The Manifesto

of the

Sudan People's Liberation Movement

The SPLM Manifesto

May 2008

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Preface:

The first SPLM Manifesto was published in July 1983 following the formation of the SPLM/A to lead a revolutionary armed struggle, which started by necessity in the South. It aimed at engulfing the whole country to establish a "united, democratic and secular Sudan". A lot of waters have gone under the bridge since then in the course of the struggle towards the realization of this lofty objective The Movement has, thus, encountered a number of challenges, emanating from changes in the national, regional and international situation, as well as internal contradictions in the course of the struggle since its inception in 1983. It is the Vision of the New Sudan that has informed the Movement's political and military developments in the country, and to rearticulate the principles, redefine objectives and chart the development trajectory of the SPLM/A and the Sudanese revolution, in response to the changing political realities both internally and externally.

The New Sudan Vision is not by any means a dogma, nor is it a doctrine or ideology! While the vision of the New Sudan has guided and informed the liberation struggle, the vision itself has become more sharpened and enriched by the unfolding developments and events in the process. It has guided the struggle of the Movement since its inception in 1983 against all forms of governments in Khartoum and informed its alliance with the rest of the political forces in the country, as well as its foreign relations. The correctness of the vision has since been vindicated by the unfolding developments in the country, notably; the outbreak of war in Eastern Sudan and intensification of war in Darfur, and frictions in the far north. On the other hand, as the Old Sudan undergoes fundamental change in its transition into the New Sudan, the SPLM itself is bound to evolve and undergo fundamental change as well. So, while its basic content has remained the same, the Movement has undergone a process of metamorphosis over the years.

It is within the intricate set of complexities of the transition from war to peace (following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005), and from authoritarianism to democratic polity, including the challenges of transforming the SPLM into a fully-fledged political party, that this present Manifesto of the SPLM, which is different from the first versions in many ways, but echoes the same basic ideas, has been prepared for, and approved by the Second SPLM National Convention in May 2008.

This version of the Manifesto, therefore, espouses and presents the main SPLM ideals, concepts, principles and core values that would guide and inform the development of the Movement's programs, strategies, policies, and tactics in the various spheres. In a nutshell, the SPLM Manifesto is essentially a synthesis of the Movement's New Sudan Vision.

I. The Problem of the Sudan in its Historical Context

I.1   Definition of the Problem

I.1.1   The central problem of the Sudan is that its reality, both in terms of its historical perspective and its contemporary context, conflicts fundamentally with the policies of the various governments that have come and gone in Khartoum since independence in 1956. These policies have been pursued with impunity and almost complete disregard of the country's rich diversity.

I.1.2   Indeed, the history of human settlements in the Sudan is old. Thus, no book of significance from antiquity has neglected to mention us, and the richness of our civilizations. Historical studies provide evidence for the existence of significant early Stone Age groups in the Nile Valley. Such evidence indicates that human beings lived in the Sudan as far back as 250.000 B.C. and that their cultures flourished around 50,000 B.C. The civilizations of Kush, the early Christian Nubian Kingdoms, and medieval Kingdoms have appeared and disappeared on the soil of our great land, the **SUDAN.** Further up the corridors of history, the expansion of Islam and the movement of the peoples of the Arabian peninsular into the northern part of Africa and the Sudan led to the establishment of various Islamic kingdoms such as the powerful Funj Sultanate, which sprung up around 1500.The rise of the Sultanate brought about the demise of the last Christian kingdoms of Nubia. There were also the strong Sultanates and Kingdoms of Darfur that emerged at different times and which were not incorporated into the modern Sudan until 1916. As for the Turko-Egyptian rule in Sudan, this lasted from 1820 to 1885, and was supplanted by the Mahdist state (1885-1898), which was in turn unseated by the Anglo-Egyptian condominium (1898-1956).This came to an end when the present 'independent' Sudanese state came into being in 1956.

I.1.3   The history of Sudan did not begin with the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism (epitomized by the National Islamic Front's assumption of power in 1989), as some propagandists would like us to believe. As narrated above, various peoples have moved and lived in the present geographical Sudan at various times, and Kingdoms and civilizations in various forms have risen and fallen on in our country. This historical motion characterizes the present Sudan and contributes to its culture and identity. This diverse historical character of the Sudan is the essence of Sudan's "***historical diversity***".

I.1.4   The Sudan is, thus, an unfinished product of a long and complex historical process. Our country has undergone a continuous process of metamorphosis and mutation throughout history - changing identity, from time to time in accordance with the inter-play and the dynamics of power among the socio-political and socio-historical forces at play in any given period. Thus, the Sudan

has evolved into an ethnically, culturally, religiously, linguistically, as well as socially, politically, economically and geographically, diverse mixture. This is so evident that, in fact, many observers have been inclined to see it as a "microcosm" of Africa, typifying many of the central characteristics of Africa as a whole. The Sudan has been and is still an ethnically and culturally diverse society. The country has over 500 different ethnic groups, speaking 130 distinct languages. According to the 1956 census, those whose mother tongue is not Arabic, but one of the African languages of the country, constituted 69% of the population, while Sudanese who spoke Arabic as a mother tongue were 31%. Religion is the other component of Sudan's contemporary diversity, as the Sudanese consist of Moslems (about 65% of the total population) and Christians and those who believe in their ancestral African religions, both of which constitute the remaining 35% of the population. This essentially marks Sudan's "*contemporary diversity"*.

