

## **United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)**

Media & Spokesperson Unit Communications & Public Information Office

# MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2014

### **NATIONAL**

- South Sudan draft deal urges cesefire and pardons (AFP)
- Kiir urges aid agencies to reach war areas (*Gurtong*)
- Information Minister wants UNMISS to apologize or face action (Catholic Radio Network)
- Rebels targeted government premises governor (*Gurtong*)
- Heavy fighting wounds 34 people seeking shelter inside UN base (*UN News Centre*)
- UN South Sudan conflict fuelled by 'dividends' of freedom (*Daily Monitor*)
- Legislature approves state of emergency in Upper Nile (*Catholic Radio Network*)
- Community declines to host IDPs on their land (*Gurtong*)
- SPLM leaders failed to live up to party values official (*Gurtong*)
- Tournament to promote unity in Aweil East (Gurtong)

## REGIONAL

- Pressure mounts on South Sudan to end war (AFP)
- Nine Ugandan soldiers killed in South Sudan army (*AFP*)
- Khartoum 'concerned' over Ugandan military intervention in South Sudan (*Daily Monitor*)
- Kenyan senators slam Museveni on South Sudan (*Daily Monitor*)

## **OPINION**

• OPINION - An impotent African Union watches as killings continue in South Sudan (By Macharia Gaitho on The EastAfrican)

**NOTE:** Reproduction here does not mean that the UNMISS Communications & Public Information Office can vouch for the accuracy or veracity of the contents, nor does this report reflect the views of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Furthermore, international copyright exists on some materials and this summary should not be disseminated beyond the intended list of recipients.

# **Highlights**

#### South Sudan draft deal urges ceasefire and pardons

Agence France-Presse Addis Ababa, 21/01/14 - East African mediators are urging South Sudan's warring parties to sign a ceasefire deal to end conflict and atrocities that have devastated the young nation, according to a draft accord.

A separate draft deal urges President Salva Kiir to pardon and release 11 key political detainees, one of the key sticking points of deadlocked talks in Ethiopia mediated by the East African regional bloc IGAD.

Thousands have been killed and half a million civilians have been forced to flee the fighting between troops loyal to President Salva Kiir and rebels allied to his sacked deputy Riek Machar.

The draft ceasefire accord, seen by AFP and presented to peace delegates meeting in Addis Ababa, notes the "scale of human suffering... with great loss of human life, destruction of property and massive displacement" since fighting broke out on December 15.

The proposal demands an end to "all military actions", but also specifically highlights both sides must "refrain from attacks on the civilian population", including summary executions, use of child soldiers as well as "rape, sexual abuse and torture".

The United Nations says that atrocities including war crimes are reported to have been committed by both sides.

Both sides would have to "freeze their forces" in their positions and allow aid corridors in, with half a million civilians now having fled their homes.

They would also have to agree to an IGAD-led team including members from both sides and regional nations to monitor the deal.

The draft deal on political detainees urges Kiir to pardon them to allow their participation in an "all-inclusive national reconciliation process."

African Union Commission chief Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma flew to the South Sudan capital Juba on Monday to meet Kiir in a bid to help broker a peace deal.

Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir is to visit Thursday, at the invitation of IGAD chairman, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. (*Back to Top*)

#### Kiir urges aid agencies to reach war areas

Gurtong Juba, 21/01/14 - South Sudan President Salva Kiir on Monday called on aid agencies to reach all war affected areas in the country in provision of humanitarian aid.

Thousands of South Sudanese citizens have been displaced in their areas especially in the Greater Upper Nile region following a political turmoil.

"Humanitarian assistance to the war affected citizens wherever they are in the country should be delivered," Kiir told press in Juba.

He also announced plans to review all the government agencies, saying there are loopholes that need to be fixed following the failed coup.

The President also pointed out that government position on the peace talks with the rebels still stands on "unconditional cessation of hostilities" as soon as possible.

He insists that there is no any condition that can be tied to the cessation of hostilities.

