



**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**  
**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**  
**HEADQUARTERS**

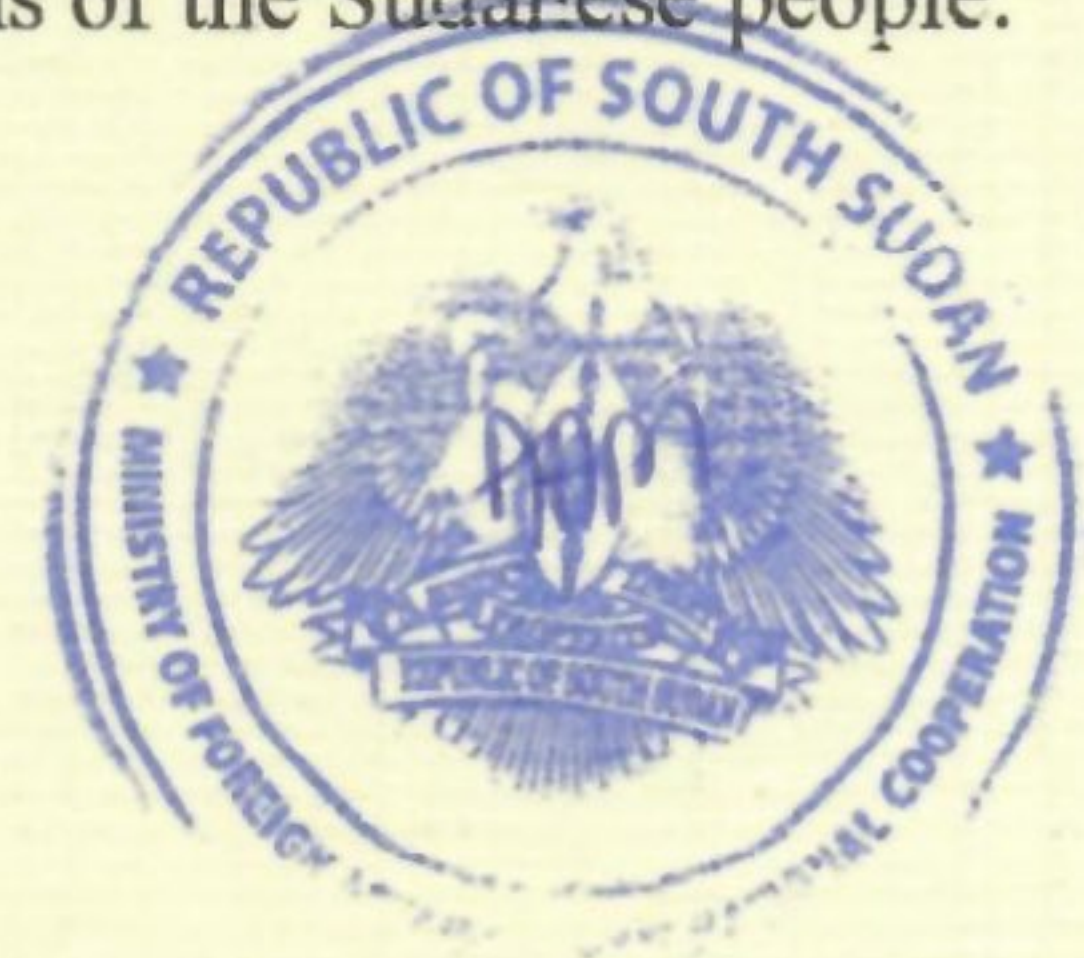
4<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Press Release**