I.1.5   Hence, the Sudanese reality consists of these two diversities, the historical and contemporary. Yet this reality has been ignored, swept aside, by all the governments that have come and gone in Khartoum since independence in 1956. These governments have failed to *evolve a Sudanese identity, a Sudanese commonality, a Sudanese commonwealth, thatembraces all Sudanese, and to which all Sudanese pledge undivided loyalty irrespective of their religion, race, or tribe*. Instead, all the governments of post-colonial Sudan have emphasized only two parameters of our reality -- Arabism and Islam – and attempted, and continued to attempt to impose an identity, based on these two elements, on all Sudanese, only to be confronted with rebellions and wars. Thus, the 'Old Sudan' has been characterized by racism and religious bigotry as the main parameters governing national politics, economic opportunities and social interaction. It is this system of injustices that led to two bitter wars between the south and the center. It is this system of injustice that led to devastating civil wars between this same marginalizing center and the west and east. .

I.1.6   The central problem of the Sudan, therefore, is that the post 1956 Sudanese state is essentially an artificial state, based on a political system and an institutional framework of ethnic and religious chauvinism, and "after 1989" on Islamic Fundamentalism. It is a state that excludes the vast majority of its citizens. The African Sudanese have been excluded from the center of power and wealth since 1956, and after 1989 (following the coup of the National Islamic Front) the system further excluded non-fundamentalist Muslims, while women have always been excluded at all times. The Islamic Fundamentalist regime is the culmination of the policies of the Khartoum-based governments that have come and gone since independence. Thus, in 1989 the Old Sudan split into two, the 'Islamic Fundamentalist-Sudan' and the original 'Old Sudan'. The Islamic Fundamentalist Sudan is essentially a fascist mutation of the Old Sudan. It is the ugliest face of the Old Sudan. Both the Old Sudan and Islamic Fundamentalist -Sudan rest on an institutionalized system of injustices based on racial and religious chauvinism, a fact that has led

some commentators to observe that the Sudanese situation is characterized by a system of 'Double Apartheid', racial and religious.

I.2 The Ills of the Old Sudan

The two basic problems of the 'Old Sudan', are;

a) The failure of the successive ruling regimes in Khartoum to evolve a viable national governance framework and a correct democratic process of nation-building based on Sudan's multiple diversities, and

b) The failure of these regimes to work out a sound economic program to solve the problems of economic underdevelopment and inequitable development.

The ills of this overall governance crisis of the "old Sudan" are manifested in:

I.2.1   One major problem of the Old Sudan is that it has been looking and is still looking for its soul and spirit, and for its true identity. We are an Arab country and we are an African country. Are we Arabs or Africans? Are we African-Arab? What are we? Are we a hybrid? On the external front, this distorted self-image has translated in foreign policy relations that have always, though in varying degrees, isolated the country from its prospective regional friends and from the world at large.

I.2.2   The unviable unity of the old Sudan - which is rooted in the economic, political and cultural hegemony of particular groupings that exclude other groups basic to the formation of the Sudanese society and deny them the chance for effective participation in political power, and the expression of their "national" and cultural identities, and receiving an equitable share in national wealth - cannot possibly survive in the context of an uneven development paradigm. The Old Sudan restricted unity of the country to selective parameters and elements (Arabism and Islam) from the totality of the components that make up Sudan's historical and contemporary diversity, and neglected and overlooked other key ingredients. **First**, unity, premised on these partial components and with all the attendant political, economic and social implications, will always be fragile and unsustainable. **Second**, insistence and persistence on identifying one religion with the state, and thereby establishing a theocratic state has led, and will only lead, to serious rifts in the fabric of the Sudanese society and the eventual disintegration of the country. For not only are all Sudanese not Muslims, but even among Muslims themselves there is no consensus on the Sharia laws.

I.2.3   Concentration and centralization of power: a) power has been a monopoly of a few in Khartoum, irrespective of the guise they assume (leaders of political parties, members of family

dynasties, Imams of religious sects or army officers). Representation of southerners and other marginalized groups in the central governments has always been symbolic and without their participation in the government formation process. They were invited to join "national" governments as hangers-on and not equal stakeholders, and b) power has been centralized in Khartoum without meaningful devolution to the regions, even when a "federal" system was adopted.

I.2.4   A "vicious circle" of change in government, whereby authoritarian military regimes and "intervals" of pluralistic parliamentary systems follow on the heels of each other, with the military seizing power for 80% of the time since independence, entrenched itself. Democracy, as practiced in the Old Sudan, was a sham procedural democracy that was a camouflage for the perpetuation of vested interests. In that sham democracy civil rights were subject to the whims of rulers. The majority of Sudan's regions remained peripheral to the central power and were treated as expendable appendages only to be manipulated through political trickery and double-dealing. This political instability is mainly due to the undemocratic nature of the ruling parties and the failure of the parliamentary system in striking the correct balance between political democracy and the economic and cultural democracy.

