

*Full Length Research*

## **IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan: Challenges and Prospects**

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**This paper examines the challenges and prospects of Intergovernmental Authority on Development peace building effort in South Sudan. The study employed the qualitative research methodology. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources of data collected from books, journal articles, proceedings, newspaper, published and unpublished materials, governmental and non-governmental organization reports and remarks, magazines and other internet sources. To substantiate and supplement the secondary data, the paper also used primary data collected through key informant interview. Given the data gathered are qualitative, the study employed qualitative data analysis techniques. The finding of study revealed that different challenges hindered IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan, inter alia, lack of enough fund for peace building effort, in appropriate intervention of IGAD's member state such as Uganda and Sudan in South Sudan for their individual interest and in appropriate peace building approach used by IGAD delegator. The study again found presence opportunities for realization of Peacebuilding such as advents of different agreements conducted between warring parties like the Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ACRSS) and all-inclusive peace building approach which invites all actors to facilitate peace building efforts than warring party alone.**

**Key words;** IGAD, Peacebuilding effort, South Sudan, challenges, prospects

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### **INTRODUCTION**

South Sudan is the world young state which borne on 9 July 2011 out of long lasting and bitter struggle as the result of Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005 in Naivasha, Kenya which facilitated not merely power and resource sharing between government of Sudan and Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) and South Sudan but also ended a 22 years lasting civil war following an internationally monitored referendum which was held on 9 January (Grawert E., 2007;; Yohannes, 2015). Inter-Governmental Authority on development regional organization of Eastern Africa played a significant and leading role comprehensive peace agreement through Kenya which resulted in the

birth of South Sudan (Pallin K., 2016:).

The independence and birth of South Sudan were welcomed by the international community with optimistic views of South Sudan will more peaceful and prosperous future for its citizens. However, this optimistic view of international community failed in to dark by the erupted internal conflict begun in December 2013 (Aziza, 2017).

South Sudan, the young state in the world relapsed into the horrific civil war on 15, December 2013, due to the power rivalry within SPLM which leads to the occurrence

of the clash between the pro government forces of president Salva Kiir and forces loyal to the sacked former vice president Reik Machar (Francis,2015:3).

The current crisis in South Sudan was also triggered by the interest and demand for democratic reform within the SPLM ruling party, the grievances of unemployment of youth, legacy of past wars, poverty at community level and unhappiness of SPLM-IO which coupled with the fact that, they felt even though they held public office, that the positions they were given were superficial and did not amount to decision making powers, control of resources and meaningful influence in the arm, which exacerbated the conflict to become a national crisis (Jok, 2015:10).

In order to halt this crisis December 15, 2013, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional bloc of the North Eastern African countries immediately inter into action especially by sending diplomatic envoys of three different IGAD member state Seyoum Mesfin of Ethiopia, Lazarus Sumbeiywo of Kenya and Mohammed El Dhabhi of Sudan. Having taken clear headed direction, IGAD quickly won a commensurate support from the international community, including notably AU, Troika, UN, EU, and China to narrow a wide gap that exists between the warring parties on a myriad of items and also to ensure that the resultant peace enjoys popular support among a whole host of constituencies in South Sudan (Zachariah, 2014:2). However, the peace building effort of IGAD wasn't brought the lasting peace. Thus, in this paper attempt has made to examine some challenges and prospective of IGAD peace building effort in South Sudan.

The study employed qualitative research methodology. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data were collected through a key informant in depth interview with experts and to substantiate and supplement the primary data the secondary sources collected from Books, Journal articles, papers, magazines and annual congressional reports of IGAD's which are relevant to IGAD's challenges and prospects in South Sudan peace building process.

### **Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD's) peace building effort in South Sudan since 2013**

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is the regional organization of seven Eastern African countries with a stated ambition to achieve peace, prosperity and economic, social and political integration among its member states. The 1996 Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Agreement included among its principles the peaceful settlement of conflicts, the maintenance of regional

peace, stability and security, and the protection of human and people's rights (Ngunia, 2014:63).

The first IGAD peace building effort in South Sudan was held in Addis Ababa on 23 January of 2013 to cease war between the warring parties, but this proved to be an agreement on paper only with no immediate provision for monitoring on the ground.