**Response to the Recent Public Statements Originating From the Republic of the Sudan**

**I. Introduction:-**

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of South Sudan has been following closely with great concern and sincere regret a spate of unfortunate official statements emanating from the sisterly Republic of Sudan in the wake of the unprovoked, horrific, and despicable massacres of South Sudanese citizens in Al Jazeera State earlier this month.
1. While the main content of these statements appears to deflect attention from the crimes committed in Al Jazeera State, they warrant a responsible, official, and ethical response.
2. It is important to note that when the conflict in Sudan erupted on **April 16, 2023**, **H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit** was among the first regional leaders to call for an immediate de-escalation of the situation and for the resolution of the issues that led to the outbreak of hostilities. In line with that call, **IGAD leaders tasked H.E. President Salva** to lead a tripartite committee of Heads of State to engage the parties involved in the conflict, a task he carried out with great honor and enthusiasm until it was reassigned to another leader in the region.
3. Moreover, **H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit** ordered the opening of South Sudan's borders to Sudanese civilians fleeing the war. Many of these individuals have since established businesses in South Sudan or engaged in professional roles, such as **university lecturers and medical professionals**. Others have reported to refugee camps or crossed into neighboring countries. As of now, South Sudan hosts over **one million Sudanese refugees, as reported by UN agencies and other organizations working along the Sudan-South Sudan border**. Furthermore, South Sudan remains willing to welcome more Sudanese brethren who are in distress.
2. Being Sudan's most affected neighbor, South Sudan not only maintains neutrality in the conflict but also stands ready to continue playing a constructive role in resolving the ongoing conflict peacefully in line with the aspirations of the Sudanese people.



## II. Response to the statement by General Yasser Al-Atta:

1. **On 20 January 2025**, media outlets broadcast video footage of General Yasser Al-Atta, Assistant Commander-in-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), addressing troops from an undisclosed location. During this address, he claimed that South Sudanese citizens constitute 65% of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) fighting force. General Al-Atta also sent mixed messages, expressing his trust in **H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit** and the leadership of South Sudan while simultaneously accusing South Sudan of doing nothing to prevent South Sudanese individuals from joining the **RSF**.
2. **Interestingly**, General Al-Atta acknowledged that many who might have joined the **RSF** are opposition elements, explicitly naming the group led by **Gen. Stephen Buay**, which the Government of South Sudan does not control. While we appreciate General Al-Atta's expression of confidence in the leadership of South Sudan and his apology for the "**violations perpetrated by individuals**," we strongly condemn his assertion that South Sudanese citizens make up **65% of the RSF**, as it is both false and dangerous.
3. We believe that General Yaseer Al-Atta is well aware, through his long war experience in South Sudan (1983-2005), that the Sudanese Army has had a long-standing tradition of arming South Sudanese militias. Hence, we are fully aware that in **the SAF**, there is a special Department called the Department of Popular and National Forces that is tasked with recruiting South Sudanese nationals.
4. On the other hand, when South Sudan fortunately proves undefeatable through militia proxies, those militia elements continue to lurk along the borders where the Sudanese Military Intelligence uses them. Some were even recruited and sent to faraway wars, such as Yemen. **According to our authentic records, two groups of South Sudanese nationals were sent to Yemen under arrangements made by the Sudanese government: the group led by the late Gen. Peter Gatdet Yak and Gen. Thomas Theil Awak.** It is under such conditions that those Khartoum-backed militia elements found themselves entangled in the Sudanese war.
5. Notwithstanding this background, describing South Sudanese as forming **65 %** of the fighting force within **RSF** is an absolute exaggeration. In fact, many of the aforementioned South Sudanese groups are still fighting alongside the Sudanese Army (SAF), For example, **Maj. Gen. Thomas Thiel Awak (also known as Altom Ali Zain) from Twic County in Warrap State serves in the Sudanese Military Intelligence Unit, along with Gen. Jafour Dou Elbaid from the Abyei area and Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Al Mazz Deng.** We wonder why General Atta fails to mention them.
6. During official meetings with our brothers from the Sudan, we made these facts as clearly available to them as possible. We are now surprised that General Atta is pedaling such falsehood, which may have motivated some members of (SAF) to



commit horrific massacres against innocent South Sudanese citizens in Wad Medani and its surroundings.