I.2.5   Women have remained the "marginalized of the marginalized" whose suffering defies description, and whose political rights of equality with men are largely unrecognized. Women in the Old Sudan are subjected to triple oppression based on ethnicity, socio-economic status and their gender. Patriarchal oppression is embedded in the economic, social, religious, cultural, family and other relations in all Sudanese communities.

I.2.6   Misguided foreign policy was, to a large measure, informed by the ideological predilections of ruling or politically active groups (Arab nationalists, communists and, of late, Islamists). As a result, national interest was identified with a Sudan writ–small: an exclusively Arabic, Islamic or politically aligned state. The national interest of the Sudan writ – large was, thus, subsumed in broader external agendas without due regard to genuine national interest.

I.2.7   Uneven and unequal development hast resulted in the irrational use of the country's vast resources and various forms of marginalization (both on ethnic and class bases), including the marginalization of women, impoverishment, deprivation and unequal distribution of wealth and the fruits of growth to regions and peoples of Sudan. This in addition to a skewed pattern of access to and distribution of the basic social services to the disadvantage of the poor and marginalized, both in rural areas and the major urban centers.

I.2.8   Serious environmental implications have resulted from the pursuit of this development paradigm and have rendered that development unsustainable. The wanton use of natural

resources poses a serious threat to the natural environment, especially in rural areas, in a manner that may lead to the total collapse of the rural economy. Besides, the degeneration of the environment is behind conflicts on marginal grazing lands all over Sudan, and especially in the Southern and Western parts of the country. And as if the untold suffering and human losses were not enough, war also had its toll on the environment: destruction of wildlife, protected areas and endangered species. Petroleum exploration, despite the economic benefits it generated, also came with its own environmental problems: pollution of land and water, removal of forests, oil spills on fragile lands. So did the haphazard urbanization in the main cities, particularly, the national Capital leading to an overload on existing amenities and unresolved problems of waste management.

II.   The Rise and Evolution of the SPLM

II.1   The SPLM Origins

II.1.1   The formation of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army *(SPLM/A)* is a continuation of the past struggles of the Sudanese people, before, during and after colonialism. The rise of the SPLM/A in 1983 was a translation and a continuation of the longstanding political discontent into an armed conflict. The resort of the SPLM/A to armed struggle was informed by the earlier armed struggles against repression, and represented a continuation of them after they had been temporarily halted by colonialism and later by the Addis Ababa Agreement, which stopped the civil war in southern Sudan for a short while (1972-1983).

II.1.2   Resistance has been the natural reaction of the oppressed and marginalized peoples of the Sudan against the various Khartoum-based governments. The resistance took different forms according to the prevailing circumstances. In the cities and urban centers it took the form of popular uprisings (1964 and 1985), while in the marginalized areas, especially of Southern Sudan, Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile, the resistance took the form of popular and patriotic armed struggle (1955-1973 and 1983-2005). The birth and formation of the SPLM/A in 1983 was, therefore, not an isolated incident, but rather a culmination and continuation of these struggles of the Sudanese people.

II.1.3   However, in reaction to Nimeiri's machinations and consistent attempts at unilaterally dismantling the Addis Ababa Accord, the Akobo mutiny (1975) inevitably followed. Elements of this mutiny combined with some of the dismissed ex-Anya-nya I soldiers and officers to form what became known as Anya-nya 11 in Upper Nile. Later on, and mainly in 1982, armed resistance, under the same name but with a different command sprang up in Bahr el Ghazal. Furthermore, prominent Anya-nya officers, who were absorbed in the Sudanese army, continued to organize within that army in order to transform the situation, by either attacking and capturing Juba or withdrawing to the bushes to wage a protracted armed struggle. But Khartoum seized the initiative and attacked Bor and Pibor garrison on 16/5/1983. Later the Ayod garrison attacked Khartoum forces that were sent to arrest its ex-Anya-nya commander. This was the spark that lit the tinderbox.

II.1.4   Simultaneously, with the military moves, prominent Southern politicians and students organized several underground organizations to mobilize the masses against the dismantling of the agreement. These opposition bodies included the National Action Movement (NAM), Movement for Total Liberation of Southern Sudan (MTLSS), Juwama African People's

Organization (JAPO); Council for the Unity of Southern Sudan (CUSS) and South Sudan Liberation Front (SSLF), which actually started a guerrilla war in 1982 and came into the limelight in July 1983 when it seized a number of foreigners in Boma post.

II.1.5   By early 1983 the necessary conditions had combined for a revolutionary situation. The battles of Bor (commanded by Major Kerubino Kwanyin Bol), Pibor (commanded by Captain Riek Macuoc) and Ayod (commanded by Major William Nyoun Bany) caused desertions in other units of Southern command and Northern Sudan. This drove students and other civilians *en masse* to join the armed struggle, which resulted in the exodus of refugees into neighboring countries, especially Ethiopia.

