

PRESS STATEMENT

Dear Compatriots

We have all been following the unfortunate eruption of conflict in our beloved country on December 15th, 2013 that continues to unleash devastation and inflict untold suffering on the civilian population in South Sudan. It started as an armed clash within the ranks of the Presidential Guard Unit at the former headquarters of Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), but was deliberately used as a pretext to target members of particular ethnic group in Juba and its environs. Scores of innocent civilians were indiscriminately targeted and killed during the first few days.

This subsequently turned into a full-blown armed conflict engulfing the whole country and taking an ethnic dimension.

Dear Compatriots;

The civil war which is currently raging in our country has so far killed over 10,000 people, mostly from the civilian population and forced over 1 million persons into internal displacement camps run by UNMISS in Juba, Bor, Malakal and Bentiu and close to half a million who took refuge in neighbouring countries including Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. Both the IDPs and refugees are now living in dire situation without proper shelter and suffering from lack of food, clean water, medicine and sanitation. As a result, thousands of them have been prone to malaria, water-borne diseases and of late cholera.

Dear Compatriots;

The current national crisis is a blessing in disguise in that it has exposed to us all the type of political elite we have in our country. It plainly demonstrated to us that a significant section of our political elite only understands the logic of war, and tends to resort to arms to solve national problems. Five months have passed since the outbreak of the violence that is still continuing unabated in a manner, which threatens to drive South Sudan into the edge of the abyss. As such, I have resolved not to keep quiet anymore. As a concerned citizen of South Sudan, I believe it is time we started to critically look into the root causes of this war with a view to addressing them in a comprehensive way.

Dear Compatriots;

The current leadership governing our country now lacks vision and mission to manage the political, social and economic affairs of our country. It has systematically undermined the institutions of governance and made a mockery of the rule of law. Moreover, it has severely curtailed the freedoms of speech and shown utter disregard to human rights. Under its watch, corruption has been institutionalized. This has substantially curbed the ability of the government to deliver the basic social services to the people of South Sudan.

Under the current government, violations of human rights have become the order of the day. Freedom of media has been suppressed, with journalists being consistently harassed, intimidated, arrested, and even assassinated. Nepotism and tribalism have been entrenched when it comes to appointments to positions of responsibility and high authority.

Most government institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation for which I am working has been undermined. The ministry is being systematically undermined through the continued interference and uncalled for meddling of the Ministry of National Security and Office of the President.

These issues have previously been highlighted by members of SPLM Political Bureau (PB), being a simple dispute within the ruling party. It could and should have been easily addressed through dialogue en lieu of being allowed to turn into an armed conflict. Sadly, the conflict turned into the bloodiest war south Sudan has ever seen.

Dear Compatriots;

The agreement on the cessation of hostilities signed in Addis Ababa on 9 May between the government of RSS and SPLM/A-in-Opposition has never been respected. This bears evidence to how both parties entertain the idea of ending the conflict militarily. This shouldn't be allowed to happen. The war must stop now. A political solution to the current conflict needs to be found without delay. The political dialogue should start immediately; solutions, which are to be found, should, necessarily address all the grievances and root causes to the current national crisis.

Unfortunately, the current leadership in Juba is neither capable, nor willing or ready to bring peace to the country now. Hence it must immediately go.

Given these facts, I can't continue to associate myself with such leadership and government. I remain loyal to South Sudan and am ready to work with anyone who is ready and willing to bring peace and national reconciliation; who is willing to build a united, democratic and prosperous South Sudan.

Under the current situation, I find it extremely difficult to continue assuming my responsibility as a nationalist, who has always vowed to support the legitimate aspirations and just cause of the valiant people of South Sudan.

It is extremely difficult to continue to serve a government that is insensitive to the needs and suffering of the people of South Sudan.

I am therefore announcing my decision to quit the government. My aim is to work in the relentless pursuit of peace, national reconciliation and prosperity for all the people of South Sudan.

Ambassador Dr. Francis G. Nazario

Executive Director, Office of the Minister

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation

Juba

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