

**South Sudan's National Day of Prayer held in Yambio (March 10<sup>th</sup> 2017)**  
**Statement delivered**

**By**

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On this day March 10<sup>th</sup> 2017, South Sudanese across the nation have come together to celebrate the National Day of Prayer. Prayer is the vocal or silent address to the Divine. This is marked as a date to “turn to God in prayer and Meditation the disciplined practice of quieting and focusing the mind or cultivating the heart’s attention.

At these events, people are not asked to set aside their different faiths, but rather to draw on each one’s beliefs, bringing all the varied prayers for compassion, peace, and dreams of a better South Sudan together.

The National Prayer Day is the first of its kind and is being said at the moment South Sudan is at cross road with itself, and above all is called for by the president serious and concrete steps must be realized. For this prayer to become historical and meaningful for us today we must REPENT AND SIN NO MORE!

The whole South Sudan will be watching President Salva Kiri very closely whether his decisions and attitude will be changed by this prayer for peaceful means to regain South Sudan. All of us who have prayed today will also be watched whether we renounce our sinfulness of hate, violence, tribal difference, for love of South Sudan and peace. May God bestow His wisdom upon President Salva to see himself as a father and mother of South Sudanese who take their right place as his children!

We must make genuine decision here and now for the stable direction of our country, some of the proposals are the followings:

- 1- We therefore must commit our nation to God her Creator yearly. Such decision will continually unite South Sudanese from all socio-economic, political, and ethnic backgrounds in prayer while also encouraging personal repentance and righteousness in the culture. The National Day of Prayer will be for all South Sudanese a day that transcends differences, bringing together citizens to celebrate our most beloved nationhood, freedom; the freedom to humbly come before God and seek His guidance in prayer.
- 2- We need to look toward additional ways of nurturing an open, honest and civil dialogue on issues of ethnic relations, restorative justice, Forgiveness, poverty, cultural use of power, mental health, economic opportunity, and addressing the question of pervasive culture of violence.
- 3- Continual prayers help us in stepping forward to embrace the suffering of our country, through unified, concrete action animated by the love of Christ, to nurture peace and build bridges of communication and mutual aid in our own communities throughout South Sudan.
- 4- The success of this prayer act will depend on how Faith in God will help us as nation to engage the challenging problems directly, by various means:

- After such a serious prayer there must be no business as usual but walk of a repented SINNER!
  - Stop hateful attitude, hateful language, pointing out at each other or communities as trouble makers or good for nothing,
  - Banish Revenge and Target killings completely
  - Freeing of prisoners and detained individuals,
  - Reach out in national love towards the South Sudanese in DIASPORA and bring them in!
  - Creating a mutual ground for dialoguing with all sons and daughters of South Sudan without preferences
  - Holistic approach to the displaced, refugees and really victims of violence,
  - gathering and disseminating supportive resources and "best practices"; actively listening to the concerns of members in troubled communities and law enforcement;
  - and building strong relationships to help prevent and resolve conflicts.
- 5- We are one body in God, One as a nation and one as a people, so we must walk ONE with our brothers and sisters and renew our commitment to promote healing. The suffering is not somewhere else, or someone else's; it is our own, in our very homes.
  - 6- From now on after this national prayer day, it will be desirable to always keep: seeking God's intervention: saying no to violence and committing to peaceful activities through strong principles of forgiveness, honest handling of national RESOURCES, tolerance, love and unity.
  - 7- As believers it is our duty to seek the face of God through prayer. If we offer fervent prayers, we are guaranteed of answers to our questions. Our call to prayer must be sincere and honest!
  - 8- Isaiah 60:18 which reads: "no longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls salvation and your gates praise"
  - 9- As we come in the presence of the almighty God, we need to ask God to forgive us our sins. We also need to forgive those we have wronged, or those who have wronged us.
  - 10- We have sought God's intervention before in matters affecting us. It is equally imperative to do so now that we are aspiring for peace building in the nation.

I am confident that according to his word in Isaiah 54:17 which says "**no weapon formed against you will prosper...**" Indeed we shall overcome every obstacle in the name of Jesus Christ. My confidence is drawn from the apostle Paul in Philippians 1: 6 who says: "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you (South Sudan) will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus".

Let us all unite and propagate peace. The peace that we aspire for transcends tribal comforts, regional admirations, creed, colour, status, political interests among others.

We should not undo what our forefathers shed blood for. This is not time to tear, but to build on the foundations that our great men and women laid. South Sudan is the only nation with a national anthem which is a prayer, we should therefore as we sing it present our needs to God always by demonstrating in our lives which it stipulates or dictates on us

When the value of life is compromised or diminished, all life is at risk. Human rights, without the right to life-- it's a fraud, an exercise in self-deception.

A lot of bad things have happened to our country since time memorial but more especially from 2013 to-date. Let us know sad stories to define us and our integrity but HONESTY! Let us ask God to keep the country together as He did in the outgoing years because He is the only one to make things better.

Blessed Pope Paul VI famously said, "**If you want peace, work for justice.**" Our prayers for peace should motivate us to be just in working for justice in our great country. A nation can be considered great, when it fosters a culture which enables people to 'dream' of full rights for their brothers and sisters.

#### **Finally in summary:**

In taking broad issue we must as nation break down what needs to be done into a few recommendations to the believers, government and all people of god will for South Sudan to focus on:

- ❖ Prayer: Masses, rosaries, prayer services during the year.
- ❖ Local dialogues: conversations on ethnic or tribal differences and dialogues hosted by all groups or communities
- ❖ President **Salva Mayardit** has to take serious lead in putting in place concrete steps which have to hold the nation as one.
- ❖ Stop the war and seriously redirect all SPLA soldiers to behave nationally and professionally.
- ❖ As South Sudanese we must show that we are SORRY and ASHAMED of our deeds
- ❖ Bring quick support of humanitarian nature to all the need South Sudanese Bring all South Sudanese on board for the national dialogue
- ❖ Community or society training: intercultural competence training for staff and community members.
- ❖ Opportunities for encounter: providing forums for people to examine local challenges first-hand, by encouraging home-grown solutions!
- ❖ Armed groups to opt for dialogue and ceasefire requirements
- ❖ Support new initiatives for Human Development.
- ❖ Provide resources for tribal or even trauma healing "more important than ever."
- ❖ National response to division and strife in our communities must "be one of hope and healing, of peace and justice," with a renewed spirit of cooperation.

I have mentioned President Salva several times in this statement just as many South Sudanese have called his name today, the reason is it is possible, example, he just said a word calling for National Day of Prayer, and here we are under this hot sun.

**God bless you all! God bless South Sudan!**