II.1.6   Elements of the political and military organizations and officers referred to earlier united and founded the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the SudanPeople's Liberation movement (SPLM). Although the SPLM emerged to continue the armed struggle waged by earlier movements, it saw the resolution of Sudan's crisis differently from the way they did. SPLM believes that Sudan's salvation lies in the solution of both the "national groups" and religious questions within the context of a united, democratic and secular Sudan. Thus, although the SPLM started by necessity in the South, it essentially aims at spreading its message all over the Sudan, thus transform the whole country.

II.2   The SPLM: Departure from the Thinking Paradigm of "Old Sudan"

II.2.1   It dawned on the SPLM leadership that marginalization in all its forms, discrimination, injustice and subordination, constitute the root causes of the conflict that cannot be addressed in a piecemeal fashion through dishing out handouts and concessions to the disgruntled and rebellious groups whenever a conflict erupted in a particular region. Sudanese have problems everywhere in the west, in the east, in the center, and even in the far north. The later outbreak of the armed conflicts and wars in eastern and western Sudan has vindicated the correctness and farsightedness of this analysis and vision. Defining the problem as the "southern problem" is in itself an attempt at marginalizing southerners. It is not the "problem of the South", as conventionally advocated by the successive ruling regimes in Khartoum, but rather the "problem of the Sudan", particularized in the South. In contradistinction from the previous secessionist movements, the SPLM advocated the liberation of the whole Sudan and not only south Sudan.

II.2.2   This shift of paradigm also marks a radical departure from the traditional struggle in the South for independence. This is what it has always been since 1955 when the Anya-Nya war started. The avowed objective was the independence of the South. This objective was not achieved; it was compromised in 1972, in the Addis Ababa agreement, when Southern Sudan was "given" local autonomy. The SPLM moved away from this paradigm of the "southern

problem", solving the "southern problem" and what to "give" to southerners. When you are defined as the others, as something different, through reference to the "southern problem", for instance, that is in itself a problem i.e. the people who have a problem are the Southerners, but this is not true. It is the Sudanese state, epitomized by the power structure in the Center, which needs to be radically restructured in order to accommodate the Sudan's manifold diversity and attend to all forms of exclusion and marginalization of its people, be they in the South or in any other marginalized region. The fish rots from the head and not from the tail!

II.3   SPLM: Overcoming Challenges and Contradictions of the Struggle

II.3.1   The SPLM's grand objective of bringing about radical and fundamental change in the Sudan as a whole was not a dream, but an objective that was premised on the victories and setbacks of the Sudanese people and on the correct and visionary definition of the central problem of the Sudan. Since its inception, the SPLM critically and objectively analyzed the Sudanese reality and concluded that we must struggle for a new type of Sudan to which we all belong; a united Sudan, albeit on new bases; a new Sudan political dispensation that is anchored in and based on the realities of the Sudan, on both our historical and contemporary diversities. We call this new political dispensation the New Sudan, as opposed to the Old Sudan, which has cost us 42 years of war since independence.

II.3.2   On the other hand, however, this does not mean that there are no skeptics within the ranks of the Movement, so far as the New Sudan vision is concerned. There are, and have always been, differences. In fact, disagreements have occurred, degenerating into violent confrontations at various historical junctures in the evolution of the SPLM/A. Thus, the vision of the New Sudan, and the adoption of objectives and programs consistent with it, had its share of difficulties and troubles in the early days of the Movement. Some leaders of the SPLM and some Anya-Nya Commanders decided to leave the Movement because they wanted to fight for an independent Southern Sudan and not for a New Sudan. However, instead of fighting the Sudan government in order to achieve the objective of independence, they allied themselves with the same government and fought the incipient SPLM/A for four years. It is true that the phenomenon of divisions and splits is normal given the diversity of vision and political thinking in any national liberation movement. What is unfathomable, however, is the collaboration with the enemy of the people. The lesson to draw from this experience is that the self-professed separatists should not be allowed to shout empty slogans about separation, thus, misinforming our people. They should concretely explain to the people how they plan to achieve the objective of separation. The SPLM emerged victorious and continued to grow in might and morale, and the SPLA firmly established itself as an indisputable decisive political and military force in the Sudanese political arena.

II.3.3   The advent of the 1990s witnessed the collapse of the Eastern Block countries, and the end of the Cold War, and this marked a world transition from one historical era to a new one. At the same time, many profound changes occurred in the East Africa region. Notably these were: the collapse of the government of Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia; the emergence of Eritrea as an independent state; and the disintegration of Somalia. The cumulative effects of all these regional and international events, especially the loss of support from Mengistu's Ethiopia, accompanied by an opportunistic attempt by the NIF regime and other foreign circles to destroy the SPLM/A in 1991, led some to believe, wrongly, that the Movement had been weakened by the loss of the Ethiopian support, and this in turn led to the split of the SPLM/A in August 28, 1991.

