

**Speech of H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit**

**President of the Republic of South Sudan**



**On the Occasion of the 4th Anniversary of  
Independence Day**

**July 9th, 2015**



**Excellencies Heads of State and Government,**

**Your Excellency Vice-President of the Republic of South Sudan,**

**Honorable Members of the Legislature and Executive,**

**Excellencies Heads of the Diplomatic Corps,**

**Fellow Citizens, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I'm privileged and happy to stand with you today to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of our beloved country, the Republic of South Sudan.

As the citizens of this country, it is our duty to come together to recognize this most important day in our history.

We must stop briefly to reflect on the sacrifices made by our heroes and heroines. They gave their lives so that we could live in freedom and prosperity.

Today, we honor them by coming together in this Great Square as people of one nation united for peaceful and prosperous South Sudan.

***Now please join me for a minute of silence in memory of the souls of our martyrs and on the top, our late Chairman Dr. John Garang de Mabior.***

**Your Excellencies and Distinguished Guests:**

I take this opportunity on behalf of the people of South Sudan to welcome you to Juba and to thank you also for accepting our invitation.

It is indeed our honor to have you with us today. Your presence signifies your support to this young nation and we appreciate your solidarity.

**Fellow Citizens:**

I take this opportunity to congratulate you on this 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of our beloved country.



I'm also very delighted to take this opportunity to thank you and acknowledge your support and patriotic stand always on the issues of your nation since the beginning of our long struggle until the attainment of independence.

We gather here today as a reminder of what we experienced here in this Great Square four years ago.

On this day in 2011, we stood together united and joyful in this Great Square as we watched with pride our flag being raised for the first time.

You will recall the great emotions that filled our hearts as the flag slowly made its way up to the top of the pole. As it reached the top, a mighty breeze came through and our flag waved majestically in the skies of Juba and all other parts of our country.

Today as our country is going through crisis and senseless war caused by Coup d'état and the rebellion, it is indeed a time for us to recall that jubilation and the significance of that moment.

***It was the day in our own lives when we realized that our liberation struggle was over; and freedom with liberty was achieved at last.***

***It was the day we turned the page of injustice and inequality over and began a new chapter of high aspirations for building a prosperous Nation.***

***It was the day we stood together united as one people watching our beautiful flag rise with our hopes and dreams for this Great Nation.***

Today, I want you to revisit the significance of that moment. ***The same vision and spirit that kept us together throughout the decades of struggle must now be revived.***

Today is the opportunity for a change and new beginning of forgiveness and embracing one another in order to move our country forward.

As the theme of this 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence is "***Together for a United and Peaceful South Sudan***", I urge you to join hands with me to stop this



senseless war and work together for Peace, Reconciliation and Reconstruction in our country.

Recently our comrades used to be known as “Former Detainees” returned home as a result of the implementation of Arusha Agreement. We received them back home and we reinstated them in their previous positions in the SPLM.

### **Fellow Citizens:**

Our Great African Icon, Late Nelson Mandela once said: *“There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again before we reach the mountain top of our desires”.*

Indeed there is no easy walk to freedom. Since our independence we have encountered many challenges at our borders; including the shutdown of oil production, austerity measures, coup d’état and the rebellion.

Despite those challenges and hardships you continued to support your government.

We stood together and declared that while we may be young; we were ready to take our place among the world’s nations and defended the sovereignty and pride of our nation.

Our unity and unconditional love of South Sudan sustained us through the decades of liberation struggle until we achieved our independence.

### **Fellow Compatriots:**

Towards the end of 2013, we once again found ourselves in another valley. This valley was totally different from those valleys we had in the past.

This time, we created our own valley through misunderstanding, poor performance, corruption, tribalism, hatred and aggressiveness. The mistakes of few among us affected each and every one of us and the impact was felt in every corner of South Sudan.



Innocent lives and properties were lost. Our farmers in the Greater Upper Nile Region were and still unable to cultivate freely. Our children in that Great Region lost almost two years of education. The little infrastructure we had in Bor, Malakal and Bentiu were destroyed. Our economy faces extreme inflation and the cost of commodities continues to rise.

***As your President, I hear your cries for peace and stability.*** I know you want to support your families, move freely in your country without fear and go back to business as usual.

