

United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit Communications & Public Information Office

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

FRIDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2013

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Highlights

Human Rights Watch Holds army accountable for violence against civilians

Catholic Radio Network, 20/9/2013 – Human Rights Watch researcher said army was accountable for violence against civilians in Jonglei State.

Skye Wheeler said in late July, South Sudanese soldiers shot dead two unarmed women, Anyibi Baba and Ateil Rio.

She said the killings were the latest in a pattern of grave violations against civilians by SPLA soldiers fighting a Murle rebel group.

The researcher explained that attacks on civilians by soldiers made Murle feel increasingly persecuted by their own government and that thousands of them fled their homes scared of soldiers to return.

Ms Wheeler said a woman told her that "we are not the ones going to raid, we are not the ones rebelling against the government but we are the ones being killed."

She recommended that the army needs to take immediate steps to improve its relationship with Murle civilian population including moving barracks away from Pibor town. (*Back to Top*)

South Sudan rubbishes Human Rights Watch Report

Gurtong.net Juba, 20/9/2013 – The South Sudanese government has denied report by Human Rights Watch released last week that it has unlawfully killed civilians in Jonglei.

"The human right report did not get the reaction of the government. They should have asked the authority to answer some of the things they have found on the ground," South Sudan's Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Barnaba Marial said on the UN Radio Miraya on Wednesday.

"Most of them are hearsays from individual citizens and those who have their own agendas in which some of the reports are exaggerated."

He however said government is taking swift measures to punish abusers of human rights in the country.

According to the report, killing the civilians had led to displacement of thousands of people to flee their homes, making them more vulnerable to attack from rival ethnic groups.

The rights group called on South Sudan to hold all abusive soldiers accountable and bolster military and civilian justice to curb further violations.

The 45-page report entitled: "They are Killing Us: Abuses Giants Civilians in South Sudan's Pibor County, "documented 24 incidents of unlawful killings of almost 100 members of the Murle ethnic group between December 2012 and July 2013 which the report said constituted serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

The report also describes how the South Sudan's army, SPLA burned and looted homes, physically and verbally abused civilians, and destroyed schools, churches, and the compounds of aid agencies providing life-saving assistance.

On Tuesday, South Sudanese Vice President James Wani Igga directed authorities to punish abusers of human rights in the country. He also called for more education to the citizens on what human rights are. (*Back to Top*)

South Sudan president Kiir accuses army of corruption

Sudantribune.com Juba, 20/9/2013 – The South Sudanese president, Salva Kiir Mayardit, has accused the country's forces of corruption, saying it had been squandering resources through dubious activities including ghost names on payroll system.

Kiir, also the commander-in-chief of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), made the remarks in the Western Bahr el Ghazal's capital, Wau, when he visited the area on Wednesday to witness the graduation of over 200 ex-combatants trained in various non-combat skills.

The president has also proceeded to his home state of Warrap where he is expected to hold a political rally on the visit which was expected to take a number of days.

The remarks directly accusing his army of corruption were the first from the president since the country became independent in 2011.

He revealed that despite the huge budget allocated every year to the army "there are no even vehicles to transport soldiers on missions".

Four defence ministers have represented the army at the cabinet since 2005 with the latest being Kuol Manyang Juuk, who in August quit his gubernatorial job in the troubled Jonglei state.

In February last year the South Sudan Anti-Corruption Commission (SSACC) asked the SPLA top generals to declare their income and assets, in an effort to tackle corruption.

The accounts of the army and other organised forces have not been audited since 2005 and a lot of money is believed to be unaccounted.

Reports suggest that Juuk may introduce reforms in the army and work to reorganise the different armies. Critics say he has failed in Jonglei state to create harmony in the communities despite his reconciliation messages, adding that his reform agenda may instead polarize the national army too.

Recently, Mai has reportedly fallen out with president Kiir on a number of issues in relations to the army and the ongoing political rivalry in the country. Mai has reportedly refused the army to be used in the current political wrangling in the country. (*Back to Top*)

Minister urges youth to avoid politicians

Gurtong.net Juba, 19/9/2013 – South Sudan's Deputy Minister of Interior and Wild Life Conservation Jadalla Augustino Wani has urged youth to distance themselves from politicians who want to destroy the country.

Wani spoke on Tuesday during a workshop that brought youth representatives from all the 10 States of South Sudan in an effort to better their understanding on the insecurity in the country and how it should be tackled.

"Youth are pillars of this nation, however, you need to stay away from politicians whom people have lost trust in and want to destroy this nation," Wani said.

"Together you can ensure peace and stability of South Sudan," he said.

The workshop was organized by the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), a Finnish non-governmental organization that advocates for peaceful conflict resolution and building sustainable peace.

Wani reiterated the Ministry of Interior's concern on curbing the nonstop ongoing insecurity in the country.

He however, said the police have embarked on new techniques of uprooting criminals especially in Juba.

He said the police have arrested several criminals in recent weeks that are now helping in unveiling more information about criminals' hides and techniques sued during the sinister acts, adding soon the police will also move to the various States after subsiding the insecurity situation in the Capital, Juba. (*Back to Top*)

SPLM State secretariat sacks four senior officials

Radio Miraya, 19/9/2013 – Lakes State's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Chairperson, Daniel Awet Akot has dismissed four County secretaries and appointed their replacements.

The secretaries are from the counties of Rumbek Central, Cueibet, Rumbek North and Yirol East.

Their dismissal was announced by the acting SPLM State Secretary, Mabor Ater Dhuol who explained the action was taken after their prolonged absenteeism from work.

"They were advised since last year to report to their bases in order run the daily activities of the party, unfortunately these counties have witnessed the long absence of these officials," he said. (*Back to Top*)

Police to establish emergency call center

Radio Miraya, 19/9/2013 – Police have announced a plan to set up an emergency call center for the public to report crime cases, in an effort to curb crime in the country.

