



## **SOUTH SUDAN**

Restoring Unity & Dignity of the People

**National Salvation Front/Army**

**General Headquarters**

Office of the Chairman and Commander-in-Chief

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Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### **The Speech of the Chairman and Commander-in-Chief of the National Salvation Front (NAS) on the 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NAS**

#### ***Taking Our Destiny Into Our Hands***

**Dear Fellow South Sudanese,**

Today marks the 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Salvation Front (NAS) under the theme: *“Taking Our Destiny Into Our Hands”*. On behalf of the Leadership and members of the National Salvation Front, and on my own behalf, I convey to you my warm revolutionary greetings on the launch of this great and historic movement.

On this historic day, I salute and remember all our martyrs who made the ultimate heroic sacrifices of giving their lives while defending freedom and rights of our people. The blood they shed will continue to fuel this noble struggle until the aspirations of the people are achieved.

Today, we are not only celebrating the struggle of this generation but we are also honouring and recognising the concerted efforts of our forefathers. Their outright resistance against deliberate marginalization of our people by successive regimes in Khartoum manifested their bravery and determination to live as free people with dignity. They never surrendered to oppression and hegemony but took their destiny into their own hands, rising to the struggle to free themselves and their future generations.

On this special day, I salute our gallant NAS Army for the courage and resilience they have shown over the past six years, and continue to do so, in order to achieve the vision, mission, and objectives of our struggle.

I congratulate our NAS supporters, sympathisers and well-wishers all over the world for their unwavering dedication, sacrifices, support and loyalty to

the struggle, especially the women and youth. Our women are the source of our existence and the pillar of society. Their participation in the struggle is invaluable. Our youth are the vanguard of our struggle. Through their unreserved contributions toward this movement, our country shall attain freedom, justice and prosperity.

I congratulate our NAS members and NAS branches around the world. You must all be proud of the history that you are all making so that the future generations shall enjoy the fruits of your struggle. Like our forefathers, this generation has a historic responsibility to rise up and take their destiny into their own hands to free themselves from the new hegemony, oppression and dictatorship in the country. The struggle for freedom and dignity is not only for yourselves but also for the future generations to come. You must now reclaim your freedom, power and restore your dignity that has been stolen by Kiir's regime. Freedom is never given on a silver plate, but achieved through the struggle of the oppressed.

I would like to assure our people that the National Salvation Front continues to be in solidarity with our suffering fellow citizens. They include internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those in the UN Protection of Civilians (PoCs) sites and other locations all over South Sudan, as well as all South Sudanese refugees throughout the world. The National Salvation Front is aware of your plight and feels your suffering. NAS is waging the struggling so that you can return home to live in freedom and dignity.

Let me state here clearly to our fellow citizens and the international community, the vision and mission of the National Salvation Front. NAS envisions a peaceful and prosperous South Sudan that ensures freedom, justice, equality and the rule of law. Our mission is to restore unity, dignity and power to the people of South Sudan, safeguard diversity and establish a federal system of governance.

### **Fellow Citizens,**

Despite the challenges that your movement is facing, with determination and unwavering stance, NAS has managed to organise its political, military and diplomatic organs to such a level that it can carry out its revolutionary duties to its logical conclusion.

Today, NAS has become a household name all over the country, thanks to the efforts of our members and supporters in carrying the aspirations of the people of South Sudan and rightly articulating the solutions that can build an inclusive nation and state of South Sudan. Our members have made enormous sacrifices and worked hard to make the movement what it is today. When we launched NAS six years ago, there were many people who thought that they would write NAS off as an insignificant movement or that NAS would somehow disappear. Our members are shaping the destiny of this country through their hard work to realise the vision of the movement. This Anniversary also sends a clear message to all that no amount of military power or coercion can ever defeat the determination of the people, no matter their situation.

NAS has worked hard to help mobilise political stakeholders for a common cause to rescue our country from collapse and achieve sustainable peace. It has participated with like-minded South Sudanese opposition political groups, civil society, women, youth, and faith-based groups in building the *National Consensus Forum*, a platform that brings all South Sudanese together. The National Consensus Forum (NCF) is working towards convening an inclusive Round Table Conference for all stakeholders to discuss the root-causes of the conflict in South Sudan and to agree on a new political dispensation for the country.

### **Fellow Citizens,**

The state of our country is dire and critical. South Sudan is spiralling towards total collapse and eventual disintegration.

The Government has failed to provide security to its citizens. There are widespread inter- and intra-communal conflicts in the country such as the ongoing conflicts between the Chollo, Dinka and Nuer communities in Upper Nile; Tonj and Warrap communities in Bahr-el-Ghazal; and cattle herders/land grabbers and the communities in Gondokoro, Mangala, Kajo-Keji, Lainya and Yei among others in Equatoria. These ethnic conflicts have been engineered by the government in Juba as part of its ethnocentric policy of divide and rule to remain in power, and they have further shattered the already fragile social fabric of our nation. There is serious concern that these conflicts may evolve into another genocide. It is worth noting that under Kiir's regime, there was genocide committed in South Sudan in 2013, which was investigated as per President Obasanjo Report of 2014 commissioned by the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council.

Land grabbing and territorial occupation are core government policies aimed at displacing indigenous communities and resettling particular ethnic communities on their lands. This policy is also aimed at changing the demographic profiles of the targeted areas and creating future constituencies for the resettled communities to win elections. The other intended goal is ethnic cleansing and extinction of indigenous communities which amounts to genocide.

The people of South Sudan are suffering from lack of basic services such as clean water and food, let alone education and essential health services. The country is dependent on humanitarian assistance. The government has abdicated its primary responsibility of delivering services to its citizens to the international humanitarian organisations.

