



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

THE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

PRESS STATEMENT

ON

UPPER NILE STATE CONFERENCE
16 – 19 December 2020



RMTD

1. Introduction:

On December 9, 2020, the Presidency held its fourth meeting in which it decided to declare the formation of the nine (9) states and local governments except the government of Upper Nile State and its counties.

The Presidency also decided to convene a peace and reconciliation conference for all the communities of Upper Nile State in Juba.

The conference shall run for three (3) days under the theme: ***"Peace, reconciliation, healing and unity among the people of Upper Nile State"***.

2. Background:

Upper Nile State is a home to five (5) ethnic groups namely the Chollo, the Dinka, the Koma, the Maban and the Nuer. These diverse communities have been living together in harmony since time immemorial. Their social, cultural and linguistic co-existence has been cemented by long history of intermarriages and neighborliness. This social cohesion reflects the unique relationship between them.

For centuries, there has been no history of devastating conflict and enmity among the people of Upper Nile. However, two isolated incidents, to be recalled, occurred in 1973 (the Hippopotamus incident) between the Chollo and the Nuer, and on the day of the CPA Celebration in January 2009 at the Malakal stadium between Chollo and Dinka, were amicably contained.

The major violence in history breakout on December 23, 2013, following the Juba December 15, 2013 crisis, resulted in the loss of many innocent lives and

property among the five communities. The violence has awfully devastated the state infrastructure, forced many people to seek refuge in the United Nations Protection of Civilian Sites (PoCs), displaced others internally and created an exodus of refugees neighboring countries, and destroyed the social fabric of the communities.

However, the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS of 2018) provides an opportunity for the people of Upper Nile to reconcile, heal, unite, and restore the social fabric of their society as well as rebuild their State.

3. Objectives:

The objectives of the conference are to:

- Provide a platform for the people of Upper Nile State to dialogue among themselves and address their grievances;
- Enhance the process of peace, reconciliation, healing and unity among the affected communities;
- Restore the destroyed social fabric and peaceful co-existence; and
- Encourage the return and resettlement of the internally displaced persons, refugees and POCs residents in Malakal and elsewhere into their homes.

4. Participants:

The conference under the sponsorship of the RTGNoU is estimated to bring together around four hundred and ninety-six (496) participants from all political and social spectrum of the communities of Upper Nile State. The breakdown of invited delegates from different locations inside and outside South Sudan is as follows:

1. Neighboring Countries:

a. Sudan	65 delegates
b. Ethiopia	26 "
c. Uganda	26 "
d. Kenya	26 "

2. Inside South Sudan:

a. Malakal POCs	30 delegates
b. 13 Counties of the State	65 "
c. Juba	232 "

Grand Total: 496 delegates



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Cognizant of the report of the Tribal Boundaries Commission (TBC) on the tribal boundaries in dispute in South Sudan; and the reverting of the country to ten states recognizing Upper Nile State as the geographical, administrative and political entity as it stood in January 1956, the sons and daughters of Upper Nile State shall engage in an all-inclusive dialogue amongst themselves to address, among other things, the following:

- a) Reconciliation and healing

- b) Cohesion among the communities living in the State;
- c) Civil Administration of the State, especially the redress of the status of the civil servants that were laid off without due procedures of the civil service;
- d) Cooperation among the political leaders in order to develop the State; and

In the light of the above, the Upper Nile Conference shall be held in Juba at Freedom Hall from 16 to 19 December, 2020 under the patronage of H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan and under chairmanship of the First Vice President, H.E. Dr Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon.



H.E. Dr Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon,
The First Vice President,
Republic of South Sudan
Juba.
13th December 2020.

