



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
(JMEC)

OPENING STATEMENT

BY

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DURING THE PLENARY MEETING

OF THE

JOINT MONITORING & EVALUATION COMMISSION

8th FEBRUARY 2017
JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN



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Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. I welcome you all to this first JMEC Plenary of 2017. I trust that everyone had a fulfilling and refreshing break over the Christmas period and that we all return reinvigorated and determined to pursue peace for the people of South Sudan.
2. May I also convey our greetings and best wishes to all the listeners on Radio Miraya this morning, who are hearing these opening remarks broadcast live around the country for the first time.
3. Since the New Year I have briefed the United Nations Security Council in New York and also a joint consultative meeting of the United Nations Secretary General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Chairman of IGAD, who also chaired the meeting. The African Union High Representative for South Sudan also attended the meeting.
4. I am sure I speak for us all in welcoming to their distinguished offices, the new United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, the newly elected Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamet and the new SRSG and Head of UNMISS, David Shearer, who joins us here today. We welcome them all, we look forward to working with them and we extend our gratitude, in advance, for their dedicated support and commitment to the Peace Process in South Sudan.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

5. We departed 2016 with a message of peace and goodwill to all people and a commitment to making 2017 a year of peaceful progress. Whilst I note that Juba enjoyed the quietest Christmas for many years, I am also dismayed at the continuing conflict in Equatoria and the appalling outbreak of violence in Wau and Upper Nile State over the past two weeks.



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

6. The recent fighting around Malakal and Renk was a blatant violation of the ceasefire. Individually and collectively JMEC condemns the violence. CTSAMM has begun their investigations and I call upon all Parties involved to cease all military activity and cooperate fully with these investigations.
7. Over the past three months we have seen a deterioration of the security in the country, with fighting between government, opposition and a proliferation of other armed groups, criminals and the politically disaffected.
8. There have been increasing reports of targeted and revenge killings, sexual violence, torture and destruction of farmland and property being committed by various groups, including men in uniform. Since November 2016, the main highways from Uganda and Kenya remain extremely dangerous due to the high number of ambushes, killings, and robberies.
9. Security is the foundation stone upon which every other aspect of South Sudan's future will be built and it is simply not credible for the Parties to preach peace with one hand and simultaneously wage war around the country with the other.
10. In the most recent days, we have received reports of violent conflict in the Equatorias, Upper Nile and Unity regions. This is not acceptable and JMEC demands respect for the ceasefire and the restoration of peace by all Parties.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

11. The spread of the conflict in the Equatorias has deepened an already dire humanitarian crisis as hundreds of thousands abandon their livelihoods and cross borders in search of safety.



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

12. According to the most recent FAO report, one third of the national population remains food insecure and aid dependent as the economic crisis worsens. UNOCHA reports that 52,600 South Sudanese fled to Uganda in January alone. The number of South Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries has reached 1.4 million.
13. Access to civilian population of humanitarian assistance has been routinely obstructed, with the United Nations reporting in December 2016, that it had recorded one hundred incidents against humanitarian workers and aid convoys.
14. Real lives, families and livelihoods are being destroyed. Much more needs to be done to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those desperately in need and the protection of those humanitarian workers who deliver it.
15. Reduced production in agriculture is directly related to increased insecurity in rural areas. Insecurity has also negatively impacted oil production. Together with low oil prices, these developments have caused a dramatic decline in living standards across the country.
16. However, with the Government's stabilization program in progress, there are signs that inflation is declining markedly, creating a firmer basis for growth and development. Inflation in the last quarter of 2016 averaged 2% per month.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

17. Our greatest challenge today remains inclusivity within the Peace Agreement institutions. The events of July 2016 resulted in a split in the SPLM/IO with two factions appearing: one loyal to Dr. Riek Machar, currently in exile in South Africa, and the other loyal to General Taban Deng Gai, now First Vice President.