Peace talks between South Sudan government and rebels in Addis Ababa brokered by the IGAD in an effort to end weeks of hostilities in the fledgling nation have remained stagnant. (Back to Top)

#### Information minister wants UNMISS to apologize or face action

Catholic Radio Network Juba, 21/01/14 - Information Minister on Monday demanded United Nations Mission in South Sudan or UNMISS to apologize in writing for denying him entry to its compound in Bor on Sunday.

Michael Makuei Lueth told journalists at the Parliament in Juba that UNMISS should forward a written apology or face a further action against Bor compound manager and the UN Secretary General Special Representative in South Sudan.

He declined to mention the kind of further action the government would take against UNMISS Bor compound manager in particular and the organization in general.

Mr Makuei explained that he was first denied entry with armed security men upon arrival, but compromised and lastly told to enter without camera crew to which he did not comply, but left Bor for Juba.

He added that it was not possible for him as an Information Minister to enter UNMISS Compound without camera men.

A lawmaker Samuel Lual Deng of Warrap State raised Makuei's disappointment in the parliament on Monday demanding a resolution, but the speaker turned it down for future session.

UNMISS authorities could not be reached for comments by press time. (*Back to Top*)

#### Rebels targeted government premises – governor

*Gurtong Juba*, 21/01/14 - Jonglei State Caretaker Governor John Koang Nyuon has announced that the rebel forces destroyed all official documents at the government premises in Bor.

The caretaker governor acknowledged massive destruction of government documents being committed by rebel forces loyal to Riek Machar after government forces recaptured Bor on Saturday.

"There are no documents in government offices in Jonglei state headquarters," Koang Nyuon told the media.

He said no government documents remained in all state government primacies in the state headquarters.

He said destruction is very bad in which one could not expect such thing to happen.

The State Assembly Speaker, Peter Chol Wal, told Journalists in Juba after his visit to Bor on Sunday that houses including governor's residence were burnt down by rebel forces.

"What I have seen when we went to Bor was a real destruction that cannot be done by the leaders of South Sudan," Chol said on Monday.

Speaker Wal says state assembly was in good condition with exception of his personal office and deputy speaker's office where all documents and televisions had been damaged, adding that desktop and laptop computers were also taken away by rebel forces.

Wal said that they need to form a committee to assess the destruction as rehabilitation and establishment of government will take time to return to normal as the destruction was targeting the government documents. (*Back to Top*)

#### Heavy fighting wounds 34 people seeking shelter inside UN base

*UN News Centre* 20/01/14 - Heavy fighting between Government and rebel forces in South Sudan erupted close to a United Nations peacekeeping base in the northern town on Malakal today, and at least 32 civilians and two UN contractors who had sought shelter were reportedly injured by bullets that landed inside.

The base hospital was also considerably damaged, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reported, noting that it is already protecting 22,000 civilians in Malakal.

Overall, UNMISS is sheltering more than 70,000 civilians who have fled to eight bases since conflict erupted between President Salva Kiir's forces and those of former deputy president Riek Machar on 15 December.

The fighting close to the Malakal base stopped late in the day, but continued with small arms fire in other parts of the town, UNMISS said.

"The Mission once again condemns any fighting taking place nearby its bases and calls on all parties to respect the integrity of UN installations and the safety and security of civilians taking refuge inside the bases and all UN personnel," it added in a statement.

Secretary-General ban Ki-moon has already demanded that all parties to the conflict respect the sanctity of UNMISS protection sites.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported today that 494,000 people are internally displaced and 86,100 have fled to neighbouring countries.

UNMISS, which the Security Council has ordered reinforced by another 5,500 troops, bringing its total to nearly 14,000, said it has conducted more than 140 patrols in the past 24 hours, including in various locations in the capital, Juba, as well as in Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile states.

On 9 January, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous said it could take up to eight weeks before the full 5,500-strong surge in UN force and equipment, including helicopters, is deployed on the ground.

But once they are there, UN peacekeepers, who currently lack the necessary vehicles, will take on "more proactive patrolling around the bases and beyond because, of course, the situation in terms of violation of human rights remains terribly critical," he added. (*Back to Top*)

#### UN: South Sudan conflict fuelled by 'dividends' of freedom

**Daily Monitor** Juba, 21/01/14 - The conflict in South Sudan is being fuelled in part by "dissatisfaction with the dividends of independence," a senior United Nations official said on Monday.

