



The South Sudan Civil Society Forum

March 22, 2021

To the Citizens of South Sudan,

Dear Fellow Citizens,

Re: Open Letter to Citizens #2 – Legacies of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)

The South Sudan Civil Society Forum (SSCSF) draws your attention to recent public statements by senior members of the SPLM, acknowledging that this revolutionary party destroyed our country.

In a speech in Bor town on March 12, 2021, Hon. Kuol Manyang Juuk, a senior member of the SPLM Political Bureau, admitted that: Instead of reconstructing what was left by the war, we are destroying what was left by the war¹. Meanwhile in a separate speech to elders in Juba on March 14, 2021, Hon. Daniel Awet Akot, also a senior member of the SPLM Political Bureau revealed that: When we call for the leadership meetings, we discuss nothing about development, about the vision of the SPLM. We discuss nothing about how to move this country forward. We discuss only our own affairs. We are always quarrelling and on our necks about small issues².

Fellow Citizens, SSCSF welcomes these public and honest acknowledgements of the SPLM legacies by these senior cadres of the party as an important step towards fixing this unfortunate man-made political disaster that engulfed our country since 2013. SSCSF believes in truth telling as an avenue to chart the right path out of this crisis and achieve healing, reconciliation and justice in our broken country.

Fellow Citizens, SSCSF encourages you to give credit where it is due. SPLM was the soul of the people of South Sudan during the long heroic struggle for the liberation and independence of our country. The SPLM mobilized our people and the world for the cause of our freedom. It was at the forefront, fighting waves of *mujahideen* from the air, land and the rivers; to keep us safe and lead us to freedom.

In 2005 when disaster struck and Dr. John Garang de Mabior, the founding Chairman of the SPLM fell, the people of South Sudan and the world stood still, worried that the noble struggle for our freedom would be lost. However, the SPLM did not fail us. The SPLM entrusted President Salva Kiir Mayardit to lead the struggle and to take us safely to the promised land.

We remember the consoling voice of Her Excellency, Mama Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior from the New Site, assuring the aggrieved people of South Sudan and the world that yes Dr. John Garang died

¹ <https://www.sudanspost.com/ex-presidential-advisor-daniel-awet-akot-tells-kiir-to-step-down/amp/>

² <https://pathofex.com/former-aide-tells-president-kiir-to-step-down-hand-over-power/>

but his vision did not die with him. Indeed, our hopes were energized by the ability of the SPLM to remain solid and move forward with the liberation agenda after Dr. John Garang.

Fellow Citizens, President Salva Kiir Mayardit did not fail us in the political wilderness. On January 9, 2011, he led us to the Southern Sudan Referendum polls to determine our future in that democratic process. We knew what we wanted, and almost all of us voted for the independence of our country.

On July 9, 2011, President Salva Kiir Mayardit led us to the John Garang Mausoleum, where our elected representatives to the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly triumphantly declared our country independent and sovereign. The SPLM lowered the flag that symbolized our suffering for generations and hoisted the flag of our new country, symbolizing our unity, hopes and aspirations. We ululated, shed tears of joy and felt a sense of pride and historic achievement of a dream and destiny.

Fellow Citizens, we are all appalled by what the SPLM chose to become since then. It fell short of our expectations and provided no vision and leadership to take our country forward. The party went on to fragment itself and remained entangled in blame games and scramble for power and resources. The leaders of the different SPLM factions – SPLM-IG, SPLM-IO, SPLM-FDs, SPLM-IO-In-Government and Real-SPLM, have sown seeds of hatred amongst ethnic groups, siphoned off public resources, failed to develop our infrastructure and make progress for communities. As a result, people got displaced, impoverished and exposed to preventable death. What is more worrying is that these factions of the SPLM could not chart a clear path out of this crisis of their making.

Fellow Citizens, SSCSF invites you to remind the SPLMs that this party led a long and heroic struggle of our people for justice, freedom, equality, human dignity and political and economic emancipation³ and this struggle is incomplete and should not be lost in the hands of its current leaders.

Together, we should remind the SPLMs and particularly their senior cadres, who were the custodians of the vision for our independence, to join Hon. Kuol Manyang Juuk and Hon. Daniel Awet Akot, not only to publicly acknowledge how this party failed our country but also to call for full implementation of the Peace Agreement. They should also call for reforms that will benefit all South Sudanese and ensure inclusive and genuine dialogue for the next political transformation of our country.

Finally, SSCSF encourages you to speak the truth always because it is only the truth that will end our predicaments and set our country free from greed and further destruction. SSCSF also expects authorities to respect the people's freedom of expression just as they have for the two SPLM leaders who have publicly and honestly expressed their views on the situation in our country.

#SouthSudanIsCalling

³ <http://orgsouthsudan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FULL-TEXT-OF-DECLARATION-OF-INDEPENDENCE-2011.pdf>