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**Statement of H.E. Gen.
Salva Kiir Mayardit,
President of the Republic of
South Sudan, at the Third Afro-
Arab Summit, Kuwait, 19-20
November 2013**

**“Partners in Development and
Investment”**

- **His Highness** Sheikh, Sabah al Ahmed al Jabir al Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait and the Chairman of the Third Afro-Arab Summit
- Their Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies, African and Arab Heads of State and Heads of State and Government
- Your Excellency Madam Chair of the African Union Commission
- Honorable Ministers
- Distinguished guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen:

Al salaam Aleikum

I would like first of all to thank you for inviting me to this Afro-Arab summit, in Kuwait and equally appreciate the warm welcome accorded to me and my delegation. Indeed, one is greatly honored and humbled to be here today, so that all of us together can chart a new future for the current and next generations of Arabs and Africans.

My delegation and I have come here to listen and learn from your valuable experiences and exchange views on matters of concern and interest.

It is of great importance that we come together to strengthen our relations and enhance our cooperation, politically and

economically for the welfare of all our citizens.

In our lifetimes, we have together seen the decolonization of those parts of the world where the imperial powers once held sway.

We have lived through a cold war, seen the inexorable rise of the East and fought our own struggles for liberation. This struggle was not only against our colonial masters but also from poverty, Ignorance, backwardness, underdevelopment and diseases.

We are now seeing the return of Africa to the world stage as one of the world's fastest growing regions and therefore, I would like to register my appreciation for the work done

since the first summit in Cairo. We must all salute the visionaries of the Africa-Arab Cooperation, because their timing to launch this initiative could not have been more opportune. I must say it was a job well done.

The proximities of Arab countries and Africa means that the two regions were destined to not only cooperate with one another but also to be there for each other at times of need.

History has proven this assumption. So the histories of the two regions are intertwined and it is therefore only appropriate for us to sit here today to foster even closer ties for the betterment of the peoples of the two regions.

The country I come from (The Republic of South Sudan) as you know was not long ago part of the Sudan, where the worlds of Arabia and Africa converged. Over the centuries we were mostly friends but some times we disagreed and fought. However, we will always remain friendly neighbors for the benefit of our people.

We are familiar too with Islam, one of the world's great religions, and we make sure today that we guarantee the freedom of worship in the Republic of South Sudan.

We have benefited too from the great commercial skills of the many Arab businessmen, traders and investors

who have exercised their skills across our region for centuries.

This is the reality of our excellent relationship. Indeed, this summit will further promote those relationships in a positive manner.

In my own country, long before independence, our citizens are greatly grateful to the Government of Kuwait for building Kuwait Children's Hospital, schools, hostels and teachers houses which still stand in Juba today.

We appreciate that the Kuwait Funds have been a major donor to institutions - such as the Africa Development Bank and the IFAD Special Programme for Sub-Saharan

Africa- and that it works in forty eight states in Africa.

Your Excellencies, I have come here today to ask our friends in the Gulf States to think about granting South Sudan loans at an affordable credit rates from their Financial Houses and Institutions in order to help finance major projects in South Sudan in areas of Agriculture, power, tourism and infrastructure such as roads and housing. We need to promote investment and trade so as to forge new partnerships in development based on a win-win for all our counties and peoples.

Your Highness and Excellencies,

Africa-Arab Cooperation is a topic that is closer to the hearts of the

people of South Sudan. Although we are late comers to the international stage, we can arguably claim to be the bridge between Africa and the Arab world to promote peace, economic and political solidarity.

In South Sudan, we have enormous natural resources that include water, fertile soils, flat grasslands, forests, minerals, fish, livestock and wildlife. In fact we have more than 30 million hectares of arable land (less than 5% of which is cultivated). We are blessed with ample rainfall of 1200-1500mm per year, excellent vegetation and soil rich in organic content. South Sudan could still be the food basket for both Africa and the Arab world. Our late leader, Dr. John Garang, wisely said that we could not rely only on our limited oil

resources, but also have to invest in agriculture to enhance our national income. In pursuit of these ideals, I have since we attained independence, made it clear that we must prioritize infrastructure and food security along with service delivery as well as public security to ensure stability and peace. It is from this forum that I am urging Your Highness and Excellencies to assist this young nation to develop its major resources for the benefit of all.

Your Highness and Excellencies,

As a new country of a small population of almost 11 million as per figures of 2012, and gifted with enormous agricultural resources, we stand ready to host any African-Arab projects that aim at boosting food


security including livestock and wildlife development.

This offer is also consistent with the recommendations of the Second Africa-Arab Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural Development and Food Security held in Riyadh in October 2013. During this meeting there was a call upon African and Arab States and their Financial Institutions to provide the needed resources to invest in the agricultural sector and other sectors related to food security.

Your Highness, the Chairman of the Summit

In order for South Sudan to play a role in contributing to food security needs for both Africa and the Arab world, it must demonstrate its ability

to be at peace with itself as well as its neighbors. I assure you that we are doing just that.



Recently, the Republic of South Sudan together with Sudan, were both encouraged by the renewed spirit of cooperation, and I was pleased to welcome President Bashir in late October 2013 for our Third Presidential Summit. Myself and my brother President Bashir agreed to work closely together, to implement the Cooperation Agreement that entails resolving outstanding border issues, freedom of movement of people, goods and services between the two countries.

Further, it is important to also mention that we are still working on a definitive solution to establish the

final status of the territory of Abyei. This remains an unnecessary source of ongoing tension between our countries that jeopardizes our efforts in other areas of cooperation.

Finally, I would like to thank our hosts the Government of Kuwait for their kind hospitality. I encourage Your Excellencies and Royal Highnesses to visit our new nation, as partners, neighbors, but more importantly as investors, friends and trading partners.

Salam aleikum wa Shukran