Ivan Simonovic, Assistant Secretary General for human rights, cited "a stark discrepancy between the availability of resources and the quality of life for the people" of South Sudan.

Reporting on his fact-finding visit to the country last week, Mr Simonovic noted that South Sudan's \$1800 per-capita annual income is more than that of neighbouring countries, with 80 percent of South Sudanese revenues coming from oil sales.

"At the same time, indicators of social development are extremely low," he said.

Mr Simonovic ticked off several such indicators, such as a 51 percent poverty rate, 47 percent of the population suffering malnutrition, 75 percent illiteracy, 75 percent with no access to toilets of any kind, and the world's second-highest maternal mortality rate.

"A girl 15 to 19 years of age has more likelihood to die in childbirth than to finish high school," Mr Simonovic said.

He added at a press briefing at UN headquarters that he had spoken to commanders of both sides of the "internal armed conflict" concerning their responsibility to protect civilians.

Mr Simonovic revealed, however, that he had not met with commanders of Ugandan forces fighting on the side of government troops in South Sudan.

Asked whether Uganda's involvement was helpful in resolving the conflict, Mr Simonovic referred to what he said was the stated view of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon – that "foreign involvement could only deteriorate this situation."

The assistant secretary general emphasised the need for accountability for atrocities committed by both sides.

Failure to ensure accountability for human rights violations in fighting between Dinka and Nuer in 1990-1991 was one of the reasons why the current conflict erupted, he said.

"Establishing facts" would also help promote reconciliation once a ceasefire is achieved in this round of violence, Mr Simonovic suggested.

Speaking separately to Dinka and Nuer displaced persons, it became clear, he said, that "they live in completely different realities" regarding culpability for the conflict.

An initial report on human rights violations could be published in "a couple of weeks," Mr Simonovic said. It would probably not name the names of those responsible, he added, suggesting "it is too early to be very precise in identifying perpetrators."

#### Legislature approves state of emergency in Upper Nile

*Catholic Radio Network Juba*, 21/01/14 - The National Legislature comprising of Legislative Assembly and Council of States on Monday approved Presidential decree on the state of emergency declaration in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states.

An extraordinary session chaired by the Speaker Manasseh Magok Rundial endorsed the state of emergency unanimously.

The Speaker hailed the house for compliance to the Presidential decrees on the state of emergency

The approval followed a call for six months' state of emergency in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States seconded by Majority Chief Whip in the National Legislative Assembly Tulio Odongi Ayahu

Minority Leader in the National Legislative Assembly Onyoti Adigo Nyikwec seconded the state of emergency declaration, describing its approval by legislature as the right step.

He appealed for more action by President Salva Kiir in Upper Nile region.

Cabinet Affairs Minister Martin Elia Lomurö presented a presidential letter with attachment of decrees requesting the speaker to convene an urgent session to approve state of emergency in Upper Nile region. (*Back to Top*)

#### Community declines to host IDPs on their land

Gurtong Torit, 21/01/14 - A Community has declined to temporarily allocate a piece of land to accommodate the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) immigrating from from the conflict in Jonglei and Upper Nile State, an official has disclosed.

Reliable sources have told Gurtong that the community in Magwi County through its leader who met the state government's delegation strongly vowed not to allow more IDPs to settle in the area because the region is already congested.

According to the state Deputy Governor, Jerome Gama Surur, who led the Crisis Management Committee to the Nimule payam in Magwi county, said Madi community to claim that the area is congested.

He told the Press that his committee did assessment with wider consultations with the region's authorities (in Nimule) alongside other side of Magwi corridor but the results had capitulated resistance responses certainly due to the land scarcity.

As alternatives, the deputy governor disclosed that his government will be deciding to take action because the IDPs situation could be worsened if there is no government plan saying other parts of the state notably Kapoeta East, Kapoeta South counties including Torit county, will obviously be priorities for land allocations.

The IDPs in the Nimule especially at Mugali area are now accommodated in schools, churches and small open places.

Subsequent to completion of a visit to Magwi county, the head of the Committee along with his accompanying team, returned to Torit where on Monday briefed a state Council of Ministers' Extraordinary sitting presided by the State Governor Louis Lobong Lojore.