In an exclusive interview on Radio Miraya, the Inspector General of Police, Gen. Pieng Deng Kuol said the police service is in discussions about opening the center.

"Now we are organizing with all the operators. But you have to have a center where all these calls come in and are sent to station for rescue and we hope that it is going to be soon," he said.

Telecommunication and Postal Services Minister, Rebecca Joshua said her Ministry is committed to enhancing security infrastructure.

"There is a plan for 2013, so that whenever anything happened, our people can call for rescue."

In another development, Inspector General Kuol said salaries and benefits of 16,000 ghost workers on the police payroll have been frozen until their status has been verified.

"For sure they will not be paid now till they are verified. Some have gone to the army, some have joined their families and there are those who have died. So these are the facts coming up now as we try to verify," he said.

The screening exercise established that there are 35, 000 verified police personnel on the payroll. (*Back to Top*)

Ministry of Telecom to ensure a revamped to yield technological advancements

The Citizen TV Juba, 20/9/2013 – The Minister for Telecommunication Rebecca Joshua Okwachi says that her ministry is working hard to bring accessible, affordable telecom services that will benefit both the local and urban communities.

US special Envoy Donald Booth has held closed door meeting with the National Election Commission to assess the challenges facing them and pave way on how the US can assist. The commission lacks funds although some 158 Million SSP is needed for starting the work.

Aids Commission says that 2.6 among adults have HIV/ Aids and the commissioner Dr. Esterina Novello says that they will put ways on how to reduce on new infections in the ten states

Constituency Development Fund is always given to member of parliaments and now a new website that will help people to follow the fund is launched to help upload information about the funds.

UNMIS Military has been working for over six months in Pibor despite the harsh terrain and floods to patrol the areas. Many cases of intertribal conflict and insecurity continue to scare the locals but the team has making ground patrols to give the public security.

Inspector complains of government officials quitting work

Easter Radio, 20/9/2013 – Yei River County Information Inspector complained that many government employees were leaving their positions for private sectors or NGOs due to low salaries in public service.

Ephraim Jomo Michael said abandoning public service to look for highly paid jobs was not a national spirit because the positions would become vacant, Easter Radio reported.

He underscored that nationalism and patriotism were concerned with the love to develop the nation regardless of salaries.

Mr Jomo said it was time to rebuild the nation after the destruction caused by the war.

He encouraged the employees to keep working for the government to develop the nation despite low salaries. (*Back to Top*)

Juba Central Prison in deplorable condition

Bakhita Radio, 20/9/2013 – Juba Central Prison Director said the prison faces deplorable conditions.

Major General Simon Wani Ramba said the prison is overcrowded and accommodate more than its capacity, Bakhita Radio reported.

He said the prison administration is planning to send prisoners with minor crimes to work in farms as one way of resolving accommodation problem.

Mr Ramba lamented that due to limited spaces, juveniles and mentally ill persons were all squeeze to one room.

He urged the national Health ministry to get some medications and a psychotic doctor to heal the mentally ill prisoners. (*Back to Top*)

Yei population growth needs more resources

Easter Radio, 19/9/2013 – The growing population of Yei River County in Central Equatoria state needs more resources for basic service delivery.

Commissioner Juma David Augustine said they are very much disadvantaged because few people were registered during the census which badly affected the money injected to the county for services delivery, Easter Radio reported.

He said Yei now has the population of more than 500 thousand people and the county has widened to almost ten kilometers square.

Mr Juma lamented that Yei schools accommodate children ranging from 120 to 180 per a class.

The Commissioner said equal distribution of resources was needed in order for citizens to feel the presence of government services.

He expressed fear that Yei town was growing into urban slums which reflect a major future challenge. (*Back to Top*)

Yei Commissioner decries development grant cut

Easter Radio, 19/9/2013 – Yei River County Commissioner in Central Equatoria state said the cut down of the development grants affected service delivery.

Juma David Augustine clarified that the grants are no longer coming to the county but the citizens are expecting services.

The Commissioner said should the government get funds it has to put Yei as priority in terms of extra support to boost services provision.

Mr Juma revealed that Yei was getting two million South Sudanese Pounds from the Local Government which is very small compared to the rapid growing population.

He lamented that Yei which has one of the big referral hospitals in the state does not have a single ambulance.

Mr Juma pointed out that Yei Civil Hospital is treating people from Lainya, Morobo and Juba counties.

He said most parts of the county lack Primary Health Care Centres that could help rural population.

Commissioner asked for more support from national and state governments to boost services provision. (*Back to Top*)

Vice-President encourages Human Rights inclusion into Constitution

Bakhita Radio, 19/9/2013 – The Vice President of the Republic encouraged lawmakers to include human rights laws into the national Constitution.

James Wani Igga said human rights cannot just be talked verbally but be enshrined into the national Constitution, Bakhita Radio reported.

He stressed the need to educate citizens about their rights.

Mr Wani Igga urged human rights bodies to collaborate with ministries of Interior, Defence and National Security to prevent abuses.

The Vice President said the government was doing it best to control and punish human rights violators in Jonglei state.

He blamed human rights bodies for contradicting and accusing the government for punishing rights violators after committing crimes.

Mr Wani Igga urged Human Rights Watch not to interfere with laws of the country.

Igga made the remarks during a human rights promotion forum on Wednesday in Juba. (*Back to Top*)

W. Bahr el Ghazal raises status of Mapel to payam level

Sudantribune.com Wau, 19/9/2013 – Authorities from South Sudan's border state of Western Bahr el Ghazal on Wednesday raised the status of Mapel, a strategic area located some 45 miles south east of Wau town.

