

## Statement to the 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the African Union

H.E. Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President, Republic of South Sudan

January 27th, 2012

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**Your Excellency Hailemariam Desalgne, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Chairman of the Union and Chairman of IGAD.**

**Your Excellency, Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Dlamini Zuma**

**Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Allow me to congratulate all of you for fifty years of existence as the Organization of the African Union, and also congratulate and welcome our Chairperson Dr. Dlamini Zuma for assuming her responsibility since October 2012.

I would also like to recognize and thank H.E. President Boni Yayi, our outgoing Chairman, for your commitment and tireless efforts to the African Union. Your contribution over the past year will be long remembered.

**Your Excellencies**, I take this opportunity to register gratitude to the African Union Peace and Security Council for their tireless efforts in working to ensure that our continent is free of conflict. Particularly I am grateful for their engagement with the challenges that South Sudan faces with the Sudan. It should be recalled that the relationship between the two countries had deteriorated to the extent of war. But with the help of this Union, calm was restored through dialogue and negotiation facilitated by the AUHIP.

There have been several rounds of negotiations and summits that culminated in agreements, which were signed in Addis Ababa in September 2012 as it has been reported by the Peace and Security Council.

As I said in my statement to the Council, I want to repeat it again here today:

***If this body is to be effective in accomplishing its mission of supporting the peace and development of this great continent and if this body is to bring meaning to the voice of its member nations now and in future endeavors, the agreements it oversees must be respected and implemented.***

**Your Excellencies**, our challenge is the honoring and implementation of agreements once they have been signed.

Last Friday, January 25, 2013, the PSC again made tremendous efforts in trying to resolve all the outstanding issues between our two countries, urging that we should implement the September agreements unconditionally in their entirety with utmost urgency. They went further to urge us to immediately implement the agreement on security arrangements, in particular establishing the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone.

The Republic of South Sudan has been and is ready to start the process of the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, as this will allow monitors to be put in place so that the accusations and counter accusations can be verified.

On Abyei, the Republic of South Sudan will fully comply with the implementation of the temporary agreement on Abyei in terms of establishing the Administration, the Council and the Police Service. The Republic of South Sudan will also go ahead to prepare to nominate its members to the Abyei referendum commission in line with the AUHIP proposal of September 21 2012.

Regarding the border, the Republic of South Sudan is ready to present its views and position on the disputed and claimed areas so that the demarcation of the borders can take place with clear determination. In case of any disagreement, we propose that it be referred for arbitration.

**Your Excellencies**, the time is now for us to leave rhetoric and get to action. The people of South Sudan and Sudan have suffered for too long. It is time that these negotiations be brought to conclusion as stipulated in the Communiqué' of April 2012 and the UN resolution 2046.

I call on this august House to uphold your Communiqué and the UN Resolution 2046.

The Republic of South Sudan has already made its choice very clear. It is the choice of peace for Africa and the choice of two viable states, respecting each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity and engaging in the common pursuit of sustainable development and in accordance with international law. With your support and that of the United Nations, we can achieve this.

**Thank you very much.**