Speaking to the press shortly after the council meeting, the government spokesperson, Clement Laku Chichim, who is also the state Information minister, recapped that the extraordinary meeting discussed how to cope with the increasing number of displaced people still arriving from other parts of the country especially the Jonglei state.

He appealed to the communities of the other regions notably Torit and Kapoeta to show hospitable and friendly faces to the suffering or homeless IDPs by living with them in harmony for a shorter time possible. (*Back to Top*)

#### SPLM leaders failed to live up to party values – official

*Gurtong Torit*, 21/01/14 - The Acting Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Dr. Anne Itto Leonardo has said that the current crisis in South Sudan is because some of the party leaders have failed to live up to the values of the ruling party.

"That is the short of some individuals; it is not the fault of the party. That must be made very clear to people particularly those who have taken the refuge," she said.

She said the current problem is because some of the leaders have failed to live up to the values of the SPLM and could not contribute to building a nation that is free that is and prosperous.

The acting SPLM Secretary applauded the Eastern Equatoria State government for working hard to ensure tranquillity is felt in the region and urged South Sudanese to start working together to realize restoration of peace and stability.

We must continue to work to build this nation through the Party, SPLM. It is our duty to struggle to bring in the crises down by restoring. We must pick courage to where it started," she said.

She said it is not SPLM that has caused all these confusions in the country.

"Those who made mistakes are those SPLM who have fallen short of SPLM values. Each one of us should have the responsibility of creating hope," she said.

She compared the 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement giving birth to the regional government of Southern Sudan, saying there is a very huge different as many things have tangibly been made as far in development.

"Currently especially in Juba and elsewhere (those) who do not understand the vision of SPLM very well, they actually blame all these atrocities on SPLM, thinking it is SPLM that created the problem. I want you and others to know, that the beautiful mission still remains viable and we must continue to achieve it," she expressed.

She said leaders must bear the responsibility of leading, uniting and reconciling people. (*Back to Top*)

#### **Tournament to promote unity in Aweil East**

*Gurtong Aweil*, 21/01/14 - The authorities in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state have mobilized the youth for a football tournament to preach peace and unity in the residential areas and beyond.

According to the sports chairperson of Amothic Boma of Aweil East county, Mr. Dhal Dhal Apai, the idea comes from the authority of the area and his office to engage youth to love one another, live peacefully and promote unity them.

"We as the authorities of the area especially my office and the boma administration of having doing this initiative of community league football every year with an intention to help unite the youth, make them to live in peace and promote harmony among themselves. As one of the key ways to success of why our youth have not been engaged in the fighting

is through this initiative," the sports chairperson, Dhal Dhal Apai told the press during his interviews in Aweil.

Dhal emphasizes on the uniqueness of the arrangement of this year and said that the participants engaged in the previous months with intentions of mentoring them for this special occasion.

He further says the idea is also connected with internal misunderstanding especially related to tribalism and politicising some of the issues which he says can harm youth in any society.

"This is to bring together these youth to learn from each other motto and objectives of our preaching for those three agenda of peace, unity and love among the youth. So all this time long, we have been coaching and mentoring most of the youth these residential areas through friendly matches in preparation for this event," he said.

The community league is expected to bring together 12 teams of the second division from Amothic, Mayomwel, Malek Yel, Naivasha, New Site, Kuom and Awuluic respectively for the period of a month and half with Amothic [Ariakriak] as the main venue for all the games.

He finally says that the administration has prepared 500 South Sudanese pounds as awarding trophy to the winning team among the 12 team and other various gifts to best player of the tournament, top scorer and the best goalkeeper respectively. (*Back to Top*)

#### Pressure mounts on South Sudan to end war

Agence France-Presse Juba, 21/01/14 - Regional nations heaped pressure on South Sudan's warring parties Tuesday to reach a ceasefire to end weeks of bitter fighting and atrocities on both sides that have devastated the young nation.

Thousands have been killed and half a million civilians have been forced to flee the fighting between troops loyal to President Salva Kiir and rebels allied to his sacked deputy Riek Machar.

