**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The post-independent period in Sudan has been plagued by persistent, endemic internal conflicts since the declaration of independence of Sudan from Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule in 1956; since then violence has been the country’s norm and common predicament facing leaders. The general purpose of the study was to examine and assess the strategic role played by SPLM leadership in resolving the conflict in Southern Sudan. The Specific objectives were to establish the causes of Sudan’s recurrent internal conflict, assess the effects of conflict, investigate the strategies used by SPLM leadership and analyze the protocols which led to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

This research adopted the qualitative survey design. The target population consisted of 40 SPLM leaders. A sample size of 35 respondents was randomly selected. Data was collected using interviews and questionnaires, administered on a drop and pick basis. The data collection exercise realized a response rate of 80%. Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was presented in the form of percentages and frequency tables. According to findings of the study, majority of the respondents agreed that the SPLM leadership role is effective in resolving the Southern Sudan conflict. However, the respondents stated that the root cause of conflict was economical, political, and social marginalization which the SPLM leadership still needs to address in the government.

The study strongly recommends that SPLM lead4ership and international community should establish constitutional institutions which will enhance democratic transformation and guarantee the success of Sudan’s lasting peace. The SPLM leadership needs to walk the talk to achieve the independence of Southern Sudan.