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

18. Other opposition members who were Parties to the Agreement also fled Juba and new political groups and armed militias have emerged, some allied to former Parties to the Agreement and others simply opportunistic or criminal elements.
19. Whereas H.E. President Salva Kiir and First Vice President General Taban Deng are cooperating, Dr. Riek Machar Teny, Dr. Lam Akol and other estranged Parties have actively challenged the credibility of the current TGoNU and the legitimacy of the Agreement and its continued implementation.
20. IGAD, AU, UN and other international partners have expressed serious concerns with regard to the inadequacy of the representation of these various groups within the current TGoNU construct, and its effect in undermining progress in the establishment of key agreement institutions and mechanisms.
21. We are all interested in finding a way to restore a fully inclusive and representative political process, involving all the estranged Parties to the Agreement and others, without renegotiating the Agreement, so that all Parties and communities see that their interests are being accommodated.
22. We urge the TGoNU, IGAD and the international community to take advantage of President Salva Kiir's National Dialogue initiative and reach out to the estranged Parties and their followers. For dialogue to have real meaning and effect, it must include more than those who already agree with the Government and take account of all views and concerns. I am happy to note H.E. President Salva Kiir's visit to Yei this week and I encourage further national engagement with all regional communities.
23. JMEC will never tire of repeating its resolute belief that South Sudan's problems must be resolved peacefully and politically, not forcefully. We



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

must be willing to accommodate each other rather than defeat each other.

24. JMEC continues to believe that the immediate deployment of the Regional Protection Force is an essential component in protecting civilians, guaranteeing continued stability in Juba, and providing a safe, secure and neutral environment for the implementation of the Agreement.
25. JMEC further believes that the Peace Agreement remains the only viable means through which to maintain momentum and deliver a sustainable peace and provides the best framework through which to drive dialogue and engagement and build governance in South Sudan.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

26. I have taken care over the past months to highlight and praise those areas within the ARCSS where progress has been made, but in this Plenary I dedicate a moment to expressing our expectations and priorities for 2017.
27. I believe we must strive for:
 - a. the total cessation of violence around the country and the immediate deployment of the Regional Protection Force in accordance with UNSC Resolution 2304 (2016)
 - b. the full and credible inclusion of all Parties and stakeholders in the political process;
 - c. the constant encouragement to the TGoNU to ensure a genuinely inclusive National Dialogue process that involves all the estranged parties to the Agreement, other armed groups, civil society and women's groups.
 - d. the submission of a revised implementation schedule, and the creation of the conditions necessary for the full implementation of the ARCSS;



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

- e. the continued support to the NCAC to conclude the necessary legislations and fully incorporate the ARCSS into the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011).
- f. the provision of all necessary cooperation by TGoNU to IGAD, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Security Council in implementing the various recommendations, resolutions and communiqués with respect to the implementation of the Agreement;
- g. the further appointment of nominees of other political parties and the former detainees to the TNLA to complete the expansion of the TNLA in accordance with the Agreement;
- h. continue implementation of Chapter II Transitional Security Arrangements, including the JMCC, SDSR, JIP, JOC and cantonment activities; and the provision of resources and facilities required to successfully achieve objectives;
- i. an improvement of the conditions for delivery of humanitarian assistance and the establishment of the Special Reconstruction Fund (SRF) and its Board as provided for in Chapter III of the Agreement;
- j. the deepening of dialogue between the TGoNU and the IMF on economic policy, progress in the implementation of the provisions in Chapter IV and determine the requirement for the provision of technical assistance;
- k. the continued cooperation between the Ministry of Justice and African Union Commission in the pursuit of the relevant accountability and reconciliation mechanisms provided for in Chapter V;
- l. reconstitution of the National Constitutional Review Commission and commencement of the Permanent Constitution making process.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

In conclusion, I recommend that we use this Plenary meeting to:

- a. Reflect on the priorities set out for 2017 to address the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and to catch-up with the



Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission

(JMEC)

- implementation schedule;
- b. To receive a briefing from the TGoNU on recent progress made in implementing the Agreement, and in particular steps being taken to address the deteriorating security and economic situation in the country; and detail of funding provision for the key bodies within the Agreement;
 - c. To receive an update from UNMISS on the status of the deployment of the Regional Protection Force; the current humanitarian situation and the cooperation of the TGoNU to enable unhindered humanitarian assistance;
 - d. To receive summary reports on the status of the various boards and commissions (JMCC, SDSRB, CTSAMM, JIP-MT, NCAC) and their progress and strategies.

At the end of this Plenary meeting, I have invited a presentation from the JMEC representative from the Chamber of Commerce so that we might better understand the impact of insecurity from an economic and business perspective. We look forward to hearing the views and plans of other representatives over the next few Plenary meetings.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank all our partners in TGoNU, the other South Sudanese stakeholders, IGAD, AU, Troika, EU, China, the UN, UNMISS, and the International Partners and Friends of South Sudan for their commitment and continued support to JMEC and the Peace Agreement for South Sudan.

May God bless us all and continue to guide us in the relentless pursuit of peace.