

South Sudan's Fourth Anniversary (July 9)

Remarks to South Sudanese-Canadian community of Ottawa-Gatineau

Hon. David Kilgour

Vincent Massey Park

Ottawa

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Dear graduates of high schools, colleges and universities,

Permit me to congratulate you, your parents and other family members and friends who have encouraged you to achieve your academic success.

Please pursue your studies as far as you possibly can. Only yesterday, I spoke to a young person of family origin in Africa, who just finished her master's degree in engineering in Berlin and anticipates a bright future. You can all do similar advanced education as well. May your academic journeys go well!

Anniversary Realities

A few words now about the fourth anniversary of South Sudan and its neighbours:

Khartoum

Hamid E. Ali and Ahmed Hussain Adam yesterday posted a piece on Sudan's President Omar al Bashir. I quote them:

(His) autocracy is unwinding faster than any observer can predict. The recent diplomatic fiasco over the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants in South Africa clearly demonstrate his government's lack of vision...

There (is) a consensus that the presidential and parliamentary elections held on 13–16 April 2015 in Sudan were rigged. The majority of the Sudanese people...boycotted them.... (there were) serious human rights abuses. Many believe that the turnout was less than 16 percent rather than

46.4 percent as alleged by the government. The EU and other governments issued statements denouncing the results, insisting that they did not reflect the free and democratic will of the Sudanese people.

Darfur

I quote Ali and Adam again:

Peacekeepers ... have been urged by UNAMID to be more aggressive in protecting people caught up in the fighting...(they) are now going out on 130 patrols a day ...to camps and remote areas and are not requesting permission of the (Sudanese) government to do their duty. Canada should be more active in the peace process... because unrest (in Darfur) will create more security issues in the South”.

Nuba Mountains

The ongoing Bashir atrocities in the Nuba Mountains are described by the New York Times in a recent video, entitled “The worst atrocity you never heard of”:

<http://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/video/the-new-york-times-the-worst-atrocity-you%E2%80%99ve-never-heard-of/vi-AAcVrik>

South Sudan

As you all know, very difficult issues persist in South Sudan-most notably the need for peace from civil war. The country also needs:

- **Good Governance:** Nothing of the Khartoum model should be transferred to Juba. South Sudan should create an African model of democracy rather than seeking to import practices from elsewhere.
Leaders in Juba must learn that a good leader is first experienced as a servant to others and to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served.
- **Creation of a multi-national state** that subscribes to the principles of equality, respect, freedom, separation of religion from state, peace, and reconciliation initiatives. Failure to do so will cause 63 plus tribal groups to rebel.
- **Use of the Diaspora in the development of South Sudan:** Canada’s former ambassador to Sudan, John Schram, has noted that Canada and its estimated 40,000 Sudanese-Canadians are willing to help with infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals.

- Equality of women with men. The late John Garang once said that women are the “poorest of the poor and the marginalized of the marginalized.” Mrs Garang recently expressed her concerns on the BBC world service.
- Equal representation from all groups: Fighting against tribalism, corruption, nepotism, and ethnic favouritism will aid unity.
- Creation of a peaceful relationship with (Khartoum).

Conclusion

I would urge the need for cooperation and interaction with the international community based on the principles of representative democracy, equality and the rule of law.

Canada and other nations should be positioning themselves to assist South Sudan as requested. Canadian taxpayers have sent about \$800-million to the region since 2006; Canada needs to keep Sudan as one of its foreign policy priorities.

President Salva Kiir and others in Juba celebrated the fourth anniversary of independence. It is tragic that the world’s youngest country has been torn apart by a civil war and an economic crisis, with hundreds of thousands displaced and thousands dead. Let us hope that the 5th anniversary in 2016 will commemorate a better year for South Sudan and its peoples.

The country’s potential is enormous. You young people are the hope for both Canada and South Sudan.

Thank you.