

**Speech by Hon. Lt. Gen. Alfred Ladu Gore, Minister of Environment of the Republic of South Sudan during the United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20)
Held from 20th to 22nd June 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Mr. Chairperson of this Rio +20 last Session
Madam Delma, President of the Republic of Brazil
United Nation Secretary General Ban Ki Moon
Your Excellencies
Invited distinguished delegations
Ladies and gentlemen

Mr. Chairperson,

With your permission may I take this rare opportunity to extend profound appreciation on behalf of my delegation to the Brazil permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York for inviting us to this momentous historical event of the 21st century.

In the same spirit I would like to extend at this juncture, our gratitude to the people and government of Brazil for hospitality and facilities they have offered to us since our arrival in this great Latin American country for this meeting. My president General Salva Kiir Mayardit would have been here among his fellow heads of states; however circumstances beyond his control could not allow him to come. For this reason, my presence means he is not alone. This means that I am mandated in this summit not only to represent him and over ten million people of the Republic of South Sudan but also to affirm our total commitment to the shared ideals of peace and sustainable development which can enable people everywhere on the globe to leave with a sense of decency and hope.

Mr. Chairperson,

Twenty years ago when humanity took a giant leap forward by gathering at this beautiful city of Rio De Janeiro to chart out a new model of development, the people of the new Republic were engaged in the most costly protracted war of national liberation. Our triumph and victory in that regard had only been possible by the intervention of the democratic peace, loving and progressive nations of the world. We thank you very much for your support, solidarity and sympathy. This has made us to be bolder to achieve the society and future we are yearning for.

Mr. Chairperson

As the new country continues to grow I would like the distinguished delegates to know its critical value that determines its sustainable development or not in order to help them assess its potential development for over mutual interest. So what do we look for in that country that makes it resilient and prosper? In this respect what certainly comes out high is the ecosphere that characterizes it. This clearly shows that the country is immensely endowed with variety of ecosystems which turns it into a jewel in the crown of a ruler.

The ecosystems range from vast expanses of forest, Savanna (grassland), mountains to wetlands, equatorial forest and all of which are host to the majority of its people and the resources and habitats that they depends on.

Mr. Chairperson,

The greatest test to the new Republic is now how to balance between the ever growing needs of its communities and the sustainability of the environment in which they are part of. The pace of development elsewhere shows that it cannot be done unless we share our experiences with other people and adopt what best suits us. However, this is not about creating photo-cat situation and emulates what others are doing nor looking for useless ideas, social experiments etc of the structural adjustment programmes of the past in which nobody benefitted from except the multinational corporations, but in our view it is all about searching for a fundamental approach that is broad, innovative and scientific to improve the health and well being of our people as well as our understanding of environment.

Mr. Chairperson,

In order for the new republic of South Sudan to move forward in fostering its development, the government of South Sudan is making concerted effort to defuse tensions associated with naked aggression of the Khartoum regime in Abyei and Panthou (Heglig) which are integral part of the republic and also to remove environmental threats posed by the same regime which has grossly abused and degraded the environment. This requires immediate intervention of the international community to prevent further escalation of the conflict on the basis of the UN Security Council resolution 2046 and to take concrete actions to assist the government to address the problems arising from decades long of oil pollution, loss of biodiversity, accelerated deforestation etc.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, it is my conviction that this great and historical gathering of leaders in the city of Rio de Janeiro will not be in vain as prophets of doom are wishing. This conference will come out with a comprehensive document which will pave the way forward for the future we want. South Sudan unconditionally support the upgrading of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to a strong institution which should have finance to fund environmental projects and protect the planet earth. I would like to assure the conference that although the Republic of the South Sudan is the newest member of the United Nations (UN) it is committed to implementing all the multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Thanks very much for listening