

THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN



The Ministry of Cabinet Affairs Office of the Minister

**Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit,
President of the Republic of South Sudan.**

*Presidential Brief and Recommendations for Implementation
of the ‘Yei River State Grass-roots Initiative to Promote
National Dialogue’.*

- 1) **Phase-1** of the Yei River State grassroots peace Initiative, to promote National Dialogue, involved thirteen (13) groups. The initiative identified and proposed solutions to address the grievances, which provoked the rebellion. The grievances expressed are those commonly advanced by many people in Equatoria in general; politicians and armed groups alike.
- 2) The nature of the grievances do not warrant a political conflict that undermines the independence and unity of South Sudan. The National Dialogue called for by Your Excellency to achieve overall comprehensive peace, unity of purpose and stability in South Sudan can redress the concerns of the armed groups.
- 3) **Phase-II** will involve higher-ranking Officers. Your Excellency’s ‘ Approval and Order’ for the commencement of Phase-II of the Yei River State grassroots peace Initiative to promote National Dialogue is needed. This is a very important gesture and it will signal a strong commitment of Your Excellency to the process.

- 4) The communities immediately involved in this grass-root peace agreement, externally border communities in Uganda and the DR Congo. Internally, in Yei River State, these communities also share boundaries with the communities of the Greater Kajo-Keji and Greater Lainya counties; areas devastated by rebellion.
- 5) The implementation of this agreement will quell potential political development at the regional and local level. It will also enable the government to regain the state, as its traditional political constituency, under its control because anti-peace elements in the neighbouring counties of Greater Kajo-Keji and Greater Lainya will be encouraged to accept peaceful redress of their grievances.
- 6) In the end, peace, unity, stability and hence prosperity will prevail in the state to the advantage of the government and the credibility of the Leadership of the Republic of South Sudan.

Recommendations for Phase-II Implementation of the Agreement

- 1) Issuance of 'Presidential Approval and Order', based on Your Excellency's Declaration of Amnesty and National Dialogue, to affirm your recognition of the agreement and approval for Phase-II to be rolled out.
- 2) The Presidential Order should include the establishment of 'a Joint Military Committee', comprising of 3-4 SPLA Officers from the government side, and equal number from the armed groups.
- 3) The Joint Military Committee will be a coordination mechanism that should be composed of SPLA, and may be National Security, and the rebels to operationalize the initiative.
- 4) The Terms of reference of the Joint Coordination Mechanism shall be:

- 4.1 To discuss, agree and co-manage the proposed assembly area, security in the assembly area, re-organization of the forces and any other security related matter to ensure the smooth implementation of the agreement.
- 4.2 Arrangement for facilitation in the Assembly area in terms of Shelter, Food and Medicine as proposed under item 4 of the annex to this document.
- 4.3 Continue to negotiate phase-II military issues before assembly, during assembly and in the lead up to the integration of forces.
- 4.4 Report regularly to the State Administration, which will in turn submit its report to the Office of H.E. The President of the Republic, on progress, challenges and solutions thereof pertaining to the implementation of the agreement.

Annex-1

Appeal of the Yei River State Government for ‘support of the National Government for the implementation of the Phase-II Grass-roots Initiative to promote National Dialogue’.

1. Introduction

The Grass-roots initiative to promote peace and National Dialogue is based on the declaration of Your Excellency for National Dialogue on the 14th December 2017.

Further, Your Excellency challenged the leaders of the various communities in the state, on the 7th February 2017, during the centenary celebration of the Episcopal Church of the South Sudan and Sudan, to call on their sons and daughters to denounce violence and accept the National Dialogue as the appropriate means to achieve peace, unity and prosperity in South Sudan.

Phase-1 of the Grass-roots Initiative to promote National Dialogue covered the proceedings of three (3) days meeting, 4th to 6th February, 2017, in Kampala, Uganda, attended by the Sons and Daughters of four (4) Counties namely: Lujulo, Morrobo, Otogo and Yei River each represented by its respective

Commissioner. In terms of Yei River State, nine (9) Counties are yet to join this initiative.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church and its partner; USA The His Voice Global, mediated and funded the process. The Mediation was based on the Church Message of Mediation, preaching of forgiveness, reconciliation and Love (Hebrews 2:17).

Political discussions that transpired were thorough as presented in the report (Copy attached). The method followed makes the Resolutions and Conclusions knowledge based, informed and reliable. The mediation team listened: (i) To the Position of the Kakwa Elders in Koboko, Uganda, (ii) The Position of the Commissioners of Yei River State, (iii) The Position of the Opposition Leaders in which they expressed their grievances and on the basis of which they made their demands, and finally the meeting (v) generated four (4) Resolutions and (vi) six (6) Conclusions.

The State government is seeking the approval and support of the National Government to move the process to Phase-II. Key issues in this stage include:

- (i) Recognition of the assembly area,
- (ii) Immediate provision of security in the assembly area,
- (iii) Provision of Shelter, Food and Healthcare materials,
- (iiii) Immediate withdrawal of government forces deployed along the Road,
- (v) Re-Organization of the forces in the Assembly Area, and
- (vi) Recognition and Facilitation of the process by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

These issues are discussed below to provide basis for a Road Map in support of the process and the State Government.

2. On Assembly areas

It is proposed that Kendilla Primary School be the Assembly Area. It has the advantage of being 5 miles on the Kajo-Keji Road and close to the government approved cantonment area as well as proximity to areas that are not part of the Phase-I agreement.