The area straddles Western Equatoria State to the south, Warrap in the north and Lakes State to the east.

It is a historical area in Western Bahr el Ghazal, as it hosted the administrative structures and the command base of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) during the over two decades of years of war with the Sudan Armed Forces.

South Sudan formally broke away from Sudan in 2011, following the conduct of the referendum on the self-determination provided under the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which ended the conflict.

The area is inhabited by the Luo tribe, which known as Jurhchol in South Sudan.

Mapel also served as a zonal headquarters for international relief organizations providing humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced people after the SPLA attempted to take Wau from the Sudan Armed Forces in 1988, resulting in the mass displacement of civilians in and around Wau town.

The elevation of the status from being a boma [sub-district] to a payam [district] level was announced by Western Bahr el Ghazal state Governor, Rizik Zachariah Hassan during a visit as part of the high-level government delegation that accompanied President Salva Kiir Mayardit to the area on Wednesday.

Governor Hassan inaugurated the building of an administration office for the payam headquarters, police station with detention cells, catering centre and market place in addition to seven shallow wells for potable water as well as agriculture and providing animals with water. (*Back to Top*)

Relief commission delays assistance as reports on flood victims differ

Gurtong.net Bor, 19/9/2013 – The Chairperson of South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC), Peter Lam, has said that the humanitarian assistance to the flood victims

has delayed as the commission received conflicting reports on the number of those affected by floods in South Sudan.

Peter Lam says because of a report given by Jonglei state government, they are going to send a technical team comprising both the government and humanitarian agencies to verify the population of the affected people in the state.

"The reports we are receiving are different than the report that the government of Jonglei has which is 115,000. And by the way all the partners, international partners are reporting that the total affected in South Sudan is 27,000 and in Jonglei report you can see that it is 115,000, I think that is a very big gap," said the chairperson of SSRRC Lam.

SSRRC Chairperson was a member of national emergency committee formed by the president of republic of South Sudan, Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit to assess and give the accurate figure of the affected population in six states.

He said that they have Bor town affected very heavily and some other eight or seven counties including Bor County.

"We say that we are going to send a technical team to come here and do a join assessment both with humanitarians partners, to come out with the number agree upon by all of us so that they can assist the population affected," Peter Lam has said told journalists.

He said that SSRRC has some materials that will soon be distributed to affected families in Bor town.

Last week, the Jonglei State government officials disputed the reports by the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission that only the business people are affected by the floods in Bor town.

The South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) had announced that the flood affected area in Jonglei State is only Akobo area with minimum destruction to the properties and Marol Market with about 5,000 individuals affected, adding that the only affected people are businessmen in Bor.

However, the Member of Parliament representing Bor town constituency, Philip Thon Nyok, told the media that the numbers reported are false as the affected population may reach about two thirds of the population in Bor.

The States of Warap, Unity, Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Western Bahr El Ghazal are the worst affected.

The Commission is working tirelessly in collaboration with the local and international humanitarian agencies operating in the country as well as the offices of South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in the 10 States to respond to the needs of the flood victims.

The SSRRC Boss said that the main challenge facing rescue operation is lack of roads to access the affected areas. (*Back to Top*)

Education minister on assessment visit in Upper Nile

Gurtong.net Malakal, 19/9/2013 – The National Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Dr. John Gai Yoh, paid an official visit to Upper Nile University as part of assessing the education status in South Sudan.

The minister was received in Malakal airport by the Vice Chancellor of the Upper Nile University Prof. Bol Deng Chol and the state Education Minister Ustaz Daniel Wuor Joak and other state government officials.

The minister reveals that his visit with his team from Juba was to collect information for arranging his plans for the new activities of his new office.

Gai said that new ministers have been given 90 days by the president to present their plans of activities which he said is one of his visits.

The new minister started his visits on the 09th of September 2013 a tour to the Public Universities in which he began his works with Dr. John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology in Bor Jonglei State, Rumbek University, Western Bahr el Ghazal state, University of Bar El Ghazal in Wau, then to Upper Nile University and will finalized with Juba University.

The education ministry congratulated the Upper Nile University for having been operating in the difficult time of the austerity measures that nearly affected the progress.

However he urged the administration though there are still difficulties they have to continue but with the hope that all solution will be realized soon.

The new minister John Gai said that they will try their best to at least bring change to the Public Universities in the country that have been suffering so that the education system is upgraded to a level that will be able to make it compete in the global level.

University's Principal Prof. Job Akuei Alith told the minister the problems of paying lecturers to have created a negative impact on the university in which about seven lecturers have left the university for other universities in the country.

He said the problem is because of poor pay and job satisfaction therefore he urged the minister to improve the staff pay.

University workers also urged the new minister to look into their problems of low payment and sometime not being paid thus calling for improvement in their services too. (*Back to Top*)

Residents notified on herd of elephants crossing to Magwi

Gurtong.net Torit, 19/9/2013 – Magwi County inhabitants have been alerted over a large number of elephants crossing from Ikwoto County moving towards Magwi County within Eastern Equatoria State.

The State Local Government, Law Enforcement and Wildlife Environment Minister Charles Lokonoi Ambrose confirmed as true reports of aggressive Elephants destroying farms in Ikwoto County urged the residents to be vigilant as the government plans to intervene.

He told the press that his Ministry was organizing and preparing fully to send a troop of Wildlife rangers as response to threatening movement of arrogant elephants in Magwi County.

Advising the inhabitants to keep away from killing them or interfering with them, the leader also told journalists that his authority has been in consistent contact Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in the Country of South Sudan to rapidly intervene so to scare the untamed elephants.

The Minister who appreciates a positive response from WCS, told the press that the elephants on their arrival to the community's farms, do not tolerate obeying cries of locals from frightening them away, instead they intensify destruction further.