II.3.4   The split caused the people of the Sudan, especially in the south, incalculable harm and suffering and retarded the march of the SPLM to victory. It divided the Movement at a time of regional and international turmoil when unity was needed most, as well as dividing the people along tribal lines, inciting southerners against each other, resulting in the death of untold numbers of innocent civilians. On the other hand, the NIF effectively used the split, both militarily and politically, in its war against the SPLM/A. Besides, the 1991 episode led many Northerners to wonder whether the SPLM/A was abandoning its long-held objective of the New Sudan, while Southerners started to have doubts about SPLM strategy and fears as to whether the Movement really had their interests at heart. This confusion and fear were sufficiently addressed through open debate and subsequent resolutions during the First SPLM/A National Convention.

II.3.5   The SPLM\A convened its first National Convention in the period between 2-12 April 1994 with the objective of debating all issues of concern to the movement and its future direction, especially in the aftermath of the split of 1991. The Convention correctly addressed the issue of Self-determination as a people's right that does not contradict the SPLM objective of a united democratic New Sudan, but on the contrary enhances it. Indeed, correctly perceived, the New Sudan can only be achieved through the mechanism of self-determination i.e. through the free will of the Sudanese people.

II.3.6 The ensuing debate during the Convention, therefore, reaffirmed the fact that the realization of the vision of the New Sudan, brought about either through a combination of armed struggle and urban popular uprisings or a politically negotiated settlement, is the key for the attainment of freedom, equality and justice for the Sudanese people. We can only achieve our aim, whether this is the New Sudan, self-determination, or separation, only if power is radically restructured in the center, in Khartoum. It is unthinkable that the regime will voluntarily relinquish power or be forced by international pressures to grant separation on a silver plate! It was, thus, decided in unequivocal terms that the establishment of the New Sudan and the

achievement of the right to, and exercise of, self-determination are the two principal objectives of the Movement.

II.3.7   Those who are skeptical about the New Sudan vision are not confined to the SPLM membership. There are those, particularly in Northern Sudan, who condemned out rightly the vision merely because it came from a source unfamiliar to their minds and hearts. Most importantly, there are forces that benefited, and continue to benefit, from the Old Sudan. They are well aware that the New Sudan is a threat to their interests, be they in power or the opposition. These forces are, thus, bent on propagating a distorted image of both the Vision and the SPLM, thus misleading and frightening away their respective constituencies by insisting that the New Sudan is a mere euphemism for an African, Christian, anti-Arab and Islamic entity, which, in collaboration with Zionism, is intent on doing away with the Arab-Islamic identity of the Sudanese (the North, in particular). Such unfounded suspicions, fueled by racism and religious bigotry, have been adequately responded to elsewhere and would not stand the test of time. Contrary to what the critics and skeptics think, the concept of the New Sudan has no racial, ethnic or separatist connotations. It is rather a framework, a national project, for building a true and sustainable Citizenship-State capable of accommodating the multiple diversities of Sudanese society. Above all, the concept is an intellectual and scholarly contribution to the unfolding political discourse on the rebuilding of the Sudanese State.

III.   Vision of the SPLM

III.1   Articulation of the Vision

III.1.1 The vision of the SPLM is therefore that of the New Sudan. This vision is consistent with how nations are formed. The Sudan is no exception. In the Sudan people have moved in time and space and have become part of the Sudanese nation, and the character and identity of this nation must be based on its reality, on its historical and contemporary diversity, not on misconceptions or distorted designs of anybody who grabs power in Khartoum.

III.1.2 Without a sincere appreciation of these realities, phrases like 'nation building' and 'national unity' become empty slogans. Indeed, the concept and reality of the state or nation-state becomes fractured and degenerates into a mechanism for enabling some of the most notorious and unprincipled members of the local elite and power seekers, masquerading as nationalists, to seize and retain political power, and then proceed to pillage and render the people of their so-called nation-state destitute.

III.1.3 *Voluntary unity* in the New Sudan is, therefore, conditioned on creating a political and socio-economic commonality that brings all the Sudanese together as equal citizens in rights and obligations. We must clearly move away from the parameters of the Old Sudan of racism, religious intolerance, historical myopia, and the associated economic collapse, instability and wars. The Old Sudan has clearly taken us to a dead end, to the edge of the abyss.

III.1.4 There are two, and only two, choices: either the country breaks up into several independent states, or we agree to establish the New Sudan, a new Sudanese socio-political entity to which we pledge our undivided loyalty and allegiance irrespective of race, tribe, religion, or gender; a new Sudanese commonality that seeks to include rather than exclude; a new Sudanese political dispensation that provides equal opportunities for every Sudanese to develop and realize his or her potential; a Sudan where there is justice and equality of opportunity for all; a democratic Sudan in which governance is based on popular will and the rule of law; a New Sudan where religion and state are constitutionally separated; a New Sudan in which oppression and hegemony by any particular ethnic group are banished; a Sudan in which all the institutions of social, cultural and racial hegemony and discrimination are dismantled; a Sudan in which there is respect for universal human rights.

