

Speech by Rt Reverent Abraham Yel Nhial about the situation in south and Sudan as a whole .

## UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

### INTRODUCTION

First of all, I want to thank God for giving me this golden opportunity to come to Winnipeg, Manitoba and be able to share about the situation in South and Sudan as whole with you. I Also, want to thank God for hearing our prayers for peace in the World. Millions of people in the world to day are facing natural calamities and human made disasters. Our prayers is highly needed.

I am very lucky because I came to Winnipeg when it is not winter. I still feel it is cold sometimes but, I hear from people that the weather now is not close to what is known for a winter season. It is also my privilege to be in Winnipeg. Last Sunday I celebrated the Easter with about 300 people in one of the Sudanese churches . I was so blessed to be received and given a permission to officiate over the services by the Rt Reverent Bishop Donald Phillips. Thank you Bishop Don.

After I hear from my friend Reuben Garang that I will speak at the University of Winnipeg, I Google the University. And two things caught my attention on the University website, the name Global College and the master program for peace and conflict resolution offer under Mennonite College. I feel connected with the name Global College because it tell me that people here are concern about the issues in other part of the world. I felt I was in right place and what I am going to say about situation in Sudan will go into to the right ears. I also Like the Master programs because the World need peace and mechanisms to maintain it.

I thank Canada and the rest of the International Community for allow people of South Sudan to vote in the referendum to decide for themselves where they want to belong in Sudan. We are deeply grateful to God and all people of faith who prayed for peaceful referendum which took place earlier this year.

### INTRODUCTION:

Let s talk briefly about Sudan. It is the largest Country in Africa which is going to split officially on July the 9th . Sudan has been in war for several decades , over 2 million people have died and millions have been displaced as a result.

In the history of North and the South Sudan, several wars have been fought, agreements were made and all were dishonoured. Therefore the relationship between the two parties is not trustworthy. There are three main majors causes of the war in Sudan in my view. Firstly, the resources are not equitably distributed. If you cross the border from the North into the South, Darfur, Nuba Mountain, Eastern Sudan, South

Blue Nile and Abyei you notices different in term of developments. Only in the North you can sense development. Secondly, the issue of religion, the government policies are framed on Islamic ideologies. People of other faith other than Islam are less represented in the government and everything from the government operate according to Islam.

Lastly the Arabization. The diversity of Sudan has been insulted movement of Sudan for many years up-to-date encourage arabization in the schools. Children must be dress like an Arab style, read Quran as perquisite to elementary school or not allow to attend school. Freedom is limited to people of African origin. Even Sudan is called an Arab country. In Summary, the central governments since the independence of Sudan in 1956 have been marginalizing the people of African descent; politically, economically and religion wise.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in 2005, between the South and the north to end the 22 years civil war, people in the South never miss fighting, bombing, looting and displacing of civilians. The Southern and Northern army masse troops along borders. The demarcation of borders between the North and south Sudan is not been agreed upon and remain unresolved issue for six years. This insecurity is cause by the Islamic government in the north which is not happy with the south to be an independent country because the south is where most of natural resources are lactated. Oil and other minerals are found in side the Southern border. The government of the North have many militias along the border and in the South. For example the Misseriya militias in Abyei and in Aweil State are heavily armed. Abyei area is inhabited by Dinka Ngok. The Misseria only come during dry to season to graze their animals. The Abyei is part of the South Sudan but because of the location of oil the government of Sudan don t want it to be part of south Sudan. This is a big problem and it already causing a lot of insecurity in and around Abyei and it might cause another civil war between south and north, if it is not handle well. We don t need war any more we had enough!

The problem is not only fighting in the border, but the North government want to undermine Government of South Sudan. It is arming its former and new militias rebels in side the South. The whole aim of arming militias in the South is for the South not to celebrate the independent day on July 09, 2011.

The conflict in Sudan is not only between the North and the South, there is war in Darfur, Eastern Sudan, Nuba Mountain and Southern Blue. These are the other marginalized groups in the north. I think the South will not establish if fighting continue in Darfur and in all the other places I mentioned above. When I was in Abyei innocent people are kill almost on daily bases but because media is limited in that areas the international community is not fully aware of at the act of inhumanity.

## RETURNEES FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

Returnees face a lot of difficulties on their way back to south they were been attack by Misseriya and looted their belonging. There in Abyei, I went to visit the returnees who have been attack and detained by the soldiers from the north as they were trying to cross into the South. There is even human trafficking. It was unfortunate, one of the woman was killed because she refused to give up her eight months old baby to Misseriya Militias. That baby is currently being cared for by relatives who have very limited resources. The sad news is that she was killed where police officers were watching but did not want to do anything to help her. After, reaching the south, the returnees find it also difficult getting themselves settle in South Sudan because of lack facilities.

I am telling you there are all sort of atrocities committed against women and children in the borders and even in the South

The UN food program plan to give only small ration of emergency Food to the returnee just for three month. I cannot image how the life would be for the women and children I saw in the border when the UN food ceased after three.

Shelters: There are no shelters to protect them from wind, dust, rain or mosquito. They are really Vulnerable to all sort of problems

Water : The issue of water is one of our bigger problem we have in the south. There is no water at all or people walk for hours to fetch for water which is not portable .

Education: there are no schools for the returnee

You may be wondering and want to know where is the government of South in all these. I tell you people of Southern have a culture of helping others, the government is trying by all mean to provide basic services. However the only revenue for the government is 50% of oil share. This share is decided by the North and sometimes the government of the South do not know total income from the oil. This share is in most cases is either reduce or delayed by the North I witness sometimes civil servants and government officials wait for months to get their paid. The revenue in fact is inadequate. While there is a lot of priorities in the South.

### INCONCLUSION:

Before I leave the floor I want to reiterate that the Peace Agreement signed between the North and South 6 years ago paved the way for peaceful resolution of the conflict, however, in reality the situation along the borders and in South is still very fragile. I want to let you know what I saw while I was there. The Northern army continue to drop bombs indiscriminately on the civilian population in the South.

Several militia who fought along the government of the North during the 22 years war, are still active in the South and all their actions appear coordinated with the government of the North.

There has been nothing built in the South before the war in term of developments. The South is larger than most of the East African countries but have no roads, schools and health amenities. During the war most of the area were planted with mines and become dangerous for people and animals to travel on . As we speak most of the fresh water sources are being contaminated. In most areas in the South oil drilling is still under the Northern companies with minimal environmental observation. We still have people trap in the North and in borders areas who wanted to cross to the South but could no do it because of the insecurity. The government of South Sudan is also very young and inexpedient with little resources to provide basic services to the returnees and southern population.

The present of the UN in Sudan is very important. The UN is doing good job in term of provision of security, however it need more mandate to in military when civilians are targeted by the armed forces.

As some one who come from the South and have a concern for the situation, I appeal to all of you here to take the word to your government that South Sudan need Canada support to achieve its independence. This support could be in terms of promotion of stability in the south --specially sharing the Canadians values of respect to human right , humanity and more importantly promotion of democratic principles. I personally agree with martial support because the situation is disparate in the South but education support is much better for along term stability.

Once against thanks to global college, the University of Winnipeg, Diocese of Rupert s Land my colleague here Bishop Don Philips and Reverend Jane Barter Moulaison and South Sudanese community.