

Forum: Security Council

Question of: Establishing an international framework in order to find peaceful solutions in the South Sudanese conflict

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I. Introduction

South Sudan, one of many countries in Africa with a rocky road to independence marked with ethnic violence, corruption and crimes against humanity. South Sudan as an entity has existed since 1972, causing a split in Sudan that has gained its independence in 1956, starting with the First Sudanese Civil War which lasted from 1955 to 1972.

Following the first civil war, the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region was established following the Addis Ababa Agreement which ended the civil war. In 1983 the Second Sudanese Civil War broke out after political disagreements within the government splitting the country between the central government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and is one of the longest civil wars to date, lasting 22 years until 2005.

After South Sudan gained independence in 2011, the SPLA formed the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, a party that has since occupied the majority of the parliament. Following an allegedly planned coup d'état in 2013, the party split into the SPLM and the opposition SPLM-IO and an armed conflict broke out that grew into an all out civil war. Both sides have received support from militias and allegedly other states, although the exact involvement is difficult to confirm.

Besides the political power struggle within the party that caused the split, ethnicity also plays a major role in the civil war. The two sides represent two of the largest ethnic groups in South Sudan; the Dinkas, standing behind president Kiir, and the Nuers of vice president Machar. This ethnic divide has been a cause of many crimes, including rape and ethnic cleansing.

II. Definition of Key Terms

a. United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

The peacekeeping mission was established in July of 2011 at a strength of 7,600 and received an extra 6,000 troops raising the current total to 12,523. The mandate of UNMISS is primarily to protect civilians, but also

to foster long term statebuilding and economic development, as well as supporting the government of South Sudan in exercising its responsibilities, such as, but not limited to providing security, law and justice.

b. Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development is a trade bloc made up of 8 African countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda). The trade bloc serves primarily as a platform for cooperation in the areas of development and environmental control.

III. General Overview

a. Previous attempts to solve the issue

i. Addis Ababa Agreement

The 1972 Agreement served to end the First Sudanese Civil War and was made a part of the Sudanese constitution. It established the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region and gave the region known today as South Sudan a level of autonomy, as well as its own executive and legislative bodies along with police and army forces. It was brought to an end in 1983 by the Sudanese government resulting in the Second Sudanese Civil War.

ii. Comprehensive Peace Agreement

The Agreement was signed on January 9th, 2005 by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the Sudanese government. It ended the Second Sudanese Civil War and established numerous agreement between the two parties, such as, but not limited to power and wealth sharing. It also set the date for a referendum on the independence of South Sudan, which lead to the separation and independence of South Sudan in July of 2011 with a 99% vote in favour.

iii. Ceasefire of August 2011

A ceasefire was announced on the 23rd of August, 2011 by the Sudanese president which would last for two weeks in order to allow for humanitarian access to the war zone and to assess the situation.

iv. Compromise Peace Agreement

The Compromise Peace Agreement was signed in August 2015 froze the fighting that lasted since 2013. It was mediated by the IGAD and was showing promising signs of ending the conflict. On Christmas Eve 2015, president Kiir announced a reform to increase the number of states in the country, which would allow his Dinka supporters to gain majority votes in key locations, which angered other minorities and triggered the growth rebel factions. The renewed tensions led to the renewal of hostilities between government and rebel forces in July of 2016, bringing an end to a year peace in the country.

b. Major parties and their views

i. Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)

The SPLM, led by president Salva Kiir Mayardit, is the nation's ruling party and as such is in direct control of the armed forces of South Sudan. The government has been heavily engaged in fighting with the SPLM-IO since 2013 and the civil war has claimed over 50,000 lives since the beginning.

ii. Sudan People's Liberation Movement in opposition (SPLM-IO)

An organization that has split from the SPLM following the 2013 unrest within the party. It is led by vice president Riek Machar and demands the ousting of the current president Kiir, as well as free and fair elections to be held.

iii. United Nations

The UN has deployed a peacekeeping mission to South Sudan (UNMISS) to keep civilians safe. Despite the mission's sole purpose to ensure the safety of civilians and aid in rebuilding, the peacekeeping forces have been met with stiff resistance from rebel and government forces.

IV. Questions to Consider

How to reduce the amount of weapons present in South Sudan in order to prevent further resurgence of violence?

How to engage neighbouring countries in non-military cooperation with the government of South Sudan to encourage peaceful, political solutions?

V. Conclusion

Regardless of numerous ceasefires and peace agreements, the situation in South Sudan remains highly volatile. The inability to find a working compromise between the various rebel groups and the government has led to the collapse of any efforts to bring an end to hostilities that have brought famine, civilian massacres, ethnic cleansing etc. with them. The resulting humanitarian crisis has drawn much attention from the international community, however efforts to improve the situation cannot go through until the fighting is brought to an end.

VI. Relevant Documents

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1996
<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1996>

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