In an attempt to solve the crisis in South Sudan and achieve aforementioned objectives, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), immediately launched the peace talk by selecting the three envoys such as Seyoum Mesfin of Ethiopia, Lazarus Sumbeiywo of Kenya and Mohammed El Dhabhi of Sudan. As a result, the IGAD-led mediation of first round talks between the warring parties was held in the Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, on Saturday, January 2014. But, the IGAD-led mediation of peace process later declared into IGAD-Plus, which included the Troika countries the USA, UK and Norway, the UN, the AU, the EU and China because of the team was faced various internal and external challenges during the peace process. Nevertheless, the belligerent parties eventually were signed the peace agreement in August 2015, due to the IGAD-Plus pressure (Mulugeta, 2016:15).

The IGAD-Led peace building process in South Sudan also leads to cessation of hostilities agreement which was signed between warring parties who promised to cease the war and hostile propaganda to each other and to form a Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM) under the leadership of IGAD, built capacities of national security and capacity of South Sudanese security organs, agreement on the status of detainees was also signed between parties who committed to release of the political detainees, approval of protection and deterrence force to come to South Sudan, Special coordination with UNMISS (United Nation Mission In South Sudan) peacekeepers battalion on conflicts zones, an all-inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation process which provide lasting solution for the conflict and forced Salva Kiir and Riek Machar to sign a peace agreement on May 9,2014 in Addis Ababa to stop all hostile activities within 24 hours(Yohannes,2015:4).

In a nutshell, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development played a tremendous role in South Sudan peace building process especially by exerting pressure on the warring parties to stop hostile propaganda toward each other, sending the diplomatic envoys who facilitate the peace talk between the warring parties and by narrowing the ideological gap between the SPLM and SPLM-IO through facilitating peaceful dialogue, though it couldn't successful. But, the effort is not successful yet due to different challenges, the following section presents the challenges of IGAD's peace building efforts in South Sudan.

### **Inter-Governmental Authority on Development's (IGAD's) Challenges of peace Building effort in South Sudan**

Despite the prevalence peace building effort, IGAD peaceful building effort is not successful in ensuring sustainable peace and stability in South Sudan peace due to advents of different challenges. Inter alia, the external intervention of IGAD's member state such as Uganda and Sudan in South Sudan for their individual interest was the major challenge that undermined the IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan since January 2013. On the same vein Gatwech Deng Wal explain the problem within IGAD itself as the following on Sudan tribune;

*South Sudan's peace will not have materialized under IGAD's leaders. This is because their neutrality, failure to give a clear and timely commitment to support to bring about peace are in question since the war and negotiations began. They are working behind closed doors in fueling the conflict and making it worse, knowing that the more South Sudan's war prolonged, the more employments they will get from the international communities such as Troika, China, EU and others under the guise of peace negotiation which easily manifested by violation of Cessation of Hostilities (COH) signed on the 21st of December, 2017 by the two factions in Addis Ababa. It was violated by the government within less than 72 hours, and IGAD's leaders neither intervened nor condemned<sup>1</sup>.*

The other challenges of IGAD peace building effort include; lack credibility of member state because IGAD members are directly involved in the conflict and also lack of partiality in mediation processes, IGAD member states, and Secretariat display lack a genuine grasp of South Sudanese sociocultural dynamics, lack of public cooperation, lack of key security infrastructure in the country, and lack of funds and resources (Ngunia, 2014:70).

In addition to above listed challenges, the strategy that IGAD has been employed in the peace building process of South Sudan was encountered by the failure of the delegated individuals of IGAD secretariat and peace ambassadors to implement all-inclusive peace building process approach which invites different political parties, civil society, religious or faith organizations, and community elders to peace building process of South Sudan and absence of regional power among the members of IGAD as to that of Nigeria in

ECOWAS and South Africa of SADC, lack of enough finance, lack of IGAD enforcement capacity, and the limited capacity of the IGAD secretariat to enforce the decision on warring parties are the dominant one (Olu, 2015:7).

Additionally, the existence of weak institution in South Sudan considered as a serious challenge of IGAD peacemaking effort because South Sudan inherited weak state institutions, a corrupt civil service, non-existent or poor economic markets and physical infrastructure, an unstable political climate, financial crisis, violent ethnic divisions, a limited capacity for governance, an uncertain regional and international environment, and a decades' long legacy of insecurity left by the civil war which undermined the implementation of peaceful negotiations and aggravated the tension in the country (Shulika, 2013:15).

Furthermore, history of mistrust and competition among member states; a lack of clarity over the distinction between unwarranted interference and legitimate intervention; political sensitivity over governance; a hard security mind-set among member states; and capacity constraints are the dominants challenges of IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan (Amanda and Berouk, 2016:3).

