



UNMISS Press Release

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Right Message at the Right Time

Juba, 28 September 2011: President Salva Kiir's historic first address to the General Assembly on behalf of the Republic of South Sudan was warmly welcomed by world leaders. "The President conveyed the right message at the right time, showing commitment to peaceful relations with South Sudan's neighbour in the North, and to establish a solid foundation for the new nation, based on political pluralism, good governance, transparency and accountability," said Hilde F. Johnson, Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to South Sudan, upon her return from New York and the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The SRSG praised the President's promise to speedily and peacefully resolve the outstanding issues between South Sudan and its neighbour in the North, the Republic of Sudan. She also highlighted the President's commitment to political pluralism at the General Assembly.

"This was an important message to the people of South Sudan and to the world community. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan is scheduled to discuss two important bills soon, the Political Parties Act and the Electoral Act. In line with the commitment to political pluralism expressed by the President, we expect that both bills will be subject to extensive consultations with the other political parties in South Sudan. This commitment also needs to be reflected in protecting political space, and respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms of all political actors in the country."

The SRSG for South Sudan also applauded the steps the President launched as he went to meet with world leaders in New York. The 5 critical actions for increased transparency and accountability will not only help fight corruption, but also set new standards in public finances and for government officials. This was very well received among international partners.

"It is unacceptable when money devoted to developing the new and independent South Sudan ends up in private pockets and foreign bank accounts. With the actions the President is now taking, he is ending impunity for the individuals involved. Investigations and prosecution against those involved are preconditions for South Sudan to succeed in building a new, strong and stable nation. Only in this way, through putting the country above any individual interests, can one ensure that what people fought for during decades of struggle is not lost."

The SRSG also highlighted the importance of the review and regulation of land sales, saying that this is significant and can reduce inter-communal tensions. She called upon the international community to assist the Republic of South Sudan in implementing these critical steps and help recover and repatriate any diverted funds, whether from Switzerland, the UK, the U.S, Australia, or elsewhere in the world. “The engagement by the Legislative Assembly and civil society, requesting additional actions against corruption, is positive. To win the fight against corruption, all parts of society need to engage.”

The SRSG noted that the eyes of the world now are on South Sudan. “The way the Government of the new Republic manages its own security in Jonglei State and elsewhere, and critical processes in relation to governance, transparency and accountability, political pluralism and protection of human rights, will be important for South Sudan’s standing internationally. We are hopeful that our report to the Security Council will say that the Government of South Sudan is not only conveying the right message at the right time, but also doing the right thing - in accordance with the principles the President has so clearly expressed.”

Ends.