Civil servants go without payment of their salaries for months; salaries that cannot even afford decent livelihood, and social amenities. NAS recognises and feels your pain and suffering.

The ruling elites currently in power have captured the little semblance of state for their self-enrichment. As a result, rampant corruption is now one of the major evils crippling the country and its economy.

Throughout the short history of its existence as an independent country under the failed leadership of Salva Kiir, little effort has been made to transform South Sudan into a viable nation-state. The people of South Sudan have not agreed on how they can co-exist together as a nation in diversity, they have not also agreed on the governance system for the country. The current post-independence transitional constitution does not represent the will of the people of South Sudan. All the essential steps of state-building have not been fulfilled.

Based on credible indicators and ratings by regional and global bodies as well as independent institutions, South Sudan has been ranked as a failed state. The Government is unable to meet its global financial obligations towards payment of its international financial dues such as membership fees in the African Union (AU), United Nations (UN), East African Community (EAC) and others.

### **Fellow Citizens,**

The flawed 2018 R-ARCSS, peace agreement, is dead and finished. The parties to the agreement have decided to illegally extend their stay in power for another two more years without consulting the people of South Sudan. The National Salvation Front strongly rejects and denounces this extension by the Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGONU) because any transitional government must involve all South Sudanese stakeholders. It is also clear that this will significantly impact on their will in determining their destiny.

NAS categorically rejects the government's two-year roadmap for implementation of the R-ARCSS, which is expected to end with an election.

Now that the R-ARCSS has failed, the position of National Salvation Front not to sign the agreement in September 2018 has been vindicated. We have known all along that the agreement was flawed and will not achieve sustainable peace.

For many years, the Kiir's regime has been resisting efforts to achieve sustainable peace in the country. We hope the regime will this time listen to the second call of His Holiness Pope Francis and his colleagues The Most Rev. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; and Rt. Rev. Dr Iain Greenshields, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The religious leaders echoed the lack of peace in the country, when His Holiness Pope Francis prayed:

*"... that South Sudan, like the people of God in the Scriptures, "may come to the promised land". Let us pray that, in a spirit of serenity, equitable provisions will be made for the use of its rich and fertile land and that the country will be crowned with the promised peace that, sadly, has yet to come."*

We thank the international community for providing humanitarian support and some essential services to our people. NAS appreciates your continuous support to our suffering people at the time when the

government has failed to provide most of the basic services such as security, health, education and food.

### **Fellow Citizens,**

The National Salvation Front (NAS) shall continue the people's struggle for freedom, democracy and dignified life until the root-causes of the conflict in the country are addressed so as to bring about genuine and sustainable peace.

NAS re-iterates its commitment to engage in constructive dialogue to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in the country. There is no short-cut to sustainable peace except through a genuine process of negotiation. The current attempts by Kiiir's regime of buying off opposition groups will not yield peace.

The National Salvation Front, along with its allies in the National Consensus Forum (NCF) have articulated a vision leading to peace and stability in the country. We are calling for convening of a *Round Table Conference* in a neutral venue, where all South Sudanese stakeholders shall sit together as equal partners to address the root-causes of the conflict and usher a new political dispensation in the country.

The National Salvation Front believes that sustainable peace can only be achieved in South Sudan when there is justice, rule of law, freedom for all and the establishment of a federal system of governance under a new federal constitution. Federalism is a key factor in uniting the people of South Sudan.

NAS believes in an all-inclusive constitution-making process to reach a permanent Constitution that reflects the will of the people of South Sudan.

NAS rejects the conduct of any election before the settlement of the current conflict in the country. Some of the critical issues related to the conduct of fair election include security, resettlement of IDPs, repatriation of refugees, conduct of population census, clear demarcation of political constituencies and other necessary prerequisites. Any fair and credible election must include among others the aforementioned pre-requisites.

NAS calls for the investigation of war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide being rumpantly carried out in South Sudan. There is a need to establish mechanisms to prevent genocide from occurring anywhere in South Sudan. It is our collective and fundamental responsibility to protect our people. We call upon the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), International Criminal Court (ICC) and other competent regional legal instruments to develop practical mechanisms for pursuing and investigating individuals or entities behind the ethnic conflicts, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in South Sudan.

We urge our people in the refugee camps to be patience and not return to the country. We warn against premature return to the country because your security is not guaranteed. You are being lured by the government to return

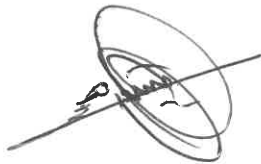
to the country so that you are used for propaganda purposes and to vote in sham elections to maintain the status quo.

Let me take this opportunity to once more reiterate with clarity to fellow South Sudanese and the international community that the vision and mission of the National Salvation Front for South Sudan shall bring about political, security and economic stabilisation of the country.

In conclusion, I appeal to the people of South Sudan to join the struggle to achieve sustainable peace and freedom in our country. NAS is a movement that has your interests at heart. Let us rise up and take our destiny into our hands. As it is said: *"The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear."* Do not be neutral. Be part of the change you want to see in South Sudan by taking your destiny into your hands. We in the National Salvation Front would like to thank and urge you people of South Sudan to remain strong and hopeful. We assure you that our commitment and dedication to the struggle for freedom, justice, equality, dignified life remains solid. South Sudan will rise again and be prosperous among the nations of the world.

May God Bless South Sudan.

NAS Guwa, People Power!



**Gen. Thomas Cirillo Swaka**  
**Chairman and commander in Chief**  
**National Salvation Front (NAS)**