

REPORT ON SEVENTH SESSION OF HIGH-LEVEL BREAKFAST DISCUSSION AND STRATEGIC THINKING ON THE PEACE PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN



HARNESSING RELATIONS OF SOUTH SUDAN WITH TROIKA
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF R-ARCSS

I - THE FUNCTION AND ATTENDANCE

The Center for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) organized the SEVENTH HIGH-LEVEL BREAKFAST DISCUSSION AND STRATEGIC THINKING ON PEACE PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN at Pyramidd Continental Hotel in Juba on Wednesday, 10th April 2019. The event brought together 43 renowned policy and decision makers, experts, opinion leaders and activists who are linked directly or indirectly to the peace process in South Sudan (high-level government officials, political parties/movements leaders, civil society leaders, NGOs leaders, academia experts, and heads/representatives of diplomatic missions). The participants arrived at the venue at prime morning time and took breakfast in the main Restaurant (07:35h – 08:35h a.m.) before converging in the Conference Room prepared for the Breakfast Discussion (08:35h to 10:45:00h AM).

II – THE OBJECTIVES OF DISCUSSION

The objective was to deliberate constructively and critically on the topic with well-informed recommendations and way forward for harnessing relations with Troika and other international partners. The following were the expected outputs from the Discussion:

- 1). Compilation of analytical policy recommendations and action points to be disseminated in order to help in forging better way forward for peace with the good of citizens and governments of South Sudan, the Troika countries and International Partners.
- 2). Harnessing and cementing the diplomatic relations of South Sudan (government, public and private) with the Troika and the International Partners who have been historically linked to peace processes and developmental assistance in South Sudan.
- 3). Forging pragmatic collective unity of purpose by South Sudan, Troika and International Partners for making peace and development a core value worth pursuing.
- 4). Assisting South Sudan with the necessary technical and professional ingredients for improving diplomatic relations with Troika and other key international partners.
- 5). Managing the arising tensions amicably for mutual benefits of the peoples and the governments of South Sudan, Troika and international community partners.
- 6). Continuous assistance of refugees and IDPS of South Sudan while preparing for voluntary repatriation in accordance with dignified domestic and international best practices in an environment of peace and development.

Guided by the above-mentioned topic and objectives, the lead expert and the moderator steered the deliberations with frank conversation on opportunities and challenges presented by 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) as far as harnessing relations of South Sudan with the Troika international community partners is concerned.

Dr. Salwa Gabriel Berberi (N.B: she holds D.Phil in International Law, MIA in International Affairs and LLB and served as a diplomat and a high-level government official in the Sudan, in South Sudan, in the UN and in the Arab League) was the lead expert for the seventh session of the Breakfast Discussion and Strategic Thinking on the Peace Process in South Sudan. **Ambassador Moses Akol Ajawin** (N.B: served as a senior diplomat in the Sudan

and Head of Mission in Sweden and Director-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of South Sudan) was the moderator of the discussion.

After warmly welcoming the participants, **Amb. Moses Akol** revisited the history of fruitful relations that the Troika and international partners used to have with South Sudan through the government, the people, the NGOs and the diplomatic missions in humanitarian and developmental sectors. He recalled the work of Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Norwegian Refugees Council (NRC) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in Torit, Polataka and many other SPLM/A liberated areas in South Sudan. Also he recalled similar good work done by USAID, EU, Swedish, among other international partners, and how the people of South Sudan are still remembering these vividly. With these historical recollections, the moderator introduced the professional profile of Dr. Salwa Gabriel elatedly and then invited the participants to share their ideas after the keynote talk on how best to harness cordial diplomatic relations with the Troika and international community partners within umpire of R-ARCSS implementation.

Dr. Salwa Gabriel expressed her pleasure for the CSPS to have given her the opportunity to share her thoughts on relations of South Sudan with the Troika and international community partners. She projected her talking points on the screen, starting from what she called the **“Backdrop: Fundamentals and pillars of diplomatic relations”**. The first point she emphasized of these fundamentals is the principle of “sovereign equality of states” in accordance with the international law. This would require that no country or group of countries should impose their will on another country or countries arbitrarily. The second principle is “consent” where any bilateral or multilateral action taken have to be justified on prior approval of the affected country or group of countries. The third principle is “reciprocity” where a country or group of countries have reserved rights to payback with similar treatment on another country or group of countries.



