



## PRESS RELEASE

### **The Anyuak of South Sudan Association in Diaspora (ASSAD) Refutes Allegations Made Against Its Leaders by the Deputy Chief Administrator for Services of Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA).**

March 17, 2015

The Anyuak of South Sudan Association in Diaspora (ASSAD) is here to refute the allegations made by the Deputy Chief Administrator of Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) for Services, Mr. Apee O. Ochudho, against its leaders. On March 16, 2015, Mr. Ochudho wrote on facebook that ASSAD leaders, namely, Dr. Joseph Agolory and Adhiero Omot, have associated with Mr. Medho Tong in joining SPLM-IO. He also accused ASSAD of opposing GPAA, because Akobo County was left out of the GPAA.

We, in the advisory Council of ASSAD, a body composed of elders and intellectuals from Pochalla and Akobo counties, and overseeing the activities of the executive body, strongly refute those allegations and count them baseless. As stated recently in a letter from ASSAD to President Kiir, dated January 15, 2015, the Anywaa Community in Diaspora, under the leadership of Dr. Joseph Agolory and Mr. Adhiero Omot, remains loyal and supportive to the SPLM Party and the Government of South Sudan under the wise leadership of legally elected President, General Salva Kiir Mayardit. Mr. Medho Tong joined the SPLM-IO as an individual. According to him he was persecuted and tortured by Mr. Apee Ochudho and his associates and had no choice left but to defect to the opposition. He was beaten and thrown into prison as instructed by Mr. Apee Ochudho. His defection has nothing to do with anybody in ASSAD but himself. Moreover, ASSAD, as a community organization, is entitled to invite any of its members for

questioning in case if that member made a move which raise a concern to the other members. However that doesn't mean that ASSAD endorses the views of those invited for questioning as elaborated by Mr. Ochudho. It remains a puzzle of why Mr. Apee Ochudho, an official in the government of South Sudan, would rush to underwrite an Anyuak organization in a rebel movement? Should he not be the one to rally the Anyuak to support the government against the rebels?

ASSAD is not opposed to GPAA as stated by Mr. Ochudhu. As a matter of fact, ASSAD was the first to call for creation of Eastern Jonglei State for minorities. However, there is a big concern from the Anywaa Community on the way GPAA was created. When GPAA was created, the Anyuak leaders, including the King and SPLM representatives were not consulted, a decision made by Apee alone.

Moreover, Mr. Apee Ochudho, the only Anyuak in the Cobra Faction's decision-making elite is a lonely person with disputable records and suspicious connections across the borders. While here in Diaspora, he refused to affiliate with the community and works solely, as a member of Cobra Faction which he called a party. He blocked information from some people who followed him as advisors. He dropped those people quickly when GPAA was coming to life. To the surprise of so many, Cobra Faction was not a party. It was a military wing. He also refused to include the Anyuak elders in the peace process. He blocked a broader participation of the Anyuak community in the process of county and government formation in GPAA. He only appoints his relatives, his clan members and his low qualified associates to run the Anyuak affairs in GPAA.

Therefore, the issue here is not about ASSAD opposing GPAA because of Akobo, as stated by Mr. Ochudhu. The issue on the table is about the entire Anyuak community opposition to the policies of Cobra Faction, which gives privileges to an individual with poor community connections to control its affairs. The Anyuak community believes that such policies affect the outcome of decisions made in relationship to its interest.

Akobo exclusion from GPAA is not a big deal. The Murle fought their war. The Murle have the right to choose partnership. There is no prejudice about it. If the Anyuak, especially those in Akobo, want to liberate their land, they have to do what is needed to be free. The Anyuak have welcomed the birth of GPAA and

offered congratulations. So Mr. Apee wor Ojulu nyikwar Ochudhu, you have found your comfort zone by advantage. Sleep and eat! Do not bother people. We are not supporters of Dr. Riek Machar to take power in South Sudan. Neither do we believe that Dr. Riek Machar will give Akobo County to Anyuak. These are your fantasy to cover up for your failures.

In conclusion, instead of circulating false accusations on the members of the community and thus bringing confusion and division among people, we urge the Deputy Chief Administrator of GPAA to focus on issues more valuable to his constituent, bridge gaps and preach unity, stop mistreating those who disagree with him, practice inclusiveness instead of isolation, stop underwriting people on the wrong side of the aisle and to work collectively with the community and elders.

God Bless South Sudan,

God Bless Salva Kiir Mayardit,

God Bless Anywaa

Long Live SPLM

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On behalf of the Advisory Council

The Anyuak of South Sudan Association in Diapora (ASSAD)