



**Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan
Office of the Archbishop**

APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL DONOR AND DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY IN THE SUDAN

4th May 2009

I, Daniel Deng Bul, Archbishop and Primate of the Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan and Bishop of the Diocese of Juba, am personally appealing to the international donor and diplomatic communities, on behalf of the entire Church and the entire country, for increased support and action in safeguarding the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Over the past year I have undertaken major tours of Southern Sudan, covering almost all of Equatoria, Lakes State, and Jonglei State. During these visits I have witnessed first hand the suffering of my people and the increasing fear of communities on the ground because of a situation of ever-increasing insecurity. In the Church's opinion, this is the biggest problem in Sudan today, and prevents any further material or economic development, as well as the free and fair elections desperately needed in February 2010 and the referendum on Southern secession scheduled for 2011.

Peoples in Western and Central Equatoria are being attacked, murdered, and displaced by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), rumoured to be supplied by people within Sudan. A large number of civilians in Eastern Equatoria, Lakes, and Jonglei states are armed. The proliferation of modern weapons has caused traditional tribal conflicts over cattle ownership and grazing rights to increase and escalate into far bloodier warfare all over Southern Sudan – warfare that is now damaging the unity of the people and the CPA process as a whole. Last week a large weapons cache was apprehended in Lakes State and there are rumours of trucks loaded with weaponry heading north out of Juba to fuel tribal violence in Central Equatoria State.

The only conclusion one can draw is that these are ancient disputes that are being deliberately stirred up into something much more damaging for the local people and the stability of our country as a whole. Who is doing this is still largely unknown, but it is evident from local reports received through the Church network that the arms smuggling, re-armament, and incitement of tribal violence is being carried out by enemies of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

During Easter 2009, I visited Jonglei State, travelling from Bor right up to Ayod in the Nuer lands. Although I and the vast majority of the party I was travelling with are Dinka, we were welcomed, and I as a Church leader spoke about love and peace between tribes. On my return to Juba I was informed that following the visit all cattle raiding and violence in the Ayod area has ceased. I take this as proof that the Church is one of the most effective ground-level players in the peace process and as proof that our



message of love and reconciliation is one that is most effective in peace building amongst the tribes of Southern Sudan.

The Church has a presence in almost all small villages in the South, coverage unmatched by any organisation, including the Government of Southern Sudan and the SPLA, which in most cases are no longer able to keep the peace on the ground. The army is largely absent from effected areas, the police are too few to provide adequate security to even the County Commissioners, let alone the people, and therefore the government is in danger. As evidence of this I cite the fact that the police in Twic East County of Jonglei State were not able to contain local violence even during my visit to the area.

I am therefore making a passionate and heartfelt appeal to those governments and organisations that form Sudan's diplomatic and donor community, in particular the United Nations agencies and the governments of the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Netherlands, all of which have a major presence in Southern Sudan and are guarantor signatories of the CPA.

As guarantors you have a duty to prevent this nation from returning to war, and I urge you to consider very seriously the churches as key partners in the work of peace-building on the ground. This is a problem that requires an ecumenical approach – all churches need to be supported by international stakeholders in the CPA to be tools of peace building on the ground. With our community-level network that surpasses any other, we need to be empowered to spread peace in this land as I have been doing in Jonglei State last month. We must teach our people that they are part of much bigger politics of which they are unaware, but which they are destabilising. They must also be empowered to make free and fair democratic choices in the upcoming elections and referendum.

My worry, and the fear of many thousands of people I have spoken to across Southern Sudan in the past year, is that the current escalating violence will add to the current disputes between the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) over the North-South border and the Abyei Protocol, that are already threatening to cause the CPA to collapse. If the CPA is not guaranteed now, war can start again all too quickly, during which a return to peace will be incredibly difficult, the Sudanese people will be further devastated and the whole region will be destabilised.

If you are guarantors of the CPA, then why is the international community allowing this violence to continue? I beseech you to act now to prevent it and protect the peace of my people.

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Yours in the love and peace of Christ,



The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul Yak
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