

## HOW DOES SOUTH SUDAN'S ADMISSION TO THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY INFLUENCE THE SHAPE AND PACE OF THE REGION'S INTEGRATION?

**Kampala, 25th November 2016**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016, the 17th Ordinary East African Community (EAC) Heads of State Summit held in Arusha, Tanzania resolved to admit South Sudan into the EAC bloc after a five year wait. Subsequently, South Sudan has signed the Treaty of accession and deposited its instruments with the Office of the Secretary General of the EAC.

Among the reasons that have been given for the admission of South Sudan as the sixth member state of the EAC includes enhancing co-operation and integration between the country and EAC Partner States, expanding the economic bloc and providing potential growth for the regions over 160 Million inhabitants.

The world's youngest State introduces a new dynamic in social, political and economic arena of the EAC. South Sudan is emerging from epochs of conflict and is still highly volatile despite the recent peace efforts and formation of a unity government in April 2016 after a turbulent 3 year civil war. The landlocked, low income economy has acute constraints in physical, infrastructure, institutional structure, human resource and this has been compounded by the dip in world oil prices, its major source of revenue. The Currency devaluation in December 2015 has made the financial and economic situation even worse.

The accession of South Sudan to the EAC brings with it many implications, some policy related and practical, some positive, others negative. The East African Community organs have to go into over-drive so as to fast-track South Sudan into the Community while balancing the design of regional integration strategies including the on-going peace initiatives. Questions have arisen on what kind of pace and approaches EAC institutions will take from now on to accommodate South Sudan in hindsight of the political, economic and social challenges the country faces?

In view of the above, the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung East Africa will run a series of debates on South Sudan to discuss various viewpoints on the new EAC Member State and its likely implications on regionalism, peace building and sustainable development. The idea of the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung East Africa *Dialogue Series* is intrinsic of the East African regional office self – implemented projects in response to the ongoing global and regional social, economic and political dynamics.

The aim of the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung East Africa dialogue series is to provide a platform for expanding the range of critical debate on trade, trade related issues, investment, regional integration, migration, agriculture, climate change among others. The dialogue series also aim

at collecting and documenting views within the round table conferences and sharing the outcomes of such to the wider audience.

The dialogues aim to bring together a wide range of stakeholders i.e. Government, policy makers, academics, representatives from donor agencies, the private sector, representatives of business communities in Uganda and South Sudan, diplomats, United Nations and civil society among others.

The first series on South Sudan will be held on **November 25<sup>th</sup> 2016 at Hotel Africana, Kampala, Uganda** under the theme **“HOW DOES SOUTH SUDAN’S ADMISSION TO THE EAC INFLUENCE THE SHAPE AND PACE OF THE REGION’S INTEGRATION”**

The dialogue is set up to include key note speeches and three sessions. The opening session will set the platform highlighting the current state of affairs in the South Sudan Republic underlining the political, economic goings-on, policy framework, and motivation to join the EAC. The first session will discuss the state of play of South Sudan’s admission into the EAC and next steps in order to meet full incorporation into the community. The second session will discuss how to integrate South Sudan into the EAC trade policy framework including the opportunities, practical and policy challenges for South Sudan, EAC organs and EAC States. The third session will discuss the role of regionalism in building peace and stability and how the EAC region could benefit from these opportunities.

Using South Sudan admittance to the EAC as an entry point, the *Dialogue Series* will explore the complexities of East African and African regional integration efforts and hopefully feed into ongoing policy and political processes at these levels including global policy spaces. The *Dialogue Series* on South Sudan will therefore follow a format that aims at using results from the initial dialogue into the subsequent symposia in 2017 to debate key outstanding questions from the audience. Consequently, the resultant dialogues will be broken down to 3hr lectures, identifying topical policy issues for discussion within the EAC.