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**GOVERNMENT OF
SOUTHERN SUDAN
OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT**

2ND SESSION OF SSLA OPENING SPEECH

BY

**GEN. SALVA KIIR MAYARDIT
PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTHERN SUDAN
(GOSS)**

JUBA, SOUTHERN SUDAN

**Right Honourable James Wani Igga, Speaker of the
Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly,**

Excellencies, Members of the GOSS Executive,

Honourable Members of this august House,

**Representatives of Governments and Inter-governmental
Organizations,**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to welcome you all back to Juba and to share with you the joys of the recently concluded historic referendum exercise that we all participated in overwhelmingly. Congratulations for the peaceful manner in which this memorable event was conducted and I pay sincere tribute to the people of Southern Sudan for the exemplary maturity they have shown the world during the polling. This behavior has been evidently acknowledged positively in the interim statements of key international observers and development partners. We can indeed attest to such overwhelming multiple observations that the referendum was done in dignity and grace.

Similarly, I would also like to acknowledge and appreciate those who have voted for unity because they have indeed disproven speculations of a chaotic situation and instead have attested to our commitment to a democratic exercise. Whichever choice prevails is already immaterial because the atmosphere for a peaceful, free, fair and transparent conduct of the Referendum has been fulfilled. In any case the principal of allowing everybody to exercise their right to self-determination has been achieved. cause

For this reason, I call upon all of us to raise our heads up in chorus that the last bullet of the long struggle has been released in the casting of the ballot and we now have to wait patiently to see whether the bullet has hit the target or not? That of course we cannot anticipate now until the final results are declared by the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC). While we will be waiting for the final outcome of the polling, the Referendum Taskforce is now left with two key functions:

- (1) To work out a Transition Constitution and,
- (2) Preparing the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) for the period after the end of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) at past mid-night on July 8th, 2011.

In that regard, the **Technical Committee** to review the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (2005) will be constituted with a mandate to operationalize **Article 208(5, 6 or 7)** of the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (ICSS) as may be appropriate based on the outcome of the Referendum. As for the role of the sub-committee dealing with **‘Preparing GOSS for post-CPA’**, it is to provide strategic guide for strengthening institutional structures and build greater capacity for improved governance, accountability, transparency, peace, stability, security and prosperity for the people of Southern Sudan from July 9th, 2011 and beyond. I promise that this government remains committed to focus particularly on governance and accountability and I would like to inform you that business will not be as usual again.

Distinguished members of this august House, Ladies and gentlemen,

While we embark on the aforementioned steps, we still have a lot of unresolved issues at hand:

- The impasse in the determination of the ultimate political situation of Abyei Area as per the Abyei Protocol is under serious discussions between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP), and with the full dedication and commitment of mediators, we are optimistic it will be resolved.
- The North-South border full demarcation remains outstanding and it is also resolvable.
- Another important obligation is for us to ensure that the Popular Consultations in the Two Areas of Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan states is conducted successfully.
- Improvement and consolidation of North-South relations irrespective of the outcome of the Referendum is key to sustainable stability in the region. Most importantly, in case of secession the North and the South will be sharing one of the world's longest borders with lots of

interdependences. Thus, building and maintaining good and smooth relations becomes an unavoidable imperative.

- South-South Dialogue provides a critical road map for nation-building.

Whatever the outcome of the Referendum, two issues must be accomplished:

- (1) A commitment to building strong relations with the North as there is no other choice? We must help build a stable Northern Sudan because it is reciprocally a critical symbiosis for the stability of Southern Sudan. What we must all acknowledge is building a better future for all of us irrespective of the choice each of us made during the polling. This is the real meaning of self-determination: it means farmers, teachers, health workers, civil servants, soldiers, organized forces, politicians, merchants, etc, all doing their own business in earnest.
- (2) Creating and forging a common identity for all Southern Sudanese irrespective of ethnicity, region or creed is equally imperative. We will not be the first country to be diverse to constitute a sovereign entity may be in this century, yes!

I appeal to you all Southern Sudanese, what is critical is the maturity to recognize the fact that none of our communities can go it alone. If we are unable to realize this fact and forge ahead then we will give room to those who would like to discredit us as a non viable entity. Do not let private and individual interests override the common interest of nation-building. It is now time to consolidate the unity of the people of Southern Sudan and cease from pointless maneuvers and conspiracies that will take us nowhere. Nations are built by people of sacrifice, altruism, patriotism and consistent commitment to the struggle for the common good.

Having said that, allow me now to specifically urge the distinguished members of this **august House** to assist the government to expeditiously achieve the following:

- Pass the budget of this Financial Year 2011 immediately without waste of time. This budget will be subjected to major review before the end of the Interim Period.
- Pass outstanding laws and any other laws that are necessary for the Transition.

- Pass and adopt the Transition Constitution, which will become the foundation of the new order and as a government based on law and institutions, it is imperative that the efficiency of Parliament is achieved.
- As representatives of the people, I urge this Assembly to play the role of the watchdog. We have been vocal against corruption but we have not seen this august House debating anti-corruption matters.

