

The Republic of South Sudan

The National Legislative Assembly

South Sudan

Juba

09 May, 2022

Regional African Parliamentary Workshop to Promote Biological Security

Report of South Sudan

Your Excellences,
Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Speaker of the Parliament of South Sudan, Rt Hon. Gemma Nunu Kumba, our Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. James Mayiik Ayii , my colleague Dr. Stans Jada, Chairperson of the Committee for Peace and Reconciliation, Ambassador Joshua Franco Paul, Director General for Public Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the citizens we represent, and on my own behalf, I want to thank the PGA, especially the Senior Director for International Peace and Security Program, Mr Peter Barcroft, for inviting my colleagues and myself to this important and great Workshop on the Promotion of Biological Security in the Region.

This is always a great opportunity for the Regional MPs to update each other on the Status of Weapons of Mass Destruction in their countries and to learn from experiences in their own countries. I want to appreciate the PGA , especially the Senior Director General, who never gave up on South Sudan, despite all the stumbling blocks, and was always encouraging, giving advice and guidance and optimistic that things would change.

Honourable Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is worth mentioning here that South Sudan is a landlocked Country bordered by six countries which act as Corridors for all the activities of South Sudan such as external movements of people and the import and export of goods. Of these countries, only two have no internal conflicts thus putting South Sudan in a very vulnerable position. The situation is further exacerbated by our own internal conflict rendering our borders porous, thus leading to a very high number of unregistered Aliens entering into the country. Some of these people entering to South Sudan could be non-state actors who would not hesitate to use such lethal weapons, should they get access to them. It is therefore very important for our country to ratify the conventions to avoid such threats. The delay has been caused by unforeseen circumstances for which South Sudan was unprepared. As a matter of fact, South Sudan, although currently preoccupied with implementation of the Peace Agreement signed in August, 2018 has now started the process of ratifying the so many conventions which are overdue.

- The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention was approved and passed by the Council of Ministers on the 7th of June 2019, and the Minister of Justice was directed to table the Convention in Parliament for its Ratification. However, this became difficult because, after signing the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan in 2018, the different stakeholders to the Peace Agreement needed to be incorporated into the Government of National Unity and this led to a major Reshuffle of the Executive and the Reconstitution of the National Parliament. Things were stalled as Parliament was in Recess for a very long time. The Covid 19 pandemic was also another challenge which had interrupted a lot of activities, not only in South Sudan but worldwide, and with so many lock-downs, movements became very restricted both internally and externally.
- The Parliament is now running smoothly and has been dealing with bills pertaining to the Agreement and the National Budget. In our recent meeting with the Minister of Justice and his legal adviser, they informed us that they have now started preparation of the documents for the Biological Weapons Convention to be tabled in Parliament.
- The Chemical Weapons Convention and the 1997 Oslo Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and the Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on

their Destruction was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2017. This should have been tabled in Parliament then but due to frequent changes of Speakers, the convention and many other bills were delayed and could not be passed by the parliament. The Convention has now been picked up and our Speaker is very serious about its Ratification.

- South Sudan has not ratified the Treaty on Prohibition of Radiological and Nuclear weapons but has promoted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) by voting in favour of an annual UN General Resolution in 2021 that calls for all states to sign, ratify and accede to the Treaty at its earliest possible date. The recent invitation of our Speaker by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization is proof that South Sudan is aware about the Treaty and its importance.

Honourable Members,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know women and children are always the victims of any conflict worldwide. The South Sudanese women Parliamentary Caucus, of which I am a member, are seized with the matter and have already started to lobby very hard to ensure that the Conventions are ratified. It is probably worth mentioning here that, our male parliamentary colleagues are very supportive of our efforts.

In conclusion,

After our recent interaction with the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Rt, Hon, Speaker, we are very optimistic that the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions will soon be ratified by the Parliament.

Thank you for your attention

Hon. Dr. Jervase Yak

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