

**2012 ECOSOC Substantive Session
Integrated Support to South Sudan: Capacity Building and Core
Governance Functions
Tuesday 24th July 2012**



**Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Planning
Republic of South Sudan
Honourable Minister Mary Jarvase Yak**

Your Excellency's,

1. It has been a little over one year since South Sudan became a new nation. We celebrated our first year of nationhood on 9th July 2012. This was a momentous, and yet sobering time to reflect on the changing events over the past year, as well as to remember our key achievements and struggles to reach the new state of nationhood since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005.
2. On behalf of the Government and people of South Sudan I would like to present some of the critical issues and policy decisions we are trying to address in state building and ensuring the functioning of governance institutions. The achievements so far have been impressive, particularly when one considers the low baseline in terms of the human, legal and capacity needs resulting from decades of war and marginalization.

3. With the support of our partners, we managed critical CPA benchmarks such as the elections and the referendum. We established three levels of government: National, State and County. We have increased primary education, and built a very small network of roads and infrastructure that has mitigated conflict in some of our communities.
4. We recognize, however, many challenges as we emerge on the global scene as a new nation. Thus, despite significant achievements, the transition that we must manage is overwhelming in both scale and complexity. South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, 80% of the population lacks access to basic health services, 92% of women cannot read and write, and 90% of the population is estimated to live on less than a \$1 per day.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. In South Sudan we are starting with very little – building institutions of governance from scratch. The expectations of the people and the need to feel the dividends of peace being delivered by Government are very high.
6. It is our objective to build a democratic, transparent, and accountable government, managed by a professional and committed public service, with an effective balance of power between the executive, legislative and the judicial branches of government. This is what we are committed to in the South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013, which is our guiding

framework for economic growth, peace and security, poverty reduction and good governance. However, our institutions lack sufficient human resource capacity, and we are doing our best to capacitate them.

7. To address the daunting challenges facing South Sudan, the Government produced the South Sudan Development Plan. This is our transitional medium term strategy for development. It includes a capacity development strategy to address the human, legal and institutional gaps required to meet our medium term targets. The Plan emphasizes the importance of good governance by strengthening fiduciary management; accountability, transparency and oversight; policies and laws; and enhancing systems, structures and mechanisms of coordination at all levels of government. The Plan also built upon our engagement with the International Dialogue of Peace and State building; and further articulates the core governance functions that we prioritized in the area of fiduciary management and accountability, public administration, rule of law, management of natural resources, and executive leadership. This is what we refer to as our core functions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. We recognize the massive challenges to be overcome in order to make progress on State building, particularly with the capacity constraints in our respective institutions. With the support of our partners and the UN, we are rapidly ensuring that State structures have the capacity to manage core governance functions through gap-filling, mentoring,

coaching and technical advisory services. This has proven to be an effective modality. The Republic of South Sudan and IGAD Regional Initiative, has now deployed 164 qualified and experienced civil service support officers of the intended 200. They provide mentoring and on-the job training to their government counterparts. An additional 120 United Nations Volunteers working in the areas of public financial management, rule of law, and peace and security are also on the ground. We have noted the impact and benefits of this approach to support capacity development and skills transfer. We acknowledge, however, the capacity constraints within the actual public service.

9. A longer-term strategy is to ensure that we implement a public sector reform agenda, including rationalization of the current civil service. This is more important than ever as we consider the implications brought on by austerity measures. Given the limited public resources, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan believes that any of the challenges that will come ahead can be addressed through sound co-operation with development partners, strengthening public financial management and our oversight institutions and expanding opportunities for the private sector.
10. Some sound strides have been made in presenting audited accounts to the National Legislative Assembly. An austerity budget has been approved for 2012/2013 and we are continuing the dialogue with the Donors, the World Bank, the IMF and the UN system, on how we can be further supported to deal with the current economic situation, and

avoid losing the small gains made over the CPA period.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. We recognize the many challenges that lie ahead as a fragile State, but remain committed to realizing the priorities and the needs of our people. In strengthening the capacities of our nation, we will continue to count on your support and cooperation.

12. In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to thank you for having this special session on South Sudan