Assembly areas are typically for registration and determination of parade. Thus under normal circumstance, the longevity of accommodation should not exceed 2-4 weeks before the assembled force move to the cantonment area(s).

However, under the current unpredictable conditions of operation, and particularly with the cantonment areas not yet established to-date under the ARCSS, the assembled force may remain put for at least three (3) months. It is, therefore, advisable to use 3 months as the basis of Phase-11 implementation of the ‘Grassroots Initiative to promote National Dialogue in Yei River State’.

3. On Security of Assembly Areas

The need for the security of the assembled forces emanates from (i) Threat from anti-peace elements from within the same force and this is a real challenge, and (ii) Fear of indiscipline or disgruntled SPLA, National Security or other Organized Government Forces. However, the later will be contained by government orders since the government supports and owns the peace initiative. Therefore the following options are suggested:

a. Option-1: The armed groups in Yei River State can take care of their own security, if possible, and if they have the confidence to do so.

b. Option-2: The SPLA, which has combat mandate, can be assigned to provide security in collaboration with the assembled forces. National Monitors can be appointed to monitor, evaluate and ensure the security of the assembled forces, and regularly report to the leadership of the state government.

In case the SPLA is over stretched, either the National Security cover the gap or alternatively, a combined force constituted from the SPLA, National Security, other organized forces and the armed groups can provide security for the assembly area.

c. Whether Option-1 or Option-2, a small ‘**Joint Military Committee**’ is to be constituted comprising of representatives of the armed group, the SPLA and National Security as a coordination mechanism to deal with the day-to-day matters,

resolve challenges peacefully and create an environment for trust and confidence building.

In the assembly areas, only the Army and National Security have a role to play. It is only during integration that the Army, National Security, Police, Prisons, Wildlife and Fire brigade shall be represented to manage selection and deployment into their respective fields.

4. On Immediate withdrawal of forces deployed along the road

The Deployment of the Army along the road was for the provision of security and protection of the civil population going about doing their normal livelihood activities from hostile anti-peace elements.

It is, therefore, not feasible to immediately withdraw the army from the road till such time when the factors that led to their deployment are eradicated. Even then it will be necessary to withdraw them gradually as security returns to the area in order to deter anti-peace elements and assure the civil population of their security.

The key point is that once the peace initiative has been approved and orders issued by H.E. The President, the State Government takes responsibility for implementation, on behalf of the National Government, together with the armed groups who received the initiative willingly and honestly in the interest of peace and the security of their people.

The leaders of the communities in Yei River State; including the Church, the Youth, the Women, Elders and the intellectuals assisted the State Government and made the initiative successful.

Undoubtedly, there is complete acceptance of the peace initiative by all the stakeholders, namely: the government at both National and State Levels, the rebels and the entire community. So there should be no fear or doubt about potential negative intentions by either party to the agreement.

5. On the Provision of Food, Shelter and Healthcare

The advance provision of Shelter, Food and Healthcare materials to the assembly area is the most important undertaking that will encourage the rebels to report, and entice others not covered by the agreement to accept a peaceful solution to their concerns. Experience shows that assembly of rebels for re-organization and training have always failed due to facilitation.

To make this agreement successful and a model for others to follow suit, provision of facilities must be handled with seriousness and relentlessly. Under the current challenging economic conditions, the following should be considered:

a. In the short term, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management to provide emergency start up supply to expedite phase-11 implementation.

The Under-Secretary of the Ministry indicated that it was possible to make a provision from the bilateral donations available in the store.

Also the Ministry of Health can be directed to allocate Healthcare facilities for this programme. It is our believe that this can be done without much difficulty.

b. In the Medium Term, the National Government should contribute a reasonable amount equivalent to \$ 200,000.000 (Only two hundred thousand dollars) for Bishop Elias to supply food and other necessary items.

During the briefing made by the Governor of Yei River State and his colleagues, Mr. President you remarked that *'we know Bishop Elias. He helped us during the liberation struggle. If he says he has the resources to help he will and if he says he does not have resources then we trust him, and we try to assist him'*.

Contribution from the National Government will encourage the Bishop to launch appeals to his friends and others to come so that the government and people of good will collectively sustain the programme.

This is critical to ensure that supplies are actually brought and

that will avoid conflict between government institutions over control of the resources.

C. Call upon Bishop Elias to mobilize resources to assist in this programme, as appropriate for the short, medium and in the long term. Where necessary, as the Bishop will advice, the government can make recommendation of such appeal(s).

6. On Re-organization of the forces in the Assembly Areas

Expert advice based on the Anya-nya Movement and the SPLA post-CPA, 2005, suggest that re-organization of any armed group into various military units must be accompanied by morale orientation and proper military training to inculcate professionalism and discipline.

It is observed that the possibility of a sizeable number of these forces is of civilian background, with very poor military training, and makes training an obligatory imperative.

Therefore, the SPLA is called upon to provide internal training, which *inter-alia* will produce trust and confidence amongst the trainers and the trainees. Subsequently once integrated into the SPLA it will be much easier to build a national army of a united, peaceful and professional nature and character.

7. Recognition and facilitation of the grass-root participants by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during negotiations in the neighboring Countries.

Since the leadership of the armed groups and some of the keys elements that brokered the grass-root peace agreement reside in Uganda, it is deemed appropriate that the leadership of Uganda, both political and military, be kept abreast.

In this regard the Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan in Kampala can be directed and authorized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to officially notify the Government of Uganda on the operationalization of phase-II and any other matter related to the agreement.

'End of Discussion'

 **8/04/2017**

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Yei River Peace Initiative