***As you know, I haven't rested and will never rest until peace is achieved and you have your smiles and jubilation back again.***

- ***My government is committed to bring peace back home.***
- ***Peace that will be in the best interest of every South Sudanese.***
- ***Peace that will not leave out others or marginalized certain areas or regions of our beloved country.***
- ***Peace that is not imposed on us by others in order to divide us.***
- ***The peace we want is a just peace that must be owned by South Sudanese themselves.***

**Fellow Citizens:**

I want to stress here that while formal negotiations will continue to go on in the ***African Regional Mediations***, we must also continue to have internal dialogue amongst ourselves.

As citizens of this nation, you are the primary stakeholders and we welcome your voices and views.

We appreciate the role of faith based groups in search for peace and stability in our country.

We are also encouraged by the initiatives made by the civil society organizations, women and youth in IGAD peace negotiations.



I urge you to work in partnership with your government, engaging, clarifying and ensuring that we move together united for the quest for peace in our country.

**Dear Citizens, Distinguished Guests: Ladies and Gentlemen**

Due to the current crisis in the country, our Parliament made a righteous decision some months ago to extend the tenure of the current government for three years.

This was not done in violation of our Supreme law but was done within its provisions and context in order to give peace a chance.

It was also done not to allow a constitutional vacuum in our country as we search for peace and stability.

Be assured that our strategy for the next three years will culminate into peaceful, free and fair elections with participation of everyone freely.

**Fellow Citizens**

During the next three years, we must work together to stabilize South Sudan. The strategy of my government in regard to peace and stability includes three major goals: immediate, mid-term and long-term goals.

The immediate priority is to relieve the suffering of our people. My government will continue to engage in all activities that will bring peace back home as well as improvement of the security generally in the country.

This will enable us to work to increase food production and provision of clean water and medical services to our vulnerable citizens.

This will also ensure that our displaced population will be able to settle and those who sought refuge outside the country may return home.

As we have been receiving many people who took up arms against the State, I call upon the rest in the rebellion to join us in order to save the lives of innocent civilians and their properties.



I also appeal to them to allow humanitarian access to the needy people in the country without hindrances; and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.

I also urge the rebels to respect and comply with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement so that we could expeditiously reach Peace Agreement and stability.

To our brothers and sisters who continue to take shelter at various UN protection sites in the country.

I just want to tell you that your voices have been heard and I understand your concerns and hesitation of not coming out fully from the camps, but this country can only move forward without your participation.

I beg you once again to come out from the camps and join us in the quest for peace and stability.

***This country belongs to all of us and it is our moral obligation to care and do more for it; considering the sacrifices we made to achieve it.***

In this juncture, I must thank and appreciate the UNMISS and our African and International Friends for their roles of mediation including humanitarian assistance to our people.

### **My Dear Citizens: Ladies and Gentlemen**

In the mid-term goals, we shall begin to introduce and execute reforms across various government institutions including the party. Your SPLM ruling party is fully engaged in the process of reunification and transformation.

I believe that in order to move forward, we must face the challenges within the party and work together to rectify them.

### **Fellow Compatriots**

Our major goal after the realization of peace and stability in the country is to conduct elections within the extended period. By that time you will be able to elect your leaders in a free and fair process.



We also expect to complete the constitutional review process within the time frame and conduct a referendum where we shall adopt the provisions of our permanent constitution.

### **Dear Citizens:**

I hear your complaints and hardships facing you about high rocket prices of food items and other commodities in the market.

I also know very well that your earnings in terms of salaries and wages are not meeting the standard of living today.

Having mentioned little about this economic situation in our country, ***I direct the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning together with the Central Bank and other Line Ministries and Institutions to come up with immediate and long term solutions.*** I would like also to inform the public that the principle of Zero tolerance to corruption will never be a slogan but a reality.

Recently, I issued presidential decrees dismissing some officials who were in charge of LCs and didn't perform well.

Those who are abusing public offices will not only be dismissed but will face justice.

### **Excellencies, Distinguished Guests: Ladies and Gentlemen**

I just want to conclude by thanking you once again for your coming in solidarity to participate with us today in this important occasion of our independence.

I would like also to reiterate to you my firm position and commitment for peace in this country.

I'm sure you all know how much we paid as a nation to achieve our independence. We lost millions of lives and our own golden ages of youth life in jungles to achieve our freedom and independence.



***I believe the best honor and recognition to our long struggle and the souls of our Martyrs who departed us in course of this Nation is to live in peace and develop our country.***

I assure you all that I'm for peace and will always be for peace not only in South Sudan but also in our Region and Africa at large.

***I Thank You All For Listening***

***May Almighty God Bless South Sudan And Africa***

***Happy Independence Day***



