

## South Sudan: What next for a successful state?

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November 17, 2012 - The Republic of South Sudan got independence on July 9, 2011 exactly one year and three months from now since we honorably joined community of nations. Our national flag was hoisted at the offices of all regional and international organizations which formed this living world. The struggle for recognition as an independent state after post-colonial ages started on August 18, 1955, to July 9, 2011. The liberation struggle was received with mix reactions on one side that were confident to achieve positive outcome one day. The other camps were either confused or not prepared for either option and described it a long journey of indefinite direction. Although they latter use shortcuts to achieve their interest, yet it was proven futile and bear no success.

As a result, the former philosophy of positivism brought us where we are today. Amongst them is comrade Salva Kiir Mayardit to name a few. Congratulations for we made history and will not forget us in the permanent record of our liberation struggle.

However, what next after independence? The Republic of South Sudan has a lot of similarities with powerful Jewish State of Israel right from oppression to resources and the Jewish common identity worldwide. How Israel got independence compared to South Sudan? The Jews towards the end of Ottoman Empire, around 1878 A. D started the modern Zionist Movement in Eastern Europe with determination to resettle Jews in their homeland.

These conflicts of identity wrangles on until when the issue of Palestine was tabled before the United Nations General Assembly in 1947, where a committee was formed to solve the crisis of identity. The committee approved the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. And the State of Israel got independence on May 14, 1948 with total population of 806,000 including children.

Now there comes a question of how will they establish their state from scratch with such lowest population; an enemy of the whole Arab world and a lot of challenges of nation building? Alternatively, the political leadership divided their resources into two major packages by 60% of their total fiscal budget earmarked for national defence because it was like a dream that such a smaller country will legitimize its military position to face 300 million Arabs in Middle East and beyond region. Another 40 % goes to Agriculture in order to attain food security for everybody.

With this brief background of one country without boring my learned readers with world history on politics and governance, what does the Republic of South Sudan may learn from Jewish State of Israel? A country that is one year old with turbulent of survival. What next is the agenda of nation building in the Republic of South Sudan? I am afraid that these questions will meet correct answers but we pray for best from relevant actors.

I have repeated myself several times that the Republic does not mean physical symbols such as National Flag, National Anthem or any organ but a country must lay down tasks for nation building which the government officials and the general public fully implement to be a successful state. These tasks are spelt out in the Constitution and subsidiary legislation to include inter alia, strict accountability, transparency, rule of law, delivery of fundamental services to the people, protection of lives and properties, infrastructural development and protection of territorial integrity and the list is long. These tasks will not be achieved in South Sudan unless there developed an enabling strategic development plan or task by qualified people deployed to the respective institutions at all levels and then followed a political will to implement them.

In the Republic of South Sudan quite uniquely, it has proven difficult to implement accountability amongst other elements of good governance to hold into account for somebody in power with malpractice. A case in point is high profile individuals alleged to be behind painful loss of 4 billion US dollars. The accused persons and other category accused of corruption related offences are seen to have certain blanket immunity, a protection that is nowhere to be found in our laws. Yet, they enjoy comfort of such accusation despite a public outcry to weed them out in the government and be held accountable because they lost credibility before the law and the general public.

Why accountability does matters a lot? It is simply because accountability is the very fountain of democratic government worldwide. For example the world newest nation in accordance with the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011 stipulates that South Sudan is established and governed on the basis of a decentralized democratic system and is an all-embracing homeland for its people. It is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-racial entity where such diversities peacefully co-exist. In order to swallow such bitter trust, the political stability of South Sudan will rest on the direction of SPLM ruling party through its internal democratic reform. The SPLM-led government, however, must allow political space for other political parties, civil society organizations and media to operate without intimidation. A tangible achievement of freedom of speech is so far scored by the SPLM-led Government but a lot need to be done more specially on the legal framework and peaceful environment for a multi-party politics.

The legal framework should include that the SPLM-led government cancel the executive and legislative participation of other

political parties in the government, except parliamentarians elected. This is to enable other political parties play an oversight function of opposition politics. There is no any basis upon which other political parties are included in the government when there is no coalition agreement. The only manner in which other political parties assume power is for the government of the day to give them the said political space in order to campaign for elections with their parties' ideologies and manifestoes unlike that of the ruling party. However, my good intention is to avoid conflict of interest because a party cannot criticize a government with whom you are a party and have collective responsibility and the same time an opposition. Thanks to other political parties who were either not consulted for inclusion or rejected an inclusion.

With this piece of analysis on our current issues, the critical questions come what is the expectation of the general public with regard to the management of resources that shall now be accruing from the cooperation agreement with Sudan and indeed the oil proceeds? First, the new resources need complete new face of the government under President Mayardit with renewed promise from the top leadership down to the lower administration to ensure equitable allocation of resources in the next 42 months of the cooperation agreement and beyond. The general public needs no return to previous history in the management of national affairs but demanding the political leadership and other relevant stakeholders a real business of nation building.

The second most prioritize agenda is peace and security of people and resources. The government must look into some key elements in understanding security situational analysis specially the ability to quickly read conflict or insecurity early warning in our communities and to apprehend such escalation by immediate application of operational and structural prevention. This proactive approach is in line with Article 36 (3) of the Transitional Constitution which says 'The security and welfare of the people of South Sudan shall be the primary duty of all levels of government'.

The third priority is the diversification of non-oil revenues. In the past, Sudan was said to be breadbasket of the world. In fact, it is South Sudan which is the real breadbasket of the world and therefore the government must now focus in developing agriculture and other natural resources to meet the concept of sustainable development for present and future generations.

Last but not least is the economic austerity measure. The austerity measures cannot be applied to a growing economy leave alone subsistent economy like South Sudan whose economic status is basically meant for survival. In a stringent financial term, austerity measures are only applicable in a developed economy. Therefore the adoption of austerity measures in South Sudan was misplaced and there is high need to reverse it. How can government impose austerity measures when our nascent state regardless of rich agricultural land and natural resources never produces even local products or people are seemingly refuse to work? We have achieved independent and handed it over to foreigners, a subject to be addressed separately. We are totally consuming imported goods and services.

With the austerity measures now in place, the government and the public could not benefit anything because no reserves was saved to be protected or significantly used for the said austerity period. But rather both suffer with daunting economic challenges that the diplomatic missions intervene and advise political leaders in both countries to sign cooperation agreement. In South Sudan unlike neighboring Sudan, life was so expensive as a result of high prices for such imported goods and services and we have no option then to adhere to economical principle of opportunity cost on the expense of other important services.

With this few words, I am of the opinion that South Sudan does not have such huge workforce in public sector that the government may impose some public service arrangements such as downswing. We really need more teachers; more doctors; engineers and development oriented strategists at all sectors of a promising developmental state, provided that such recruitment is done on the merit of qualification and nationalistic interest to save the Republic of South Sudan.

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