



PRESS BRIEF

27th August 2015

"The Signing of the Compromise Peace Agreement by the Warring Parties Is Completed. Making Peace Happen Is the Next Challenge"

Organization for Nonviolence and Development (ONAD) joins the suffering citizens of South Sudan and all peace loving individuals, groups and institutions at different levels to welcome and celebrate the signing of the Compromise Peace Agreement by the President of the Republic of South Sudan. This came following the partial signing of the same agreement on 17th August 2015 by the leader of the armed opposition and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Leaders, Former Detainees and other representatives, and witnesses as the government requested for 15 days consultations. The signing of the long-awaited internationally backed and IGAD Plus mediated peace deal in Juba on 26th August 2015 completes the agreement as bidding. The signing ceremony was witnessed by national, regional and international leaders and representatives marking the new beginning to halting civil war in the country. This agreement is signed at the time when the warring parties faced maximum pressure from internal and external voices calling for immediate endorsement of the agreement.

While, the courage of the leadership of the warring parties to make this difficult decision is appreciated, yet stopping fights, restoring order and making peace happen is what citizens wait to applaud the leadership for. There have been exchanges of happiness and celebrations in social media and at individual levels. However, at the time of releasing this press brief, the public expressions for the signed peace agreement is yet to be witness in Juba and other towns. We therefore, urge the leadership of the warring parties to respect the agreement as well as cooperate with civil society and other peace stakeholders to fully implement the agreement, consolidate peace, allow access to humanitarian assistance, deliver basic services to the desperate population and above all support building trust, social fabric, national healing and reconciliation. It is our hope that this agreement brings to an end the 20-month long armed conflict which caused untold suffering, loss of tens of thousands of lives, loss of properties and forced more than two million people to leave their homes.

ONAD also takes opportunity to congratulate colleagues in the civil society for the hard work and partners for supporting our engagement in mobilizing and feeding in the views of the grassroots to influence the then ongoing peace negotiations. Although some of our valuable contributions such as having different power sharing ratio in the three conflict affected states were not considered in the final document, yet we are happy significant provisions of the agreement captured our recommendations particularly on transitional justice, accountability,

reconciliation and healing.

It is worth noting that, the agreements provides for;

1. Establishment of the government of national unity after 90 days pre-transitional period and will be responsible for the implementation of the agreement and last for 30 months.
2. Permanent Cease Fire and Transitional Security Arrangements
3. Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction
4. Transitional Justice, Accountability, Reconciliation and Healing
5. Parameters of Permanent Constitution

As Late Nelson Mandela once said and I quote: "If you want peace, you talk with your enemies not with your friends". This may also mean working with the former adversaries to make and build peace. Given the fact that the parties signed the agreement while facing maximum pressure and that the government signed the agreement with reservations, this signals possibilities of challenges in fully implementing the agreement. The starting point is the ratification of the agreement in the transitional constitution, followed by working out the details of the permanent cease fire and transitional security arrangements, smooth management of the transitional period, holding the general elections to mention but a few.

This requires wisdom, full attention on peace as a strategic goal, collective responsibility of all peace actors to move the nation to a nonviolent, peaceful and democratic country.

Its worth noting that ONAD was initiated in 1994 by Southern Students activists at University of Juba in Khartoum and over 20 years has attracted large and diversified members in terms of ethnicity, religion and gender from all across South Sudan. The organization is based in Juba and works for a nonviolent, peaceful and democratic country through trainings and advocacy in: Nonviolence and Peacebuilding, Governance and Civic Education, Community Empowerment and Gender and Organizational Development.