He also confirmed he has sent an emergency response team to the affected areas so to assess the destruction's extent or intensity.

He pointed out that a platoon of about 35 plus wildlife forces currently stationed in Bira centre has been laughable to be in charge of a huge number of elephants which according to him is estimated to be closer to 1.000 in number.

The Minister Lokonoi, who however warns the community attempts to kill elephants, disclosed he has already contacted and appealed to the Wildlife Conservation Society to come for rescue scaring elephants.

In order to avoid similar annihilation of the farms in the future, the minister told the press that the issue has haunted the state government pondering possible alternatives on where to relocate residential areas including farming areas to safer positions since the very Bira's farming grounds are positioned next to wild animals' circuits.

The current farming areas and settlements of the Community is in close proximity to Kidepo game reserve making it convenient for the wild animals to march into the farms anytime they choose when they pass by.

Furthermore, the Minister Lokonoi told Journalists that his Ministry has accordingly informed Ikwoto communities settling along the wildlife passageways, to remain vigilant as elephants are attempting to cross to Magwi County in a threatening bigger number. (*Back to Top*)

Poverty challenges Christianity in South Sudan

Voice of Hope, 19/9/2013 – Poverty is one of the challenges affecting Christianity in South Sudan forcing priests to break their relationships with Jesus Christ by abandoning the ministry.

Wau Catholic Diocese Bishop Rudolph Deng Majak told Voice of Hope after arrival from Khartoum that in the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference's plenary; poverty was one of the issues on top of the agenda.

He pointed out that poverty is very challenging to the mission of some priests in the country particularly and Africa in general.

Bishop Majak added that choosing Jesus as a way of life means, abandoning earthly things.

He complained that Wau Diocese has few priests and not enough to evangelize over three million people.

Bishop Majak called on youths to join the missionary of Jesus Christ and live the life of Good News.

The Catholic prelate said young people who become catechists were discouraged after discovering that Church's work earns no money.

Bishop Majak urged families to support the church by producing good generation and hard workers to help in the growth of faith. (*Back to Top*)

Critics condemn South Sudanese churches' focus on profit

Theniles.org Yei, 19/9/2013 – Christians have accused some South Sudanese churches of corruption, complaining they take payment for prayers.

Small Joice, a committed member of Episcopal Church of Sudan, said a Kenyan pastor operating in Morobo "was taking 25 SSP (approximately 7 USD) from each person who came to be prayed for".

Her claim supports widespread rumours of church leaders requesting specific sums of money from their people in return for prayers.

The growing practice of 'selling spiritual services' is widely practiced in the country's capital city Juba. This has angered the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), a body that regulates the operations of churches in the country.

"In the church we serve people freely, not for money." Critics argue that the trend is demoralising the entire church in the young country.

"Going to a church leader for comfort is supposed to be free of charge," said Joice. "In the church we serve people freely, not for money."

Bishop Hilary Lwate Adeba of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and a member of the New Sudan Council of Churches condemn the practice. "These are not churches. They are people who have personal interests to fulfill -- not God's," he said.

James, a member of South Sudan's United Methodist Church, who asked to be identified by his first name only, is among the citizens complaining that the church is not transparent.

"All departments of our church keep receiving funds. For example there is usually 50,000 USD sent every year from The General Board of Global Ministries to support the health department," he said. "Information on how it is spent is not accessible."

He reiterated complaints made by the church's department of women to their leaders, including the two bishops of the Holston Conference and East Africa Annual Conference. Earlier this year they accused Reverend Fred Dearing, the highest ranking church official, of keeping their oil press, one

truck and grain-grinding mill as well as an unspecified amount of money. They argue these items should be used to provide income for the women's department.

Reverend Fred Dearing declined to respond to The Niles regarding the complaints.

South Sudan has six major churches: The Episcopal Church of the Sudan, the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church of Sudan, the Sudan Pentecostal Church, the African Inland Church and the Sudan Interior Church. Some of the churches operating under the umbrella of the NSCC date back to colonial times.

They operate under certain rules -- including restraining from asking money from their followers in 'deceitful way'.

Allegations of church leaders asking their followers to pay for blessings have caused an outcry among the churches registered with the NSCC. Many have exerted pressure on the South Sudanese government to step in.

"Religions, especially churches, are not supposed to ask for money from their followers in order to offer their services." Mary Apayi, Central Equatoria State's Minister for Gender, Development, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs, condemned the practice. Speaking on Miraya FM radio station, she said the government wants churches to operate as they did in the past, without paying money to priests, aside from the usual collections. She pointed out that churches are registered as non-profit-making entities.

"Religions, especially churches, are not supposed to ask for money from their followers in order to offer their services," the minister said. She outlined plans to call representatives from the major religions to a round table to tackle the controversies.

The NSCC, meanwhile, blames the unruly practices on the government for allowing the mushrooming of new churches without any clear criteria on how to establish a church.

The Bishop, Hilary Lwate Adeba of the Episcopal Church of Sudan in Yei, has stated that the NSCC's members do not want to associate with newly formed churches or sects.

Aware of the tarnished name of the entire church, the Bishop feels the government should take care of the issue as they have registered the churches and are therefore responsible.

"The NSCC has got nothing to do with it," he said. "It is the government which caused this problem." (*Back to Top*)

China to better Sudan, South Sudan relations

Gurtong.net Juba, 20/9/2013 – China on Wednesday threw its weight on supporting the two Sudans to improve their relations and cooperation.

This was part of the international support to better the relations of the two long term foes; Sudan and South Sudan as China said there is no problem that cannot be solved.

Chinese Ambassador to Juba Ma Qiang spoke during a workshop in Juba that explored on China's economic development and its relations with South Sudan.

