

**STATEMENT OF H.E. SALVA KIIR MAYARDIT, PRESIDENT OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN AT THE INDIA-AFRICA FORUM  
SUMMIT III,**

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**29<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015, NEW DELHI, INDIA.**

H.E. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Excellencies,

Heads of State and Government,

Heads of Delegation, Ladies and Gentlemen

I greet you all, in the name of the people of South Sudan. My delegation and I are truly happy and privileged to participate in this India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) in New Delhi. This Forum is a very useful platform for charting a roadmap for comprehensive cooperation agenda between Africa and India.

The global nature of today's world has made it imperative that countries reach out to one another in order to maximize mutual benefits. Africa has huge potential in nearly every imaginable field of resources for exploitation for the good of Africa and India. India is equally endowed with similar resources, further enhanced by considerable degree of industrialization. Against this background, Africa-India partnership promises cooperative agenda that will bring huge benefits to all parties.

South Sudan, the world's newest country, fully supports this partnership because its people appreciate the benefits that will accrue from it if it is faithfully adhered to and the adopted projects are effectively implemented.

At the bilateral level, India is a major investor in the oil industry in South Sudan. Also India has been offering invaluable assistance in the area of capacity building and human resource development.

The newness of South Sudan lies not in its age as an independent country but rather in the fact that it stands at the very first ladder of development. South Sudan has a large territory with untapped natural resources both below and above ground. Over 90% of its land is arable, just waiting for mechanized farming which would turn it into one of the world food basket.

**Mr. Prime Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Economic cooperation should be the core area of our partnership. It will open doors to other endeavors and will enhance achievements in other areas of advancement and modernization. We acknowledge that India through its private and state-owned companies has steadily increased investment in African countries. Whereas it is conceded that Indian investment in various sectors around Africa is beneficial to Africa, emphasis needs to be put on the provision of credit for small and medium size enterprises. This approach fits well into the scheme of the commitment to combat poverty and aims to eliminate it by 2030, as envisioned by the UN in its Sustainable Development.

This is because in countries like South Sudan where the level of development is still very low, it is the small and medium-size enterprises that collectively involve the largest number of citizens in the lower economic segments of society. India would, therefore, do very well if it were to accord this programme greater priority under its partnership with Africa.

In South Sudan, we aspire to gender equality and women empowerment. It is enshrined in our national constitution that also stipulates that women will be accorded at least 25% of leadership positions at all levels of government in the country. In the African context, the disadvantaged status of women and their marginalization is an inexplicable paradox. Africa's population remains overwhelmingly rural, and women constitute the backbone of our rural economies.

There is therefore a strong imperative for gender equality nowadays not just because of the growing international campaign to achieve that, but because of the realization by most men that it is also in their best interest to empower women.

**Mr. Prime Minister, Excellencies Heads of State and Government, Heads of Delegation, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It is necessary to use our partnership and economic cooperation with India to engage those countries which, together with their respective financial and political institutions, set the agenda of the International political and economic order and persuade them to consistently adhere to the principles of fairness and equity. Our solidarity can go a long way in positively influencing the world political and economic order. This solidarity should start with joint activities to enhance good governance and economic advancement.

**Mr. Prime Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

There is no doubt that with some determination and unity of purpose our partnership with India can bring about a lot of benefits directly to our countries and indirectly to the rest of the world. I urge this Summit of the Africa-India Forum to translate into action this year's theme and firmly commit us to achieving real dynamic and transformative development.

I take this opportunity once again to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government and people of India for hosting this summit and for their generous hospitality and efficient arrangements that have obviously contributed to its success.

May God bless you all.