



STATEMENT DELIVERED BY

EUGENE OWUSU

**DEPUTY SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY
GENERAL**

UN RESIDENT AND HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR AND

UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

AT THE

LAUNCH OF THE INTERIM COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

OCTOBER 6 2016 JUBA GRAND HALL,

JUBA SOUTH SUDAN

**Excellency the Deputy Minister of Finance and
Economic Planning, Ms Mary Jervase Yak**

Excellencies, Members of Cabinet

**The Special Representative of the UN Secretary
General, Ellen Margrethe Loej, also Head of the UN
System in South Sudan**

Excellencies Ambassadors

**Colleagues, Heads of United Nations Agencies, Funds
and Programmes**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

I warmly welcome you to this afternoon's event, and wish to thank Excellency the Deputy Minister for Finance and Economic Planning for graciously accepting our invitation to officially launch the Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF), which is a partnership between the Government of South Sudan and the twenty United Nations agencies, funds and programmes represented in South Sudan.

We are glad to have all of you here, as today's event represents a defining moment in the UN's collective efforts to support durable peace, recovery and resilience building in South Sudan.

Violence, displacements, poverty, hunger, multiple deprivations and death; These are certainly not what Dr. Garang fought for; and clearly not what the martyrs of this country died for. These are tragic outcomes that none of us can be proud of, and which the people of South Sudan do not deserve.

I stand here with a simple message. As the UN Country Team in South Sudan, whilst we are frustrated and saddened by the turn of events, we steadfastly believe in the future of this country. This conflict has brought unconscionable suffering to the people of South Sudan and a devastating impact on society as a whole. This conflict has been development in reverse.

In fact, with recent developments, it is not hard to be pessimistic. But we in the United Nations Country Team believe South Sudan is strong enough, resilient enough and resourceful enough to ultimately overcome the current challenges that the country faces. We have a shared aspiration with the people of South Sudan about a society at peace with itself, a nation energised by the task of building stronger foundations for its future generations.

South Sudan must succeed. It is within our grasp to achieve this success. **But first we must have Peace.** We must have durable peace. The government and all the fighting forces have the responsibility to ensure that the guns are completely silenced.

We need to break the cycle of violence to be able to put the country on the path of sustainable development, and provide an opportunity for all South Sudanese to live a life of dignity and prosperity.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests

The ICF that we are launching this afternoon is designed to help-kick start the recovery process in South Sudan and to begin laying the foundations for long-term sustainable development. This will not be easy, but we are firmly committed to this, and we are ready to step up and do our utmost.

Over the next two years, to implement the ICF, we aim to mobilise almost \$900 million dollars to support building resilience in communities, delivering social services for the most vulnerable, reinvigorating local economies and supporting institution-building and capacity development.

The ICF we are launching today is a response to a complex challenge against the backdrop of a fast changing context. Our agenda for the next two years is to help transform South Sudan to enable it transition from a cycle of conflict towards recovery, stabilisation and a clear path of nation building. This transformative agenda is anchored on five distinct but integrated pillars.

First: we will invest in strengthening the resilience of local communities, to make them better able to resist shocks and to bounce back better when shocks do occur. The setbacks caused by the conflict and the recent crisis demand that we focus on the most urgent priorities to address the huge recovery needs, where the opportunities exist. This includes communities that have been displaced as well as those affected by the difficult economic conditions whether they live in Aweil, Akobo or Yambio.

Second: We will support improvements in the access and provision of social services, including education, health, water and sanitation, especially amongst the most vulnerable. As South Sudan emerges from conflict, we must ensure that no one is left behind, including the displaced and those particularly hard hit by the conflict.

Third: We will support the process of national reconciliation, transitional justice and healing, as well as strengthen the infrastructure for peace. We will work with all relevant stakeholders to facilitate community co-existence, social cohesion and national integration. We will also support efforts at making government and civil service responsive and in ensuring that South Sudanese have a say on issues that affect them.

Fourth: we will invest in laying the foundations for local economic recovery, employment and livelihoods creation, so as to reinvigorate local economies. An economy in which citizens fully participate calls for us to strengthen livelihoods and facilitate the creation of jobs.