III.1.5 The New Sudan is not the antithesis of the Old Sudan nor does the vision imply the complete destruction of the Old Sudan and building the New Sudan on its ashes. The construction of the New Sudan is, rather, a "transformative" process for fundamental socio-

economic change and political restructuring that would build on all the positive elements of the Old Sudan, informed by all our historical and contemporary experiences and cognizant of, and equipped for, the enormous challenges of the 21st century. It is the responsibility of the SPLM and other forces of change, particularly in the North, to utilize the most refined and positive components of their respective experiences in their effort to lead the transformation process into the New Sudan.

III.1.6 The national crisis that has been afflicting the Sudan since independence is essentially a crisis of leadership reflected in the social nature of the successive ruling elites, namely; their narrow social base, constricted intellectual outlook, backward political values, poor imagination, isolation from the people, and disdain of the humanist ideals. Thus, these elites have failed in developing the country and resorted to express their parochial interests by adopting divisive policies and using state power in promoting and defending Arabism and Islam, which resulted in a crisis of identity and exacerbated the crisis of nation-building. This crisis of identity is manifested in the inability of the Sudanese to reconcile themselves with the cultural and ethnic realities that make of them a nation.

III.1.7 The vision of the New Sudan, thus, is essentially a national framework, a socio-economic and political commonality, anchored in and accommodative of the country's multiple diversities. The essence of the vision is the equitable management of diversity and respect for the identities and cultures of all "national" groups. Though the Sudan constitutes the base and focus of the vision, the context could apply globally to countries and regions torn apart by racial, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity and disparity. As is the case in Africa, the majority of the continent's "nation states" are mosaics of multifarious nationalities and cultures. The unity of those states hinges on the recognition of, and respect for, their multiple diversities and presupposes pulling together the common strands that unite while eschewing factors that divide.

III.2   Normative Framework of the Vision

III.2.1 The crisis does not lie in the mere definition of the Sudanese identity, but rather in the implications of the distorted self-perception of the ruling elites in the center, in terms of participation in the shaping and sharing of power, access to wealth, resources, services, employment and development opportunities.

III.2.2 Corrective measures are therefore required to promote an inclusive sense of belonging on the part of all Sudanese as citizens who enjoy all the rights of citizenship on equal footing.

III.2.3 While identities cannot be legislated and radically transformed overnight, a constitutional and legal framework of equality can be enshrined with immediate effect and could, over time, allow an inclusive national identity to evolve.

III.2.4 The normative framework of the stipulated New Sudan emanates from the correction of the ills of the Old Sudan as outlined above. It presupposes a united, democratic and secular Sudan, a constitutionally, economically and culturally reconstructed Sudan. The founding notions of the Vision for the polity, society, culture and economy of the New Sudan are:

- *Evolving a Sudanese Identity reflective of the Sudan's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural character.*
- *Building unity of the country on the totality of the components that make up Sudan's historical and contemporary diversities, and separating religion from the state.*
- *Restructuring of power in the center and decentralization of power by redefining the relationship between Khartoum and the regions and devolving more powers to the regions.*
- *Fostering democratic governance in which equality, freedom, economic and social justice and respect for human rights are not mere slogans but concrete realities.*
- *Promoting environmentally and even sustainable development.*

IV.   The New Sudan: Polity, Culture and Society, and Economy

IV.1   Guided and informed by the Vision of the New Sudan and using all legitimate peaceful means at its disposal, the SPLM shall continue its struggle to build a new socio-political order that is based on total commitment to the Bill of Rights, decentralized governance, political pluralism, respect of the edicts on human and people's rights established by international covenants and an economic system that affords the individual an atmosphere and opportunities conducive to self–realization. That system should also equip marginalized regions to overcome uneven development and create an environment for the healthy growth of the private sector. *Human dignity and respect for the individual and the family* must be asserted as the essential foundation of the New Sudan. All individuals have a right to freedom, prosperity, and security. The state is no more than a tool to attain these goals.

Prosperity for All

IV.2   We aim to establish *a society of equal opportunities* based on the principles of *social justice and social solidarity* of the strong and weak. In other words, as well as *the release of private initiative, a robust system of social support* is a crucial condition for the existence of a free society in the New Sudan. A free society can only be created in a stable political system that rules out all abuse and presupposes the state's active role in maintaining economic order in order to achieve *prosperity for everybody*. The state must regulate the free market to attain social objectives, and not try to coerce it to realize such goals. The market is not an aim in itself, but rather a means of securing freedom and sufficiency for all citizens of the New Sudan.

Freedom, Justice, and Equality

IV.3   In the New Sudan, f*reedom* of the people is paramount and sacrosanct. It has the same absolute value as human life. The people of Sudan, particularly in the marginalized areas of the country, have suffered enough for their right to freedom. Only a free New Sudan can assure the prosperity and security of its citizens and enable the country to develop dynamically in the 21st century. Freedom cannot survive in a society that does not strive for *justice*. Such a society is doomed to division between those whose freedom is backed by material wealth and those whose freedom implies merely a state of devastating poverty. Such a division may result either in social upheavals or a dictatorship of the privileged minority. Justice demands that we strive not only for *equal rights* for citizens, but also *for equal opportunities* so that the individual can realize his/her worth. Justice should also guarantee a worthy existence for the less fortunate.

