



**ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE**

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**H.E General Salva Kirr Mayardit
President of the Republic of South Sudan
Juba, Republic of South Sudan**

Your Excellency,

RE: CONGRATULATIONS

On behalf of the All Africa Conference of Churches and its president, His Grace Archbishop Valentine Mokiwa, and on my own behalf, I extend our hearty **CONGRATULATIONS** and salute you and the people of South Sudan on your achievement of Independence. We join you in your celebrations, and in praising God whose grace has enabled this great day to come to pass. The 9th of July 2011 represents the most precious gift the people of South Sudan could ever have. But it is also a costly gift, having been bought with millions of precious Sudanese lives. However, the fact that this day has dawned signifies that the blood of the martyrs was not shed in vain.

Your Excellency, yours is the longest journey to freedom in Africa, if not in the whole world. It is also the costliest with over 2.5 million Sudanese have been killed in the war of liberation. We are aware that it has taken no less than half a century of struggle, manifested in various ways, to arrive at this historic day when you officially proclaim your independence. This day is significant in many respects. It is a day of deep **Remembrance**. As you look back you, without doubt, recall the ups and downs, twists and turns which characterized the struggle on the long road to freedom. It is as well a day of **Celebration**. This day could not have come to fruition without the courage and determination of individual Sudanese who have contributed to this tremendous achievement. It is, still, a day

of **Reflection**. As you celebrate those contributions you will also use this day to reflect on the challenges ahead and discern the next stages in the struggle. Above all, it is a **Blessed** day in that millions of Sudanese, young and old, women and men have lived to see this day of all days. It is a day that the Lord has made and so rejoice and be glad in it.

While you have realized political self-determination, a lot remains to be done to achieve economic and social emancipation. The new political dispensation that is ushered by the proclamation of independence also marks the beginning of the nation-building process. As in the process of the liberation struggle, nation-building as well will require sacrifices of individual and group self-interest and the concerted efforts of all South Sudanese. Your people constitute the most precious asset in nation-building. We believe that nation-building, including constitution making, will be successful if the process is inclusive and participatory. We are grateful for your commitment to continue to unite your people in concerted efforts, because nation-building is no less challenging than the liberation struggle itself. We are fully aware that this is a daunting task, but our confidence is that you, together as a people, all south Sudanese working together collectively, are more than equal to the task. Moreover, you have the tremendous goodwill of the rest of Africa, and the world. We at the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) want to assure you of our prayerful support and solidarity in this noble task of nation-building.

Your Excellency, you have attained your independence at an opportune moment compared to other African countries that went through liberation struggles similar to yours. We are aware that there were many false starts undertaken by a majority of African countries at the time of their independence. Many mistakes were made with gravious political, social and economic implications. It is still taking all of us a long time and enormous resources to correct those mistakes. The Republic of South Sudan should be in a position to learn from such mistakes, in order not to repeat them. We have no doubt that the African countries, in welcoming your independence, will be ready to share their experiences with you.

We at the AACC are available to reflect together with the Sudanese churches on the mission and calling of the Church in the new country, the Republic of South Sudan. We will accompany the Sudanese churches as their partners in discerning the way forward in the search of the South Sudan the Sudanese want; in discerning the soul of the nation and the fundamental values that constitute the foundation of the society. We trust that in this way the churches will play their role in building a truly just, peaceful, prosperous and participatory society in which every human person will enjoy life in dignity. We have no illusions that this is a no easy task given that the protracted civil war has, in its wake, left deeply traumatized people in dire need of healing and reconciliation.

Once again, please accept our sincere congratulations. We pray that through God's grace the 9th of July 2011 will be a day when peace will prevail in Juba and everywhere else in the new country.

Determined to continue to accompany you in facing new challenges, we paraphrase the prayerful theme of AACC next Assembly to take place in Kampala, Uganda in June 2013 and coinciding with the fiftieth anniversaries of the African Union and the All Africa Conference of Churches, “ **God of life, lead Africa, THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN, to Peace, Justice and Dignity**”.

Yours faithfully,

Rev. Dr. André Karamaga (signed)

General Secretary

Nairobi, 9th July 2011

Cc: Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, Ecumenical Special Envoy to Sudan and our Representative in the independence celebration

Rev. Ramadan Chan, General Secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches

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AACC is a fellowship of 173 member Churches and Christian Councils in 40 African countries
La CETA est une communauté de 173 églises et conseils chrétiens dans 40 pays d'Afrique
PRESIDENT: The Most Rev. Valentine Mokiwa **GENERAL SECRETARY:** Rev. Dr. André Karamaga