Fifth: We will invest in strengthening the status of women and youth in South Sudan. The devastating human impact of this conflict has been felt largely by women, the youth and children. We will ensure that women and youth are brought into the development mainstream through dedicated activities that support them.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests

Let me be clear. We are not prescribing a magic pill to solve all the challenges of South Sudan. We do acknowledge the voices that may say that, given the context today, the ICF is rather ambitious.

The truth is, we are witnessing an unprecedented challenge. Why shouldn't the United Nations Country Team be bold when there are people who cannot afford a meal a day? Why shouldn't this programme of the United Nations Country Team be bold when children cannot attend school and women are raped?

Really, can we as the United Nations be timid, pessimistic and indifferent to the pain of the families in distress, including those in the Rhino camp refugee settlement in Northern Uganda; those who struggle to get a single meal a day; those whose businesses are struggling after the tragic events of July 2016 and the current difficult economic conditions.

This is not what the UN Country Team should stand for, and certainly this is not the UN Country Team that we should be in South Sudan. The monumental challenges we face in South Sudan demand bold, robust and aggressive actions.

The ICF is our call for action and our commitment to a robust partnership for peace, recovery and resilience building. But the ICF is not a blank cheque for handouts or extra-budgetary support. Rather it is a package of results we want and must collectively hold ourselves accountable to.

To succeed, we need more than sensible talk and sound rhetoric. We need action on all fronts. The ICF is our promise to the people of South Sudan that if we all do our part, live up to our obligations and certain fundamental conditions are met - notably peace, selfless leadership at all levels, and prudent management of the nation's resources – that their lives will be better.

Crucially, I see success of the UN's collective actions in the framework of the ICF conditioned by four key factors:

First: we can do all these if and only if there is PEACE.

There can be no development without peace and no peace without development. We certainly cannot embark

on the process of recovery and resilience building without
PEACE!

Second: To deliver on the promise of the ICF, the UN will need to do business NOT as usual. We cannot deliver maximally if we isolate ourselves in silos. Central to our business model must be 'Working together as One UN', to deliver results together.

We need to shift towards more joint actions, more joint programmes and more cost effective approaches to ensure value for money in the areas where we have the biggest comparative advantages. We should ensure that we are nimble and responsive to the context and to the felt needs of the country and its people.

Third: strong progress on political and economic reform is an absolute necessity to achieve maximum results. Investing in quality healthcare will be meaningless if people can't access hospitals; if people can't have a decent meal and if corrupt officials sell medicines. If we invest in creating jobs we will provide alternative livelihoods, and limit the incentives to fight.

But we can't create decent jobs if there is no justice, no rule of law, if corruption is rampant, if there are no freedoms. In this regard, we count on government's leadership and will to implement the reform package

enshrined in the peace agreement. We stand ready to support government in this regard.

Fourth: No amount of resources will solve all the problems. As partners, we stand ready to leverage our partnership to help South Sudan tap into bilateral, regional and global opportunities.

However, we must appreciate the difficult funding environment and the fact that, it is our simple actions, sacrifice and resolve that will make the ultimate difference.

We are competing with other priorities. If we want to be prioritised, we must not only highlight our plight, we must also demonstrate our commitment through transformative actions.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests

As I conclude, let me stress that this gathering is a testament that indeed the peace process in South Sudan is much more than the Transitional Government of National Unity and transitional security arrangements.

As we continue to work hard to secure some major milestones within the peace agreement, we must constantly be reminded of the dangers posed by poverty and deprivation. The ICF is a shout-out that the security of the state of South Sudan and the survival of the nation

depends on strong investment in human security; investment in rebuilding the lives and livelihood of its people.

It is hard not to be doubtful and frustrated considering what has happened since independence. But I truly believe the future of this country can be bright. We must accept and deal with occasional disappointments, but we must never lose infinite hope.

December 2013 and July 2016 are not what should define this country. What should define this country are the dreams, the hopes and aspirations that South Sudanese have for themselves and their beloved nation. Whilst our brothers and sisters in South Sudan endure their pain,

they should never let the pain define who they are as a people.

As South Sudan dreams of a different future - a better future - I want to assure you that we are in this together. We in the United Nations shall continue to work to enable you define and realize your dream for a better future.

If indeed peace, recovery and sustainable development is what you desire, you will find in the United Nations a committed and enduring partner.

I thank you