**III. Response to the statement issued by the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs:-**

1. In the same attitude of unsatisfactory and regrettable approach, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sisterly Republic of the Sudan issued a surprising statement on **23rd January 2025**, echoing Gen. Yasser Al-Atta's remarks in its actual context and taking issue with the South Sudan's statement at the recent United Nations Security Council Open Debate on African-Led and Development-Focused Counter-Terrorism in New York. South Sudan rejects the accusations contained in that statement as unfounded.
2. The recent statement by Hon. Ramadan Mohamed Abdallah Goc, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in New York, was not intended to request intervention from the African Union and United Nations in Sudan. The Minister sought only the support of the United Nations Security Council to join our call for an investigation into the tragic massacre of our innocent citizens in Aljazeera State, to ensure transparency and quick outcomes for the best benefit of the two countries and people. At this juncture, we reiterate our call for the UNSC and the AU to join our call for a credible investigation into the Wad Madani Massacre.
3. When addressing the issue of terrorism in our New York statement, we referred to our fight against terrorism since the days of our liberation struggle. Furthermore, our statement did not call for intervention by the African Union, as stated wrongly and unjustifiably in the statement issued by the Sudanese Foreign Ministry.
4. Again, our words of acknowledgment to the African Union and IGAD were misinterpreted outside their direct and real context; the wording is clear and self-explanatory.
5. It is imperative to clarify that South Sudan's government did not arrange hospitals to treat RSF soldiers. But, we hosted a number of Sudanese soldiers who withdrew from Mariam city to South Sudan, particularly Northern Bahr Ghazal State, and from White Nile State to Renk. We are still accommodating some of these Sudanese soldiers in South Sudan after disarming them and considering them regular civilians, following norms and practices in such situations while awaiting their transportation back to Sudan.
6. We emphasize that the claims made in the Sudanese statement are unfounded and misleading. They do not reflect the realities on the ground and undermine the historical and bilateral ties between South Sudan and Sudan.



7. Hence, we strongly condemn any threatening and disrespectful approach to addressing concerns and remain committed to adhering to amicable dialogue and constructive political and diplomatic exchanges. On the other hand, we are also ready to continue addressing threats and disrespectful approaches, **if any**, conscientiously and promptly to safeguard South Sudan's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and national interest.
8. Indeed, South Sudan will continue to engage our brothers in the Sudan to ensure those perpetrators of the devastating and brutal massacres of our innocent citizens in Wad Medani are held accountable. Such transparent accountability will undoubtedly serve the interests of both Sudan and South Sudan by preventing further tragic and brutal killings, as witnessed in Wad Medani and its surroundings.
9. The Republic of South Sudan remains committed to a peaceful resolution to the current conflict in the Sudan and firmly believes that a fire raging in one's neighbor will certainly engulf your own house if not extinguished in good time.
10. We urge the Government of the Republic of Sudan to refrain from issuing unfounded allegations that could jeopardize our bilateral relations and regional stability. We remain committed to advancing our existing bilateral relations with Sudan across various cooperation fields and reiterate our assurance to address any misunderstandings or concerns promptly and appropriately.
11. The Government of South Sudan reaffirms its responsibility to protect Sudanese citizens residing in South Sudan and their properties, as demonstrated during the recent tensions. We also call upon the Government of Sudan to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens living in Sudan.
12. We extend our sincere condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and wish a quick recovery to the injured individuals from the recent incidents.
13. We call for the foreign ministries of both nations to lead joint efforts to address and resolve existing challenges amicably and thoughtfully.
14. The Government of the Republic of South Sudan reiterates its commitment to sustaining cordial relations with Sudan and upholding the guiding principles and overarching objectives of global order, international humanitarian law, human rights, state sovereignty, mutual respect, win-win cooperation, promoting peaceful coexistence, and peaceful dispute resolution in any conflict.

**End of the Press Statement**

