

# UNITED PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

24 December 2018



## UPDM END OF YEAR OPEN LETTER TO IGAD

The on-going violations of the peace agreement have dampened expectations for what the New Year holds for the people and the country. Nevertheless, we appreciate the constructive approach that the international community has taken to end the crisis and critically, the recognition by the TROIKA that the revitalised ARCSS lacks vital parts necessary to bring about lasting peace including through socio-economic development.

All the moments that the SPLM and its fragmented leadership have wasted looking back and inward hold the country from moving forward.

UPDM believes the way forward for a genuine and lasting peace is to introduce transparency and accountability measures in the management of the country's national resources and to impose a UN-mandated transitional security arrangement. Both interventions are vital to creating a political space, a level playing field and a critical environment for an effective transitional government of national unity that can implement the substantive Chapters of the ARCSS agreement.

- UPDM appreciates all efforts led by IGAD in bringing peace to South Sudan since 2014. However, with the last signed R-ARCSS, we have seen a significant relapse.
- Emboldened by unconditional support from some in the region, the government stepped up its dangerous precedence to monopolise power;
- With no vision for economic development, the government increasingly relies on the brutal force of its security forces and has more than ever lost its ability to lead the transition;
- The government continues to violate the arms embargo, importing more weapons in the country to use against its people;
- Rape and sexual abuse of women and children continues unabated and with impunity;
- Humanitarian actors providing essential services to affected populations are attacked and obstructed from carrying out their duties;
- The ceasefire monitors (CTSAMVM) conducting the vital task to bring about the needed stability to implement the peace agreement were assaulted, humiliated and illegally detained by government security forces.


The international community has a moral responsibility to intervene to avoid another cycle of doomed negotiations. It is why UPDM recommends the following:

1. Reconvene the negotiations with new gender-balanced team of mediators that have no conflict of interest to bring a fresh perspective to the negotiations and built trust.
2. Negotiate for a consensus among all parties at the table to ensure that parties allocate technocrats with experience and ability to lead the implementation of the necessary reforms based on an agreed framework, structure, operational procedures and principles for position holders of the transition.
3. Facilitate a levelled playing field for all parties to the agreement in a manner that:
  - i. Builds trust in the process;
  - ii. Allows unhindered protection of civilians,
  - iii. CoH monitoring and humanitarian response; and
  - iv. Creates a neutral space for justice, dialogue and healing.
4. Understanding that most disgruntled groups are not politically represented, the new round of negotiations should emphasise a humanitarian and rights-based framework that responds to the underlying concern of disgruntled communities (e.g. land rights, a fair justice system, and accountability).

As we welcome a New Year, suffering cannot be allowed to continue when there is much that we can do to end this manmade crisis. We believe in the people's ability to bring about change, it's our conviction to build the instruments of our democracy, to make people's lives better, not worse.

God bless South Sudan.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Taban Julu Lomuja  
UPDM Secretary-General