IV.4 Equality of rights cannot be meaningful without political, economic and social empowerment of women, eventually leading to gender equality in the executive, legislative, judicial and other domains of society and polity. This, in turn, calls for the elimination, through legislation, of all manifestations and consequences of patriarchy- from the feminization of poverty, physical and psychological abuse, undermining of self-confidence, to open and hidden forms of exclusion from positions of authority and power. Critical in this regard is the creation of the material and cultural conditions that would allow the abilities of women to flourish and enrich the life of the nation. This would entail transforming customary law and social practices that deny women and children their human rights.

IV.5 Affirmative action in favor of women shall continue and will only decline in the same measure as all centers of power and influence and other critical spheres in social endeavor become broadly representative of the country's demographics. In the process, all inequalities that may persist or arise will need to be addressed.

IV.6 **Youth**: a nation's success depends on its ability to encourage, harness and incorporate into its endeavours the creativity, daring and energy of youth. This relates to such issues as access to social and economic opportunities, engendering activism around issues of development and values of community solidarity and creating the space for the creativity of youth to flourish.

IV.7 **Children and the Elderly**: the New Sudan society should ensure the protection and continuous advancement of children and the elderly as the most vulnerable in society.

IV.8 **People with special needs**: such is the challenge also with regard to the need to address the problems of the people with disability- not merely as a matter of social welfare; but rather should be based on the recognition of the right of each individual to dignity and development and of the contribution that each can make to the collective good.

Democratic Governance

IV.9 Democracy is vital and an imperative for the New Sudan. The democratic course in the New Sudan is, therefore, based on a revision of the sham procedural democracy of the past. The transformation of Sudan envisaged by the SPLM, thus, represents a political and socioeconomic paradigm shift from hegemony in all its forms to the recognition of Sudan's political, cultural and social diversity, within a framework of a vibrant multi-party democracy with a meaningful Bill of Rights that recognizes and upholds natural as well as political, socio-economic, cultural and environmental rights and obligations. That democracy shall also ensure peaceful transfer of power and separation of powers among the executive, judicial and legislative organs of the state. Beyond the formal processes of regular elections and legislatures, various forms of legalized and

other forums to ensure popular participation shall be initiated and encouraged. Equally, the democracy engendered by this transformation shall be permeated with a social content which includes: awareness of, an attention to, the needs of poor and economically disadvantaged individuals and groups, primarily with respect to health care, education, employment and social safety nets

IV.10   A decentralized system of governance that would bring power closer to the people, and is characterized by popular participation, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, consensus-seeking orientation, fairness, effectiveness and abidance by the rule of law, so that the people of New Sudan are provided with the necessary conducive environment for accelerated socio-economic development and increased happiness.

IV.11   This system of governance will be premised on a) restructuring of the power of the central government in a manner that would take into account the interests of all the Sudanese, especially those of marginalized regions, and the impoverished socio-economic groups, and b) a decentralized power structure by redefining the relation between Khartoum and the regions with a view to devolving more federal powers to the regions and, where and when necessary, full autonomy. That form of regionalism should enable the masses, not the regional elites, to exercise real power in the fields of economic and social development and the promotion of their respective cultures. Devolution of power shall be incomplete if it does not equally empower local governments to fully exercise the powers entrusted to them by the Constitution and the law without obstruction from any center of power in the states.

IV.12   Good governance, where the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of the country's affairs at all levels shall be people-based, so that individuals and groups have an effective say in the allocation and management of resources and in decisions that affect their lives.

IV.13   The fight against corruption constitutes one of the key pillars of good governance; hence it shall be waged with ever increasing rigor.

IV.14   The foreign policy of the New Sudan will be primarily guided by the nature of its domestic policies and the supreme interests of the Sudanese people. We shall strive to live collectively with the world and contribute to peace and well-being and progress of humanity. We will do this through; respecting international law, fostering human rights in international and regional fora, participating actively in, and cooperating fully with international and regional organizations, building strong relations with African countries, particularly in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region, promoting regional African and Arab economic integration on the basis of consensual plans not ideological bias or political alignment, enhancement of

economic cooperation among countries of the South, observing good neighborliness, and fostering human rights. It shall cooperate with all countries and international and regional organizations in combating international and transnational crime and terrorism, consolidating international peace, and actively partaking in regional and international endeavors for the protection and conservation of the global environment.

Rule of Law and Human Rights

IV.15 In the New Sudan, people's freedom is sacrosanct and their rights inalienable. The sovereignty and legitimacy of the Sudanese state shall be vested in the people and exercised by their free will in open free and fair elections and informed by the principles of justice, liberty and equality. The Rule of Law shall be supreme and must be upheld by governors and the governed alike.

IV.16 Human rights and peoples' rights will be firmly embedded in the constitution of the New Sudan. All persons are equal before or under the law in the spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life, and in every other respect, and shall enjoy equal protection of the law.

