

**Let Us Join Together to Rescue the Peace for Our People**  
**URGENT APPEAL OF THE SUDANESE CHURCH**  
**SUDAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (SCC) 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

**Khartoum, August 10-14, 2009**

***Isaiah 57:14 “Let my people come to Me. Remove every obstacle from their path!”***

Aware of our spiritual responsibility, re-affirming our commitment to bringing about justice, peace and reconciliation, we, the Sudanese Church, represented by the highest governing body, delegates and guests of the SCC member churches, call upon all people of faith, our governments, our neighbours in the Region, the continent of Africa and the wider international community **to join hands in a concerted effort to rescue the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) from collapsing, bring about peace in Western Sudan, provide security and peace to all our people, and thereby save the country and the whole region from being destabilised soon.**

Deeply saddened and highly alarmed by the current situation and possible future scenarios in our country, we have spent four days of serious reflections to assess the current situation in our country, to reflect on our own role and responsibilities, and to plan how the Church in co-operation with our communities, our governments, our partners and all those, who committed themselves to the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement - signed on January 9, 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya - can respond to the severe obstacles and challenges we are facing all over Sudan.

Instead of a comprehensive dialogue and reconciliation process as the basis for a common future, we have witnessed people retrieving back to their own groups. Instead of seeing development and becoming self-sustained, we have to call for providing relief in many areas once again to rescue the life of our people.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the CPA- Interim Period, at a time when people should be able to enjoy the fruits of peace, we see **prevailing and emerging conflicts** all over Southern Sudan, namely in Western, Central and Eastern Equatoria, in the Lakes State, in Jonglei, in Upper Nile, in Warrap, let alone in Darfur and parts of Southern Kordofan. We cannot but suspect a common pattern behind all these armed conflicts, which by far exceed the so called ethnic clashes, leaving hundreds of people killed and thousands newly displaced.

While disarmament is going on in some places, brand new **arms** are provided in others, by sources apparently connected to those who seem to have no interest in a common peaceful and just future of our people.

In addition, those responsible to **provide security** seem to be unable or even unwilling in some places to do so, for reasons we fail to understand.

In a country rich of **resources** like Sudan, many are unemployed or do not get their salaries for months. This cannot be explained by the global financial crisis alone. Money allocated for development of the people, never reaches them but vanishes unaccounted for.

Furthermore, especially in the areas where oil exploitation is going on, we witness an **ecological disaster**, with polluted water and soil. Our people, displaced by the war, cannot return home due to the lack of security, basic services and the environmental damages.

**Elections** have been postponed twice, and there are indications that even if they will be held finally as scheduled now for April 2010, they may not be free and fair, based on experiences with the contested results of the recent census.

Being aware, that the boarder demarcation is far behind schedule, and the **Referendum Bill** is still disputed between the parties, we furthermore fear, that the Referendum for Southern Sudan and for Abyei as well as the Popular Consultation for Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile might not be conducted as provided in the CPA. We recognize holding the Referendum in 2011 as being of key significance in the implementation of the CPA. We are aware of the various aspirations of our communities; we consider it important for Church leaders to speak with a united voice on this issue.

We affirm our commitment as spelt out in our document of 2002 “Let my people choose”. We also affirm the right of every human being to decide his or her destiny, and accordingly we support the right of self - determination for the people of Southern Sudan to decide their future. But it is high time to also prepare for the time after the referendums and the popular consultations and to start a process of identifying the implications of the various options, as well as to have a broad based dialogue process on how the future political-social set up shall look like.

**Committed to dialogue as the best option of managing the current state of affairs, we specifically call upon:**

1. The Signatories of the CPA, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP) to seriously and urgently work to resolve their differences, to enable the referendum law to be passed in time for the required process thereafter to follow
2. The Regional partners, namely the IGAD countries, and the International Partners particularly the “Troika” plus Italy to exert the necessary pressure for the parties to move on with the required discussions in a serious and urgent manner.
3. The Government of National Unity to substantially improve the security situation in Darfur and Southern Kordofan; and all parties to the conflict in Darfur to seriously engage in peace talks.
4. The Government of Southern Sudan to seriously improve the security situation in the South including managing the LRA, which is continuously causing displacements in Equatoria.
5. The Government of Southern Sudan to bring to book those involved in corruption and malpractices.
6. The Government of National Unity and that of Southern Sudan to provide the needed relief and rehabilitation required by the populations.
7. The International Community to provide the needed resources to the “Humanitarian Storm” in the Southern Sudan, the whole country and the region.

8. All stakeholders to immediately engage in consultations about the implications of possible future scenarios, and in respective preparations, in a process clearly centred around the civil society.

One player alone cannot regard all these challenges and cannot achieve sustainable peace. Therefore we once again urgently appeal to our members, all people of faith, the governments, the region, the continent and the wider international community to take responsibility and to join hands – for the sake of our people and the whole region.

**As we close we hold the concerns of all God’s people in our hearts, and commit ourselves before God in prayer, to take our identity as people of God serious, to provide responsible, accountable and transparent leadership, to work in the spirit of unity, and to act with the people and on their behalf, wherever needed.**

Signed on behalf of the General Assembly participants by the heads of the delegations, Khartoum, August 14, 2009

Catholic Church of Sudan

Episcopal Church of Sudan

Presbyterian Church of Sudan

Coptic Orthodox Church

Sudan Interior Church

African Inland Church

Sudanese Church of Christ

Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church

Sudan Pentecostal Church

Greek Orthodox Church

Greek Catholic Church

Signed copy available at SCC office, Arkawet, Khartoum