"There is no problem that cannot be solved. We support the resolution from African Union (AU) all together. We will continue to participate in the peace keeping mandate of UNMISS and play a positive and constructive role in seeking to resolve all the outstanding issues between Sudan and South Sudan," Qiang told journalists.

"We suggest that the two sides maintain frequent high level visits and friendly exchanges, conduct comprehensive cooperation in political, commercial, trade, investment and education including agriculture."

China also commended Presidents Kiir and Bashir's high-level talks held early this month in September.

China is one of the biggest investors in both the Sudan and South Sudan's oil industry.

Leading world emerging economic nation, it is however, in previous months accused of playing standards; supporting peace on one hand and fueling conflict on the other in the two nations. (*Back to Top*)

Prioritizing humanity in Abyei

Huffington Post/Borglobe, 19/9/2013 – Two years after Sudan split the important central border region of Abyei remains contested between the governments and communities of a divided Sudan and a newly independent South Sudan. Home to the nine chiefdoms of the Ngok Dinka people and an important thoroughfare to grazing lands for the cattle of the nomadic Misseriya tribe, Abyei is in the news again as a long-promised referendum looms against a background of broken promises and failed agreements.

The people of Abyei are, once again, facing an immediate risk for enduring violence and displacement due to repeated inaction to establish political and economic stability. As the UN General Assembly convenes this month, the UN Security Council along with government of Sudan and the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) have the ability to address the stalemate situation and prevent another humanitarian crisis from delaying the advancement of peace in the region.

The relationship between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya is long and complex, and Sudan's half a century of civil wars have pulled the communities in opposite directions. Boundaries that were once tribally administered have now given way to sovereign borders, which has hardened positions and raised the stakes for what will come next. Abyei is among the last unresolved issues from the countries' split. The original 2005 peace agreement which culminated in South Sudan's independence also granted the Ngok Dinka and other residents of Abyei a referendum to choose whether to be administered as part of Sudan or South Sudan. Eight years later, there has been remarkably little progress on resolving Abyei, let alone the referendum. Instead Abyei has suffered two military invasions by Sudan's army, displacing roughly 100,000 Ngok Dinka civilians each time, and most recently the assassination of the Ngok Dinka paramount chief by a Misseriya tribesman. The region has seen the establishment of an Ethiopian-staffed UN peacekeeping mission to maintain a ceasefire and repeated attempts to build local governing administrations with limited success.

National politics have conspired to make victims of the people and communities of Abyei. The stalemate is driven by a consistent refusal of the Government of Sudan to implement multiple agreements and commitments, which would allow the referendum to precede as originally intended, inaction motivated primarily out of fear that the Ngok Dinka will vote to join South Sudan. Further, the Sudanese government has manipulated and mobilized the Misseriya to fight against the Ngok Dinka, impeding the opportunity for local solutions or political compromise. Although Sudan has successfully used Misseriya foot soldiers to grab land in Abyei, the Misseriya's goal is not Abyei, per se, but access to grazing lands in Abyei and beyond in South Sudan.

The international community has played an active role in trying to broker peace. Following the Sudan government's initial refusal to implement the 2005 Abyei Protocol or accept the "final and binding" Abyei Boundary Commission report, the parties sent the case in 2008 to the International Court of Arbitration. The Court ruling reduced the land in question, but upheld the core tenets of the original agreement. Most recently, last year the African Union High Implementation Panel (AUHIP) submitted a proposal calling for the referendum to be held in October. Importantly, the proposal protects the grazing rights of the Misseriya regardless of the outcome of the referendum, and rightly focuses on restoring and building good civil, political, social and economic relations between the two communities, thereby enhancing the prospects of peace between and in Sudan and South Sudan.

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) have repeatedly endorsed the AUHIP proposal, yet the Government of Sudan continues to drag its feet. After years of frustration, disappointment and displacement, the Ngok Dinka community has begun self-mobilizing to hold the referendum next month, as per the AUHIP proposal timeline. Yet with both the Government of

Sudan and the Misseriya community warning against a unilateral Ngok Dinka referendum, the situation could quickly escalate and again lead to violence in this tense border area.

The dirty politics around Abyei has come at the expense of the peoples of the area, who continue to suffer under this stalemate. Peace in the area will benefit both communities and both countries far more than continued military and political strife. While the AUHIP proposal is unlikely to satisfy everyone, it is fair and it can begin to establish the necessary environment that allows both communities, over time, to recover, reconcile and flourish. The African Union, with the support of the UN Security Council, must continue to actively facilitate positive change in Abyei so that the obstacles to their community's recovery and economic development are removed.

As the UN General Assembly meets later this month, and again in Addis Ababa in October, members of the UN Security Council should support the AUHIP proposal, and use these meetings to encourage members of the AUPSC to stipulate a specific timeline for implementation by Sudan and South Sudan of the various components of the AUHIP proposal, or risk forwarding the proposal to the United Nations Security Council for endorsement and implementation under Chapter VII of its Charter.

The voices of the people of Abyei must be heard and respected so progress on peace can move forward. Too often those with the most at stake are not allowed at the negotiation table. The referendum is the agreed upon opportunity for the people of Abyei to determine their future, and it will empower them to refocus their work towards healing their community and cultivating economic development. The referendum is not the end, but is part of an ongoing peace process that requires diligence and accountability. The people of Abyei have patiently and painfully waited long enough. It's time to let them vote. (*Back to Top*)

US still reviewing visa application by Sudan's Bashir

Sudantribune.com Washington, 19/9/2013 – The United States on Thursday said that a visa application submitted by Sudanese President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir to travel to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) next is still pending review.

The US official however, revealed for the first time that the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant issued for Bashir on alleged war crimes will be a factor in deciding his visa request.

"I don't have any update for you. There are a variety of considerations in play with respect to President Bashir's visa request, including the outstanding warrant for his arrest," US State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said in response to questions by reporters during daily press briefing.