The fourth principle is “friendliness” where she cited how President Salva Kiir used to be puzzled as to whether this refers to people-to-people or government-to-government friendship where one country engages amicably with other country or group of countries (e.g., TROIKA, UN, EU, China, Japan and Russia with South Sudan). Then she went ahead to talk about the fifth principle of “good neighborliness” where a country or group of countries prioritize the mutual good with their immediate neighbors or blocs (e.g., IGAD, AU, IGAD, EAC, ICGLR). These connect well with sixth principle of “trade and commerce”. She regarded this principle as the classic of diplomacy and cordial relations among nations. According to her, the fact that South Sudan has been endowed naturally with valuable resources (e.g oil and petroleum though with no refineries yet) and other geopolitical factors has made the new country an attractive partner internationally, including importation of food commodities, construction materials and equipment, modern technologies, arms and hard currency. The seventh core principle is “cooperation” where a country or a group of countries venture into enhancement of mutual economic, technical, educational, cultural relations with concrete benefits in both short and long terms engagements. This is made easily possible by eight principle of “partnership” between and among sovereign states, which makes it easier for the different aspects of cooperation in the modern world to take place cordially.

Having highlighted the fundamental eight principles of bilateral and multilateral diplomatic relations, Dr. Salwa Gabriel proceeded to the next phase of her presentation on the historically established diplomatic relations of South Sudan with TROIKA (USA, Norway & UK), China, Japan, Russia, Egypt, Turkey and other international community partners (UN, EU, IGAD, AU and NGOs with either international or national character). She reiterated what was alluded before in the introduction by Amb. Moses Akol regarding the special place of Troika and other international community partners in South Sudan, particularly the Christian missions and humanitarian NGOs.

In addition to the tremendous work done by USAID in South Sudan, Dr. Salwa Gabriel commended the Kingdom of Norway for having travelled extra mile through the NCA and the training it offered to civil servants in strategic programming. This has helped the regional Government of Southern Sudan to score historical achievements in professionalizing the public service. She considered the UK as a colonial power with special advantage of staying around forever through UKAID and other mode of support to South Sudanese. The same is for Turkey and Egypt who were involved historically in the making of South Sudan. In a special manner, Egypt has a critical and vital interest in the flow of Nile water through South Sudan.

According to Dr. Salwa Gabriel, the Troika is historically intertwined with South Sudan through settling refugees and asylum seekers who became dual nationals with uplifting contributions to their original home country. Therefore, the Troika can't be harmful to South Sudan. Though China came late, it has also done commendable things in South Sudan. The same for Japan, Netherlands and other international community partners who have demonstrated good relations and support to government of South Sudan. Also Russia has had its share in relating with South Sudan, especially in the UNSC and through its late Ambassador in Uganda who used to come to Juba frequently from Kampala. Additionally, the NGOs community (national and international) have been present in South Sudan for a long time contributing lot to the welfare of the citizens in humanitarian as well as in the developmental sectors.

Having noted the historically established relations of South Sudan with Troika and International Community partners, Dr. Salwa Gabriel geared her talk to the fractured diplomatic relations. She identified the first reason to be in “the use of power as might” with subordination effects on sovereignty of South Sudan. The second reason is “the weakness and fragility” of South Sudan due to the elongated history of civil war, the worst of which occurred after the independence (i.e 2013 and 2016 conflict and crises). The Government of South Sudan had regarded these as coup attempts for regime change while the Troika rejected the narrative and called it quarrels over power. But whatsoever the case, the uncalled for internal war has led to the collapse of international partners for that used to be effectively cordial and developmentally supportive during the era of peace in South Sudan.

The third reason is “the withdrawal of Troika” from supporting public governance and development projects. This has had its effect on the UN Agenda shift from building permanent and durable peace to managing humanitarian crisis in form of Civilian (PoC) sites, which emerged unprecedentedly to take its own lifestyle and priority in the mandate of the United Nations Missions in South Sudan (UNMISS). The government of South Sudan has been concerned since then about the transparency and sincerity of the POCs, especially when some of its IDPs come out to get involved in town activities at day time and then get back in the evening to spent a night under UNMISS fenced protection. Nevertheless, the UNMISS and humanitarian NGOs operating the POCs do not cooperate with the government regarding the data of births, marriages and deaths that take place within the POCs and even the details of the budget spent on their programs on South Sudanese.

The fourth reason is “the claim of genocide and ethnic cleansing”, which has induced the UNSC, EU and US to levy targeted sanctions (e.g., arms embargo, travel bans and economic sanctions on both military and civilian actors in South Sudan). But as this is known as the Mother of all crimes in the international law, the claim seems to be rushed without sufficient and credible consultative process and proper investigation (e.g., putting the first minister and spokesperson of the Government of South Sudan under targeted sanctions when they didn’t act individually but officially). Thus, according to Dr. Salwa Gabriel the decision is more politicized internationally than legalized. Also the tribes of South Sudan live in specific territories and the national armed forces are not composed of one tribe. That is why such sanctions regime created uneasy relations of South Sudan with the Troika and international community partners. It has been opposed by the IGAD, AU and many African countries due to the timing of its announcement while the peace process is on-going in South Sudan.

