

Statement of participants from Yirol meeting on Wunlit 1999 Peace Conference after 22 years
Yirol, 18 – 19 May 2021

On 18 – 19 May, we the thirty-one representative chiefs and women from Unity State, Lakes State and Warrap State, members of the original Wunlit Peace Conference of 1999, brought together by the Rift Valley Institute and Assistance Mission for Africa, with support from the Swiss Government, met in Yirol, Yirol West County, Lakes State.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Receive the research findings from the Rift Valley Institute and Catholic University of South Sudan oral history memory project on the 1999 Wunlit Peace Conference;
- Celebrate the achievements of Wunlit;
- Document proposed ways forward for South Sudan considering the lessons learnt from Wunlit.

In recent South Sudanese history one of the most significant peace-building events was the Wunlit Peace Conference of 1999. Wunlit was a meeting of chiefs, organised by churches, that began the process of reunification of the two factions of the SPLA/M. The Wunlit meeting paved the way for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005, which brought South Sudan into being as a nation.

Following the preceding meeting held in Nyal 13-14 May, this meeting in Yirol gave us the opportunity to reignite our memories of the Wunlit 1999 Peace Conference, which has inspired and encouraged us. During this meeting we reviewed and discussed the Nyal statement and therefore:

We acknowledge and endorse and reiterate:

- All points made in the statement issued from the counterpart Nyal meeting 13-14 May 2021 and would want to add the following items;
- In particular, the absence of key chiefs missing from our meeting, notably from the Bul Nuer community, and the prevalence of guns in the hands of our young men;

We recognise with concern:

- The ongoing clashes and acts of violence at the border areas between our communities;
- That the Commissioner of Payinjar County has not yet taken up his position meaning that the Commissioners of the neighbouring counties do not have a counterpart in place with whom to resolve key issues;
- The serious flooding and subsequent challenges to livelihoods faced by the citizens of Payinjar County.

We appeal:

- To the Transitional Government of National Unity, Republic of South Sudan, and to the Community in Payinjar County to address the concerns around the Commissioner as soon as possible;
- To the Transitional Government of National Unity, Republic of South Sudan, and our partners in peace, to organise a Governors' and Commissioners' conference to bring together Governors and Commissioners of Yirol East, Yirol West, Payinjar, Rumbek

East, Rumbek North, Tonj East, Twic, Mayom, Gogrial East Counties, and Abyei Administrative Area;

- To our community leaders at large to stop hate speech and inciting community violence;
- To the Church to be actively involved and remain visible in the support of work of community peace and social cohesion;
- To the humanitarian actors to provide support to those displaced by the flooding in Unity State.

Therefore we resolve:

- To accept peace amongst our communities;
- That our people in Payinjar County should be welcome for peaceful coexistence to the drylands in Lakes State whilst the floods subside;
- To work amongst ourselves to identify and condemn the thieves, criminals and peace spoilers in our communities;
- To reconvene a second Wunlit meeting bringing together all chiefs from across the three regions together with commissioners, youth, women and religious leaders to convene once again in Wunlit and evoke the spirit of Wunlit;
- To reiterate our request for a joint meeting with President Salva Kiir and First Vice-President Dr Riek Machar to discuss the issues of local conflict amongst our communities.

We, the undersigned, resolve this on Wednesday 19 May in Yirol, Yirol West County, Lakes State, South Sudan:

Name:

Peter Nyuong Danhiar

Paramount Chief, Payinjar County

Date

Name:

Gum Mading Akuecbany

Paramount Chief, Wunlit Payam

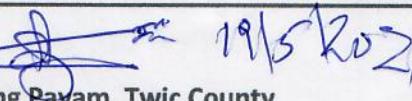
Date

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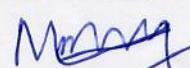
Sawat Malual Arop

Paramount Chief, Rumbek East County

Date

Name:
Jacob Madhel Lang 
Paramount Chief, Aweng Payam, Twic County
Chairperson: COTAL Warrap State

Date

Name:
Andrew Madut Buoi 
Paramount Chief: Yirol East County, Titnagau Payam

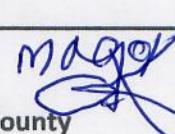
Date

Name:
Joseph Kong Yoach 
Paramount Chief: Guit County

Date

Name:
Elizabeth David Dabuol Ngot 
Women League Chairperson, Koch County

Date

Name:
Isaac Magok Gatluak 
Paramount Chief, Mayendit County

Date

Name:
Stephen Kuong Mabil 
Paramount Chief, Leer County

Date

Name:
Madut Aguer Adel 
Paramount Chief, Tonj East County

Date

Name:

Reechdit Anyieth Reech

Paramount Chief, Yirol East County

Date

AHONBOP

Name:

Bahon Mabor Deng

Paramount Chief, Yirol West County

Date

Name:

Thiik Riiny Giir

Paramount Chief, Gogrial East County

Date

Name:

Marial Dhieu Malual

Paramount Chief, Yirol East County

MARIAVDIHEED

Date

Name:

Malok Wol Madhieu

Paramount Chief, Tonj East County

Date

AKOK Aciil