"We're not going to sort through these considerations publicly. We're going to continue to do so privately and deliberately," she added.

She refused to speculate on whether the US can heed to a request by the ICC judges for arresting the Sudanese leader upon arrival.

"There are a lot of legal questions here. This is what I know: That generally speaking, because the United States is not a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC, the obligations that apply to member-states do not necessarily apply to us. Again, that's generally speaking," Harf said.

Ahead of the referral eight years ago, the US, which has been a staunch opponent of the court, sought to veto Darfur's ICC referral in a standoff with European members on the council led by France but later decided to abstain after ensuring that a clause is added protecting non-signatories from the court's reach and ensuring it is not funded by the council.

The ICC Pre-Trial chamber, in a decision issued Wednesday, said it had "… invited the competent US authorities to arrest Omar Al Bashir and surrender him to the Court, in the event he enters their territory."

On March 4 March 2009 and 12 July 2010, the Hague-based court said it "transmitted requests" for Bashir's arrest to all United Nations Security Council (UNSC) members, which includes the US, Russia, China, Great Britain and France.

The Security Council is one of the key organs of the UN charged with maintenance of international peace and security. Its members that have not signed or ratified the Rome Statue which established the ICC meaning the ICC has no jurisdiction over them. But the countries can 'decide to cooperate with the Court on an ad hoc basis,' said the ICC statement.

In New York, the UN Secretary General said the decision on whether to grant a visa to Bashir rests with the US but called on the Sudanese president to answer charges against him by ICC.

The Sudanese Foreign Ministry on Tuesday issued a statement accusing Washington of protecting Israel and violators of human rights and directing the ICC to indict African leaders who are democratically elected by their people.

It also said that the US has no option but to grant Bashir a visa under the headquarters agreement with the UN.

The independent al-Khartoum newspaper, quoting presidential sources as saying that Washington asked a "major African country" to urge Bashir to stay away and withdraw his visa application.

Criticisms

The visa issue has attracted controversy placing the US, a non-signatory to the ICC's Rome statute, in the spot light.

The US-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) has urged the members of the United Nations to publicly oppose attendance at its General Assembly by Bashir.

"If al-Bashir turns up at the UN General Assembly, it will be a brazen challenge to Security Council efforts to promote justice for crimes in Darfur," said Elise Keppler, associate international justice program director at HRW.

"The last thing the UN needs is a visit by an ICC fugitive", she added.

On Thursday, a group of Hollywood actors and activists wrote a letter to Obama urging him to block Bashir's attendance.

"While we recognize that the U.S. government is obliged to facilitate President Bashir's visit under the U.N. Headquarters Agreement, we urge you to do everything in your power to prevent the trip," it said.

The letter suggested a number of steps to discourage the Sudanese president from visiting.

The signatories including George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Mia Farrow and Omer Ismail and John Prendergast of the Enough Project said that the US Department of Justice should "explore filing a criminal case against him under 18 USC 1091".

"This law, which codifies the Genocide Accountability Act of 2007, allows for anyone present in the United States to be prosecuted for genocide, even if their crimes were committed abroad" the letter reads in part.

"By publicly raising the threat of such a prosecution and the specter that President Bashir's privileges and immunities may not extend to genocidal acts, your administration would make an important statement about the U.S. government's commitment to atrocity prevention and accountability".

"Declaring that the U.S. will only offer the Sudanese delegation the minimum amount of protection mandated by the UN Headquarters Agreement could also affect the Sudanese government's decision making process... Limiting the number of visas granted to President Bashir's security detail and imposing specific geographic constraints on those visas could also circumscribe the delegation's mobility and raise the reputational costs of the trip" it adds.

"In the event that President Bashir remains steadfast in his intent to travel to United Nations headquarters despite these actions, there are a number of steps that can be taken to impede his travel. Our diplomatic corps should encourage countries along President Bashir's planned flight path to refuse landing rights for his aircraft for refueling and restrict access to their airspace. The U.S. delegation to the United Nations and Ambassador Samantha Power should also encourage

senior UN officials and delegations from other countries to publicly refuse to meet with President Bashir or his delegation. Drawing on the precedent set by a similar rejection of former Iranian President Ahmadinejad in 2011, our diplomats could also coordinate a walk-out of the UN General Assembly session in protest of President Bashir's presence".

Several U.N. diplomats told Reuters they were surprised by Bashir's request to come to the United States. One Latin American ambassador said it was a "travesty of international justice."

ICC member countries are obligated, under the Rome Statute, to cooperate with the world court in arresting of suspects.

In the past, however, many countries, both members and non-members of the Hague-based court have avoided hosting the Sudanese leader, whose visit to the US or UN will be the first-ever for any individual indicted by the ICC for war crimes. (*Back to Top*)

Kenya's Longhorn swings to year profit, warns on taxes

Reuters Nairobi, 20/9/2013 – Kenyan book publisher Longhorn swung to a pretax profit of 151 million shillings (\$1.7 million) in the year through June, but warned that recently introduced tax measures would affect its prospects.

The company, which had posted a 25.9 million shilling loss the year before, attributed the better-than-forecast performance to robust demand at home and in the export markets of Uganda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Rwanda.

Its own internal forecast had been for 121.9 million shillings at the pretax level.

Turnover rose by a third to just over 1 billion shillings, the company said, adding it would pay a dividend of 0.80 shillings per share on earnings per share of 1.61 shillings.

Authorities in Kenya enacted a value added or sales tax last month, slapping taxes on items including books, and sending the retail price of various items higher.

"This is expected to slow down business and negatively impact on product volumes uptake," Longhorn said in a statement.

It however added that a stable economic outlook in the region could cushion it somewhat from the impact of the new taxes.