The fifth reason is the miserable “failure of the Government of South Sudan to implement the 2015 ARCSS” and also to “delay the agreed pre-transitional activities for 2018 R-ARCSS implementation”. Though a total collapse of ARCSS was prevented in 2016 when the First Vice President Taban Deng Gai took over the leadership of the SPLM/A-IO, still the Troika has remained accused by the Government of South Sudan of working for regime change. This has become apparent in 2018 R-ARCSS, which diluted the powers of the President of the Republic via introduction of bloated collegial presidency and unification of security forces as well as adoption of inclusivity (i.e., 35 % for women, youth representation and regional balance in the formation of the government whether the regime like it or not).

The sixth reason is the “confusion whether the diplomatic relations is first and foremost between governments or peoples”. The diplomatic norms of the established international relations gives the utmost official legitimacy to the government with public diplomacy (including lower tracks) exercised within this umpire. Ignoring the legitimacy of the Government of South Sudan has reflected negatively on its relations with the Troika and international community partners. This confusion is connected to the seventh reason is “the use of humanitarian assistance not as charity and philanthropy” but a boasting political tool for Government of South Sudan to look uncaring for its people and portraying the donor countries and humanitarian NGOs to be the responsible ones.

Putting into consideration the fundamentals of diplomatic relations and taking notes of the special historical relations while acknowledging the core reasons for fractured relations of the government of South Sudan with the Troika and some other international community partners, Dr. Salwa Gabriel recommended the following way forward:

- 1). D tente and continuous constructive engagement of Government of South Sudan with the Troika and other international community partners in order to cordially mend the fractured relations rather than wasting time complaining without a solution.
- 2). The government and the opposition of South Sudan to take full responsibility of ending the war and humanitarian crisis in order to protect its citizens in peaceful environment and attract the IDPs (especially in the PoCs) and refugees in the neighboring countries (Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, DRC, CAR) and abroad (Egypt, Australia, Canada, US, etc.) to come back home voluntarily for safer and dignified livelihood.
- 3). The government, the opposition and the people of South Sudan to prioritize the 2018 R-ARCSS Agenda of peace, development, justice and democratization firmly built on unwavering political will to implement its provisions in letter and spirit.
- 4). The Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) to normalize the fractured relations with the Troika and international partners through creation of bilateral and multilateral technical organs (e.g., Re-activated Troika and RTGONU Forum, Re-activated Technical Assistance and Aid Coordination, among others) with pragmatic plans, transparency and accountability.
- 5). The Troika, the UNMISS and international community partners to refocus their original role of supporting governance and development in South Sudan rather than emergency humanitarian response, which is not usually conducted transparently and accountably.
- 6). The UNSC to reconfigure UNMISS mandate, which was adjusted due to the situation of 2013/2016 ignited crises of violent political conflicts and displacement of civilians, and get back to 2011 origins of assisting South Sudan with good governance and developmental projects as the core of peace-building.



III– THE PILLARS OF ACTION POINTS AND WAY FORWARD

The Seventh Session of the HIGH-LEVEL BREAKFAST DISCUSSION AND STRATEGIC THINKING ON THE PEACE PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN was successful in its timing and deliberations. The keynote speaker, the moderator and participants deliberated objectively on the topic with practical well-informed way forward for building, maintaining, harnessing and cementing constructive relations and cooperation of the Republic of South Sudan with the Troika and International Community Partners. The discussion is summarized into these key pillars for R-ARCSS implementation and realization of peace in the country:

Appreciation of the constructive historical links of South Sudan with the Troika and International Community Partners and their positive achievements for the mutual welfare of their respective peoples and governments.

Prioritizing sustainable peace, humanitarian outreach, inclusive development and fair justice as core interests worth pursuing for foreign policy that is properly harnessed for cordial relations between South Sudan and international community partners.

Continuous engagement and pragmatic dialogue with respectful communication and creation of forums for enabling the convergence of interests based on established values system of South Sudan and international community partners.

Cooperation on the responsibility to protect the citizens of South Sudan and international community partners alike based on prudent exercise of sovereignty with friendliness, consent and good neighborly understanding.

Employment of right competent and professional persons in government institutions and availing them with sufficient resources to handle and harness well the needed cordial relations of South Sudan with international community.

Change of unattractive behavior with transparency, accountability and responsiveness to the concerns of South Sudanese and international community partners on the pertinent issues for their mutual benefits.