Democratic Management of Diversity

IV.17 For Sudan to be voluntarily united in diversity rather than divided by diversity, the constitutional and institutional arrangements, programs and policies of the New Sudan should be reflective of both the historical and contemporary realities of the country.

IV.18 The New Sudan belongs equally to all the peoples that now inhabit the country. Its history, its diversity and richness are the common heritage of all Sudanese. The process of national formation presupposes deep introspection into Sudan's history as well as drawing from the experiences of other countries in order to form a unique Sudanese nation that does not have to take refuge elsewhere.

IV.19 Religion is part of humanity. All Sudanese have beliefs, whether they are Muslims, Christians or believers in indigenous African religions. Thus, freedom of worship for all followers of religions or traditional beliefs shall be guaranteed, without favor or prejudice to anyone of them. All that the vision of the New Sudan proposes is that religion regulates the relationship between humans and their creator, a relation governed by religious legislation in the personal realm. The state, on the other hand, is a socio-political institution contrived by humans embracing all regardless of their respective religious affiliations. In the New Sudan, it is the democratic constitution and not religion, which must constitute the sole source of legislation, except personal and family laws.

IV.20 All the Sudanese national languages shall all be promoted. Multilingualism shall become the feature of the New Sudan culture.

Equitable Growth and Environmentally Sustainable Development

IV.21 The economic model of the New Sudan would make rational use of the country's vast natural and human resources with a view to arresting unequal development, putting an end to all forms of marginalization and deprivation and achieving equitable distribution of the fruits of growth. Thus, poverty reduction, and its ultimate eradication, will be the overarching objective of development, with emphasis on equity and employment issues, as well as access and equity in the provision of basic social services. An integral part of even development is the appropriate and fair sharing of wealth among the various peoples of the Sudan. The regulatory role of the state in the social and economic fields shall be undertaken with due consideration to the above requirements. In doing so, the state shall cooperate, among others, with trades unions and concerned civil society organizations.

IV.22 A social market is *an organized economy* whereby lawful regulation of the free market forces aims at achieving *social results*. Therefore**,** the New Sudan economic system shall be efficient and equitable in a sustainable fashion, in which corruption and graft are eliminated, private initiative is encouraged, competitiveness observed and government's social responsibility not abdicated. It is a free market economy in which both public and private sector complement and reinforce each other, with the role of the public sector concentrated on providing social overhead services, basics infrastructure, social welfare and technical and technological advancement**.**

IV.23 While oil revenues are a boon to the economy, they shall cease to be so if they are not used to fuel agriculture, rural development and the transformation of traditional farming through technological innovations.

IV.24 In order to end urban bias and center-focused development orientation, the SPLM's vision is to "take towns to people in the countryside rather than people to towns", where they end up in slums with a consequent deterioration in the quality of their lives. Taking towns to the people in the countryside rather than people to towns will not only preclude the phenomenon of slum dwellers, but will also help ensure that people stay on the land so that agriculture and agro-industry can flourish.

IV.25 Our economic model shall take advantage of globalization by increasingly transforming it into a knowledge-based economy, to speed up development while at the same time mitigating the negative consequences of globalization. However, this has to take place in the context of a meaningful strategy for sustainable development that is anchored in science and technology. Major challenges such as spurring industrial and agricultural productivity, ensuring food security, controlling diseases, providing clean water and preserving the environment, cannot be met adequately without using science and technology.

IV.26 Environmental management in the New Sudan will be strongly anchored on the concept of sustainable human development and peace. The focus is on equitable and sensible utilization of natural resources among the citizens without jeopardizing the rights of future generations; preventing resource-based conflict and its consequences; acknowledging the citizens' rights especially the indigenous people to a clean, safe and healthy environment, and spreading the culture of environmental rights through the principle of avoiding harm to the environment.

New Sudan in a Globalized World

IV.27 The SPLM forms part of the global forces, including political parties and civil society organizations in developing and developed countries, campaigning for a humane and equitable world order. In its historical evolution, the Movement has gained from and contributed to a culture of human solidarity across the globe. In its world-wide interactions, the SPLM was informed by values of internationalism, promotion of human rights against all abuses and violations, and support for national liberation struggles and people's fight against oppression and tyranny.

IV.28 The SPLM shall continue to work with other like-minded forces to promote the transformation of the global order away from unilateralism, conflict and confrontation to cooperation, human solidarity and peace. The Movement shall also struggle to chart a path of hope and human solidarity, to pursue resolution of conflicts through dialogue and peaceful means and to promote mutual friendship among peoples of the world. In doing so, the SPLM proceeds from the premise that all nations have a shared responsibility to improve the human condition.

IV.29 The Movement's standpoint on these global concerns is prompted by its profound commitment to realize the interests of the Sudanese people, as well as by its commitment to the well – being of humanity as a whole. The SPLM will continue to build and strengthen progressive alliances and networks across the globe, including inter-state, party-to-party and people-to-people relations in pursuit of an equitable and humane global order.