Therefore, IGAD failed to find the lasting solution and ensure the peace building effort in South Sudan due aforementioned challenges such lack of strong commitment from the IGAD leaders, capacity constraints, advent of mistrust among and between member states, intervention of member state in South Sudan for their individual interest, inappropriate peace building process which didn't invited all stakeholders to participate peace building process and existence of weak institutions in South Sudan. Moreover, historical mistrust between the warring parties in South Sudan is also another challenge of peace making the effort of IGAD. However, there are also prospects of peace building for IGAD to ensure the lasting peace in South Sudan. The following section presents IGAD's prospects of peace building effort in South Sudan.

### **Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD's) prospects of peace building effort in South Sudan**

Even though different challenges parallelized and hindered the IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan, since January 2013 to today still there are some possibilities and prospects through which Inter-Governmental Authority on Development can ensure durable peace and lasting stability of South Sudan as the regional body of Eastern Africa.

Among other things, all-inclusive peace building approach which invites all actors not merely the warring

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64594>  
accessed by 25/3/2018

parties including region leaders, civil society, and other stakeholders to facilitate peace building process of South Sudan can bring lasting peace in the country. Additionally, the advents of different agreements and the cessation of hostilities conducted between warring parties and other stakeholders such as the Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ACRSS) which was signed in August 2015 to involve other actors besides the two warring parties such as other political parties, civil society, women, faith based leaders and eminent personalities which play a significant role in reforming and establishing the existing and new institution and demising the violent conflict and human fatalities, high level revitalization forum agreement on cessation of hostilities, protraction of civilians and humanitarian access of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and materializing these treaties can ensure lasting peace in the newly born world nation state (Mulugeta, 2015:4).

Additionally, The SPLM Reunification Agreement in Arusha, January 2015 is also another opportunity for IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan. This agreement addresses the political, organizational, and political issues that led to political dispute between SPLM/A that became a national crisis and the agreement also enforce parties to commit themselves to reunify the SPLM/A and to develop a comprehensive program for national unity, peace, reconciliation, healing and promotion of harmony among the people of South Sudan(Koul 2016:11).

Moreover, the advent of pressure from international community especially from great powers such as USA and TROIKA is the other prospects of peace building process in South Sudan because great powers imposing sanction on the warring parties and renewed and deepened commitment from international community and extreme eagerness of the South Sudan people and their deepen commitment for peace and stability of the country also serve as the other IGAD's prospects for ensuring lasting peace in South Sudan (Patrick P., 2017).

Therefore, despite the prevalence of numerous challenges which hindered the IGAD's peace building effort in South Sudan, the aforementioned opportunities are there which can serve as the prospects for IGAD to realize its primary dream which was creating war free South Sudan.

## CONCLUSION

South Sudan is world new state which gates independence on July 9, 2011, as the result of Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 which took place in Nairobi, Kenya between Sudan and SPLM/A with the assistance of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. But, this new state relapse

to the new episode of violent conflict on December 2013 as the result of a clash between the guards loyal to Kiir and Dr. Machar at the beginning and expanded to all parts countries like ignited fire with in the short period of time. The East African regional organization (IGAD) responds to this eruption via sending a diplomatic delegation to Juba after a moment of time to halt the condition and ensure durable peace but, the assignment was failed to succeed.

This study founded that, there IGAD's peace building effort in south Sudan was hindered different challenges like luck of enough fund, inappropriate intervention of IGAD's member state to South Sudan for their individual interest and in appropriate peace building approach used by IGAD delegator which didn't invite local elders, different opposition political parties, religious organization as part of peace building agents by simply over focusing on the different between SPLM and SPLM-IO party. The finding of the study revealed that that, the presence of different religious/faith organization, opposition political parties, community elders and civil society as the peace building facilitator are considered as the prospects for IGAD's peace building process and advent different agreements and accords between warring parties is also the prospects of IGAD peace building effort in South Sudan.

Therefore, the finding of this study suggests that there should be policy formulation by IGAD head of state and government to abstain external intervention of individual nation state in South Sudan, for their individual benefit. Additionally, the finding of the study recall IGAD to formulate financial policy for fund that required to facilitate the south Sudan peace building process and finally, the finding of the study also calls for IGAD delegator in South Sudan peace building process to implement the all-inclusive approach peace building process which invites all stakeholders including faith organization, civil society, all opposition political parties and community elders to the room of peace building process and which can really dry the root of crisis.

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