Distinguished members of this august House, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Whatever the outcome of the Referendum, all will not be milk and honey. The recently concluded exercise of the Referendum is just nothing but the beginning of a new struggle. The journey that will require more resilience and patience has just begun. We are going to be confronted with new challenges that we must all face headlong. For example, there will be problems with regards to the following:

- Oil revenue flows

- Issues of nationality and citizenship will continue to haunt us
- Movement and reintegration of our populations especially Southern Sudanese relocating from the North
- Inadequate basic social services and poor physical infrastructure, and so on and so forth.

All such challenges and many more will demand collective attention and commitment from all of us as a people. As one of our continental exemplary icons has articulately authored, **‘There is No Easy Walk to Freedom’!** We as struggling people should pay tribute to such harbingers of freedom like Madiba, God bless you Mandela for this world of ours owes a great deal to your exemplary inspiration for liberation.

Distinguished members of this august House,

I have time and again pointed out that in order for us to surmount every hurdle and challenge, there is dire need to change our attitudes and behavior. We need to become truly a people who deserve recognition and acclamation because we have been struggling for many years to achieve an identity. True, the observations of the international community following

the peaceful conduct of the Referendum are quite encouraging but there should be no complacency. There is need to become even more vigilant, focused, diligent and hard working people. Thank God we have been endowed with immense potentials that we must exploit to better the lives of our people.

- If it is food, we have the land to produce in abundance and the required weather to achieve that. Take sugar and rice for example, we have got Mongala and Melut schemes to supply domestically and export internationally and as for the latter, we have got Aweil and most parts of Bahr El Ghazal to produce it.
- If it is tourism, we have got all the wildlife and world-class sites to attract the whole world to become a major destination.
- If it is fame, we can compete in all types of Sports to win all medals in athletics, basketball, volleyball, football, etc.
- If it is cement and iron ore, we have got all the necessary stones and ingredients to manufacture.
- If it is power generation, we have got the Nile Water Falls to produce the electricity we want for development.

- If it is wealth creation, we have got all the natural mineral resources required and herds to accomplish that desire.

The litany of such potentials is endless and the sky is the limit.

Last but not the least; I shall be remiss if I do not reiterate appreciations to **H.E. Field Marshall Omer Hassan Al-Bashir**, the President of the Republic of the Sudan, for his noble stand to respect the outcome of the Referendum and to support the emergent new state in case of secession.

The SPLM and I are committed to assist our partners in the NCP to find a political settlement for Darfur and not to support a military solution. It is not in the interest of Southern Sudan to encourage war in any area of the Sudan as we are now enjoying the fruits of peace that we would like our brothers and sisters in Darfur and all other parts of the country to enjoy. Since we have been yearning for many years for democratic governance and the rule of law, I would like us all to be committed to respect the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (ICSS) and whatever amendments that the Technical

Committee to review it will come up with. With this Constitution, we must uphold the will of the people who elected this **august House** and my very humble self. Since we were democratically elected, we must consult with our people as to what course of action can be taken with respect to the **Transition Period**. People elected me and this august Assembly and there is no one who can change this except our people. If there are people who are warming up and hoping that Salva will step down after the Referendum, I want to say that they are wrong because I will not disappoint the people of Southern Sudan who voted for me overwhelmingly to lead them during this critical time in history. I would like to seize this opportunity to assure Southern Sudanese that I will continue to discharge my constitutional mandate at least till the end of my present tenure. The last six years are testimony that the SPLM as an institution cannot be taken for a ride. We are here to complete the dream of our heroes and heroines for they did not perish in vain!

Finally, as we are at vigil to celebrate your choice, we must not lose any life again. We must show the same responsibility we did during the polling to protect lives and properties of northern Sudanese and other foreigners throughout Southern Sudan and the Sudan in general. Your excitement should not cause misery to yourselves and others. I want to repeat again that there should be no celebratory gun-fire on the day of announcement and I order the Minister of SPLA and Veterans' Affairs, Comrade Nhial Deng Nhial and his Internal Affairs counterpart, to take all the necessary measures for random shooting not to take place all over Southern Sudan.

As far as Abyei is concerned, we must maintain the commitment to finding a peaceful lasting solution. It is very unfortunate for us to continue losing innocent lives again in Abyei Area while we are at the verge of permanent peace. I have asked the people of Abyei not to take any unilateral decision to join the South and to give me a chance to find a peaceful settlement with my brother President Bashir and the NCP. I am confident that the spirit that he showed in our

recent meeting in Juba will help us to overcome the problem of Abyei. I want to send again a message to the Misseriya and other nomads that the South is committed to respect and protect their grazing rights in Southern Sudan but I ask their leaders to allow peaceful movement of Southerners who are returning back to Southern Sudan. I welcome the meeting of the chiefs of Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya that reaffirms the organized seasonal movement of Misseriya nomads in Abyei area.

Distinguished Members of this august House, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I now take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to peace and as I have more often reiterated there is no more time to contemplate war. The gear of our vehicle is that of peace and development and it is irreversible! I wish you all well and success as we deliberate matters of common interest for the people of Southern Sudan irrespective of the outcome of the Referendum. Let us all stay calm and vigilant because the future is bright and full of blessings and hope.

Thank you and God bless you always!