Longhorn, which is best known for text books, has been investing in electronic learning materials, in a variety of media and platforms, to benefit from the new Kenyan government's pledge to equip all school children with laptop computers.

Africa: How and Why Are Peacekeeping Missions Formed?

AlerNet/AllAfrica.com, 19/9/2013 – Why does the international community intervene in some conflicts and not others, and what are the laws governing such interventions?

Here's a quick look at what's involved in setting up a peace mission.

Who makes the decision to form an international peace operation?

The decision to deploy a peace operation rests with the U.N. Security Council, as part of its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The proposal for a new peace mission has to have a majority vote and no veto from the council's five permanent members - Russia, China, United States, France and Britain.

Most missions are run by the United Nations, but the Security Council can also authorize organizations like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), European Union, African Union and coalitions of countries to carry out a mission.

The missions vary hugely. At one end of the spectrum they comprise a few monitors to report violations of a ceasefire agreement, at the other a fully armed military force.

The United Nations has no military or police force, so it relies on member states to contribute staff and military equipment.

Is the new brigade in Congo the first time U.N. peacekeepers have had the mandate to use force?

No, but it's rare for U.N. peacekeepers to have this mandate. It happened in Ivory Coast in 2004 and in Congo in the 1960s.

Most traditional peacekeeping missions fall under Chapter 6 of the U.N. charter which has measures to settle conflicts by peaceful means - including negotiation, mediation and confidence-building measures.

If Chapter 6 isn't enough, the Security Council can mandate the deployment of forces by land, sea or air to stop what's going on under Chapter 7, which is peace enforcement.

Several international peace operations without U.N. troops have had U.N. Chapter 7 mandates to use force, for example the NATO-led forces in Afghanistan.

What happens if the Security Council doesn't authorize a peace operation?

South Sudan: 'Everyone is upset'

Arabian Business, 20/9/2013 – Critics say South Sudan — led by president Salva Kiir — is facing the same ills that always plagued the old Sudan — corruption, a lack of public services and repression of government opponents and the media.

Telsach gad, a teacher in South Sudan, had high hopes for a better life when his country became independent in 2011 after decades of civil war with Khartoum. Two years later, he has lost all illusions.

"The government hasn't done anything to develop the country," the unemployed Arabic instructor says, sitting with other jobless young men in a makeshift roadside cafe in the capital Juba. "We don't have jobs, schools, hospitals."

Western donors and the UN have poured billions of dollars into South Sudan, which won independence after decades of war with northern rulers in Khartoum, becoming the world's newest country and a large African oil producer in its own right.

Nobody ever thought it would be easy to transform one of the world's least developed countries into a functional, prosperous state, but the performance of the former bush fighters as rulers has fallen short of even the most modest expectations.

President Salva Kiir is facing growing dissent from the streets and from inside his ruling party. Critics say the newborn nation is facing the same ills that always plagued the old Sudan — corruption, a lack of public services and repression of government opponents and the media.

Two weeks ago, small protests broke out in Juba against the deteriorating security situation. While nobody regrets secession, half the population feels South Sudan is heading in the wrong direction with poverty and crime rising, according to a poll by the International Republican Institute.

"People are upset. Everyone is upset," says Deng Athuai, head of the South Sudan Civil Society Alliance, which promotes the rule of law. "Nothing is going right."

The absence of a real opposition party means widespread grievances find no outlet through the political system, but the calmness in Juba's dusty streets is deceptive. Many are afraid of the powerful security services and people are reluctant to discuss corruption in detail.

Instead of protesting, many flock to the churches to vent their anger. "People call all the time to set up counseling sessions," says Caesar Ojja, pastor at the Pentecostal Church.

Ojja says he heard more and more people talking about suicide due to unemployment and poverty. "People have problems and they don't know how to solve it," he says. "People are afraid to take to the street."

Responding to popular frustration, Kiir in July fired his cabinet, many of whose members had been accused of corruption and incompetence. He also removed vice president Riek Machar and SPLM secretary general Pagan Amum, his main political rivals.

Kiir consolidated power with the sackings but the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) will likely split as Machar and Amum have higher ambitions, says Nhial Bol, editor of the independent Citizen newspaper. Machar wants to challenge Kiir for president, while Amum has filed a lawsuit against being investigated on Kiir's orders for "disloyalty".

Bol said things could turn violent if the government failed to hold elections in 2015 as planned. An understaffed election body is struggling to organise a census and register political parties.

With only weak institutions in place, the country might break up along ethnic lines, as in the civil war when Kiir and Machar were opponents, according to a study by the Sudd Institute, a local think tank.

"If the cracks take ethnic lines and violence ensues as a result, the state may become dysfunctional, giving way to a large-scale ethnic violence," the report said. (*Back to Top*)

South Sudan is building a new nation

New Europe, 19/9/2013 – Two years on, South Sudan is beginning to build a nation, both in institutions and in the hearts of its people. There is a lot of hard work ahead and although the future is not assured, there is a real chance for the fledgling state, but it will need the continued support of the EU to develop.

This is the key message of Toby Lanzer, Deputy special Representative of the UN secretary General. He spoke with New Europe about what needs to be done and how the best way of building a nation's future is through education.

First of all, he explained the situation, "This is a country where everything needs doing. This country inherited nothing, no civil service or functioning state institutions. There are political challenges, humanitarian challenges, rights, development."

Not the easiest of tasks to try to solve. "It's daunting. When I wake up in the morning every day feels like the first day. I take solace in listening to people who have been engaged here for so many years. They tell me that it's a lot better than it was a few years ago. They mean that slowly and surely, there is a semblance of state authority in the 10 state capitals."