Based on these pillars and garnering the recommended way forward during the high-level engagement of above-mentioned experts and discussants, the following analytical action points have been gleaned for dissemination to help in forging better way forward for harnessing fruitful relations with the Troika and International Community Partners for consolidation of peace and development in South Sudan as a success story of 2018 R-ARCSS:

S/N	Leadership	Citizens	Stakeholders	Guarantors	Partners
1.	Promote good historical links of South Sudan with Troika and International Partners who have scored commendable achievements of state and nation building.	Cherish the historical links of South Sudan with Troika and International Partners and preserve the memory of the achievements for nation-building.	Record the historical links of South Sudan with Troika and International Partners and achievements scored in state and nation building.	Encourage the Cementing of historical links of South Sudan with Troika and International Partners and achievements scored in state and nation building.	Revisit and consolidate historical links with South Sudan and the commendable achievements scored in state and nation building over time.
2.	Give peace its deserved chance and ensure that humanitarian situation and development have improved based on justice and pursuit of core mutual interests of South Sudan and International Partners.	Support peace and embrace the spirit of humanitarianism and inclusive development based on justice and pursuit of core mutual interests of South Sudan and International Partners.	Advocate for peace, humanitarian outreach and inclusive development based on justice and consolidated relations of South Sudan with Troika and partners.	Play rigorous oversight on peace, humanitarian outreach, inclusive development and justice in South Sudan and cordial relations with Troika and partners.	Support peace, humanitarian outreach, inclusive development and justice in South Sudan as a guaranteed way of cementing cordial international relations.
3.	Engage in constructive dialogue with respectful communication of intentions through joint forums for gauging the cooperation of South Sudan with International Partners.	Inculcate the culture of dialogue with respectful communication of intentions for creating good cooperation of South Sudan with International Partners on core values and fora.	Promote dialogue and good intentions in cooperation of South Sudan with International Partners based on core values and establishment of joint fora.	Encourage dialogue and good intentions in cooperation of South Sudan with International Partners based on core values and joint fora for gauging common understanding.	Embrace dialogue and good intentions in the communication and cooperation with South Sudan based on core values and joint fora for creating good understanding.

4.	Exercise the sovereignty of South Sudan in a prudent and friendly manner with prioritization of protection of the citizens and adoption of good neighbourly foreign policy and international partnership based on consent of the people.	Keep the sovereignty of South Sudan intact and friendly with promotion of good neighbourly conduct and international partnership in the pursuit of beneficial mutual interests based on keen understanding.	Advocate for respect of sovereignty of South Sudan based on responsibility to protect the citizens and promote good neighbourly conduct with mended international partnership and understanding.	Ensure that the sovereignty of South Sudan is respected with responsibility to protect the citizens, promote good neighbourly conduct and mend the cordial international relations based on understanding.	Respect the sovereignty of South Sudan with responsibility to protect the citizens and promote good neighbourly conduct based on wider understanding of each other for cordial relations.
5.	Uphold the merits of experience, competence and professionalism of the employees of government for harnessing cordial diplomatic relations of South Sudan with the international partners.	Give the merits of experience, competence and professionalism that deserved chance in public institutions and harnessing of cordial relations of South Sudan with the international partners.	Ensure that merits of experience and competence in public institutions is adhered to with harnessed relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Share the importance valuing merits of experience and competence in running public institutions and harnessing the cordial relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Press for the importance valuing merits of experience and competence in running public institutions and harnessing the cordial relations of South Sudan with international partners.
6.	Give value to knowledge, planning, transparency, accountability and appreciation of good work for harnessing cordial diplomatic relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Ensure that knowledge, planning, transparency, accountability and good work is harnessed accordingly for cordial relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Advocate for knowledge, planning, transparency, accountability and good work for harnessed cordial relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Encourage the dissemination of knowledge, planning, transparency, accountability and good work with harnessed cordial relations of South Sudan with international partners.	Help with dissemination of knowledge, planning, transparency, accountability and good work for harnessing cordial relations of South Sudan with neighbours and world at large.

7.	Be responsive to the concerns and pertinent issues of South Sudanese and the international partners with consolidation of the common good for all.	Stands firmly for the concerns and pertinent issues of mutual benefits to South Sudan, Troika and international community partners.	Be the voice of people on the concerns and pertinent issues of mutual benefits to South Sudan, Troika and partners.	Cooperate with South Sudan on promoting its concerns based on pertinent issues of mutual benefits with the Troika and other partners.	Assist South Sudan to promote its concerns and pertinent issues of mutual benefits based on common understanding internationally.
8.	Change any unattractive behaviour and conduct towards Troika and international community partners.	Embrace good behaviour and conduct towards cordial relations with Troika and international community partners.	Encourage good behaviour and conduct for cordial relations with international partners.	Be exemplary for good behaviour and conduct of cordial relations with international partners.	Reciprocate for good behaviour and conduct of cordial international relations with South Sudan and its future.



ABOUT THE CENTER

South Sudan Center for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) was established in July 2011 with aims of participating in the development of the country through applied research to enhance the debate on governance, nation and state-building in South Sudan, with the purpose of adding objectivity, critical thinking, nurturing strategic thinking, progressive and well-informed leadership.

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