the CHURCH had to give HOPE and HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE through the SSCC Core Group Partners (ACT Alliance and Caritas International) and in partnership with friends like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In mid-August, over two hundred (200) Pastors & Clergy from the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) Member Churches came together to strengthen the Church's UNITY, HONESTY, COURAGE AND TRUST in order to better contribute to conflict resolution and peace for the people of South Sudan. This was a holistic and historic event where South Sudanese Pastors and Clergy from seven (7) different Church Denominations came together to reflect on their role and how be a good shepherd when conflict rages.



## **CORE MESSAGE TO THE UNITED NATION SECURITY COUNCIL DELEGATION:**

The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) advocates for a collectively focused strategy with the involvement of all peace partners ranging from National, Regional and International scene.

As National Churches and Faith based organizations in collaboration with the Regional and International Churches as well as the Ecumenical partners, we strive to influence the progressiveness of the peace deal; through engaging the TGoNU and national key stakeholders to embrace Peace and Reconciliation using the angle of common National goal for a peaceful co-existence, respect for humanity and economic stability (prosperity) and Human Rights.

The South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) herein urges the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to influence and contain the Regional and the International community to set strategies geared to Peace, Development and Prosperity for the interest of the People South Sudan.

### **We call upon the UNSC to:**

- Support the Presidency of South Sudan in a non-violent dialogue and work with the parties to the conflict to put aside their differences and come together
- Re-double the efforts in holding all stakeholders involved to the principles and implementation of the ARCISS.
- Engage ALL the principals of the ARCISS both in and outside South Sudan to commit to the cause of ending conflict.
- Protect the people of South Sudan against violence and human rights violations. Engage the leadership and the military of South Sudan to embrace professionalism in respect of the National Constitution and the International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
- Engage the government of South Sudan and conflict parties to allow Humanitarian Aid full access to the vulnerable population affected by the conflict.
- Embrace and contribute in all pertinent economic strategies to create a platform for stabilization of the threatening factor failing the economy.
- Reiterate and sustain the call for peace and reconciliation, for recovery and rehabilitation of South Sudan, pursuant to the ideal hope that peace is inevitable when shared strategies are offered opportunities and platforms

South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) reaffirm its recognition of the commitment of the United Nation Security Council under the co-chair of USA and Senegal for this essential visit to hold forum discussions with the TGoNU, Civil Society Organizations and the Faith based leaders to create an understanding of shared peace remedies in the Africa's youngest nation, South Sudan.

O GOD BLESS SOUTH SUDAN.



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