Another sign of the beginnings is education. "There are more and more children in school. When the peace agreement was signed there were 300,000 children in school. Now there are 1.4 million. It's true there are one million kids who are not in school, but it's a glass is half full, not half empty situation."

Lanzer also tells of roads being constructed and being safe with the militia gunmen and others who 'collected taxes' no longer to be found in many of their old haunts. One person reported to Lanzer on a trouble free visit to a remote town, almost adding as an afterthought "Oh and there were no mines."

Violence has dropped and fewer civilians are dying says Lanzer, "There is one stark exception to that, Pibor county in Jonglei, where there is an intractable situation that is leading to displacement, violence and continues to make people's lives unsafe and insecure."

"There is some light at the end of a very long tunnel," is his conclusion. "Building a state is going to take decades," says the humanitarian, but there are surprising stories in the new nation.

Lanzer tells of Guor Marial, a runner who fled the country after no less than 28 of his relatives were killed. Now he's back and competed in the 2012 London Olympics, under the flag of the International Olympic Committee, because there wasn't a national organisation in South Sudan.

Although he didn't win his event, the marathon, he did become a hero and inspiration in the country.

While the bean counters and policy experts may be looking at institutional capacity, Lanzer knows that people like this single athlete can help build a nation in the hearts of the people.

One aspect that brings hope is the role of women, who hold around 25% of ministerial posts and Lanzer is impressed by their commitment and energy. "These are strong women with clear views

and taking important portfolios. I'm a big believer in empowering women in countries like this because they do more of the caring. This sounds trite, but it is true."

He continues, "There is no guarantee that South Sudan will succeed. But, with hard work and discipline it could be like Kenya or Uganda in a couple of decade's time."

It takes time to transform a place that is incredibly poor to one there people have a roof over their heads, kids go to school, the sick can get treated in a clinic and you've got roads that you can use for trade. This, in an environment where you don't get shot at during the night, well these are great accomplishments," he says, while noting that "in Brussels and other cities, sometimes people have forgotten the basics that are crucial to moving things forward."

There is talk, in some political circles, that aid should be cut during austerity. Lanzer is dismissive. "I can give you the moral, the ethical solidarity argument. I can give you the argument that it makes sense if you want to expand your markets, I can give you the self defence argument, there are lots of good reasons why the international community have to engage."

South Sudan has the curse and blessing of oil. "The oil sector is absolutely key, for funding projects like road building, but also for developing a sovereign wealth fund, for the costs of running a state when there is no oil. Oil is vital for people today and generations to come."

However, oil has caused trouble between Sudan and it's newly independent neighbour, with two impoverished states fighting over revenue.

He looks back on his experience, "Timor faced the same sort of difficulties with its neighbour, so it is entirely possible that relations can improve. There will be short term shocks and disruptions in the relationship, as there were in Timor."

There is one message he has for Brussels, "It's important we stay the course," he says. Noting that quick answers are increasingly demanded, Lanzer knows that building a nation, from nothing takes time, and a lot of support. (*Back to Top*)

The Constitution and Presidential Appointments in South Sudan

South Sudan News Agency, 19/9/2013 – The mixed opinions need to be sifted so that the truth could get appreciated from the falsity. The South Sudan Transitional constitution (2011) says that the appointed Ministers by the President of the Republic shall be approved by a resolution adopted with a simple majority vote of all members of the National Legislative Assembly {See Article 122(2)}. The constitution did not say that the vote shall be on a singled-out Minister among the presented Ministers. That is, there is no approval for a Minister but Ministers collectively. Thus, either the whole list of the appointed Ministers is rejected or passed all together without exception. There is nothing called vetting an individual Minister separately. Even Article {57(h)} talks of vetting and approving "appointments" and not "appointment". That is why the case of selective rejection of Mr. Telar Riing could be termed as unconstitutional move by Rt. Hon. Wani Igga and his August House Team.

But the relevant question here is: What is the meaning and purpose of powers of vetting and approving the Presidential appointments by the NLA? It is nothing else but giving legitimacy to the appointments. Then where does the issues of qualifications, credentials and integrity come from when they are required by the constitution in case of eligibility to the President and the Vice President Offices as well as National Legislature Membership only? {See Articles, 62, 98}. Surely, these came from nowhere but anger and conspiracy based on ill-intentions against Mr. Telar. Hence, President Kiir should have considered Mr. Telar as approved by the NLA together with the rest of Ministers and sworn him into the office as Minister of Justice together with the rest of the approved Ministers. As a politician, President Kiir has to know who are his political friends who should be closer to his throne. Machiavellianism is not separable from state politics, and those who think that Kiir is mistaken to re-appoint Mr. Telar as his Legal Advisor are unrealistic Platonists.

Another relevant question should be: Why do we write a constitution and then do strange things outside the constitutional dictates? Why we don't put in the constitution what we would like to do constitutionally? The SPLM members should be in the better position to answer these questions

since their VIPs were the ones quarreling over the implementation of their own inappropriate imposed constitution.

I hope the mess-ups in the implementations and violations of the current transitional constitutions are doing a great deal of pragmatic civic education on all of us so that we learn to come up with a good constitution in future. Learning by hard ways is sometimes very good as it is said that where there is no pain there should be no gain. A lot of good ideals that are missing in the current constitution should find their right way into the next Constitution and many bad ideas that are incorporated into it should face a delete button without regrets.

Referendum and not clapping in the NLA Hall should be the way to go for legitimizing the constitution that the people of South Sudan want for their posterity. South Sudan should start looking for a Parliament that is well equipped with the Will of its dignified the people. It is by this that what is known as the rule of law (whether it is unjust law) would start to see better light in the new Republic.

Congratulations to Mr. Telar Riing for getting back into the political boxing ring with a head high for a strong knock out on "False Friends" who are now "True Enemies" of President Kiir's right to reign. (*Back to Top*)

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