Leaders of IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, are due to hold a one-day summit in Juba on Thursday, South Sudan's foreign ministry spokesman Mayen Makol said.

"Hopefully it is going to be attended by seven heads of state of IGAD... the key agenda of course is the negotiations in Addis Ababa," Makol told AFP.

The summit follows a visit Monday by African Union Commission chief Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma, who demanded both sides end the "senseless killings... and end the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in their country."

A draft IGAD ceasefire accord, seen by AFP and presented to peace delegates meeting in Addis Ababa, notes the "scale of human suffering... with great loss of human life, destruction of property and massive displacement" since fighting broke out on December 15.

The proposal demands an end to "all military actions", but also specifically highlights that both sides must "refrain from attacks on the civilian population", including summary executions, use of child soldiers as well as "rape, sexual abuse and torture".

Both sides would have to "freeze their forces" in their positions and create aid corridors, as agencies warn of a mounting humanitarian crisis in an already deeply impoverished nation.

A separate draft deal urges Kiir to pardon and release 11 key political detainees, one of the key sticking points.

Kiir, in a presidential address on Monday after government forces wrested back full control of Malakal, the last major settlement under rebel control, said that "presidential pardons and general amnesties shall be part of peace efforts".

Malakal's recapture, one of the main battlefields since fighting erupted and the key town in oil-producing Upper Nile, came just two days after government troops celebrated the retaking of Bor, capital of Jonglei state.

In Bor, civilians recounted grim stories of how the rebels gang-raped and murdered sick patients in the town's hospital.

The recapture of Malakal opened up the possibility of a shift in ceasefire talks deadlocked for two weeks, with some suggesting the government had been reluctant to strike a deal while rebels still held urban centres.

Kiir on Monday made a direct appeal to his enemy Machar, while still warning those guilty of crimes would be held "accountable for the atrocities they have committed."

"I still call Riek Machar and his group to lay down their weapons and come back and participate in the building of our new nation," Kiir said.

"Nobody will disown them for what they have done. We have a space in our hearts to forgive him and his people."

Rebels are reported to remain powerful and in control of large areas of the countryside, and battles continue.

IGAD includes Uganda as a key member, whose forces have a taken a key role in the fighting in support of Kiir.

Machar has demanded Kampala withdraw all forces, claiming Ugandan fighter jets have tried to kill him.

In Addis Ababa, little progress was seen Tuesday.

"The government was having consultations on the issue of withdrawal of Ugandans," rebel delegate Hussein Mar Nyuot said.

"We'll hear from IGAD and them on all of this later." (Back to Top)

#### Nine Ugandan soldiers killed in South Sudan: army

Agence France-Presse Kampala, 21/01/14 - Nine Ugandan soldiers have been killed and 12 others wounded during a month fighting in South Sudan, the army said Tuesday, dismissing rebel claims to have killed scores.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni confirmed last week that troops had been killed during combat in the war-ravaged young nation in support of PresidentSalva Kiir.

However, army spokesman Paddy Ankunda said Tuesday that nine had died in a single rebel ambush.

"Let there be no speculation any more," Ankunda said. "Uganda has lost nine soldiers and 12 injured in South Sudan."

Ugandan troops deployed in South Sudan five days after fighting began last month, and have a taken a key role in the combat, including the recapture of the strategic town of Bor on Saturday.

No announcement has been made as to how many -- and for how long -- Ugandan troops would be deployed. (*Back to Top*)

#### Khartoum 'concerned' over Ugandan military intervention in South Sudan

**Daily Monitor** Khartoum, 21/01/14 - The Sudanese government has expressed concern over the Ugandan military intervention in the current war in South Sudan.

Sudan's minister of Foreign affairs Ali Kartihas, told reporters in Khartoum on Monday that his government is opposed to any foreign military intervention in the neighbouring country.

"Sudan has the most interests of all other neighbours regarding what is happening in South

Sudan because of security, economic and strategic reasons," the minister said after holding a meeting with the Sudanese President, Gen Omar al-Bashir.

"Sudan is standing on the side of stability in South Sudan, but we principally reject foreign intervention in that country," he said. "This intervention may attract other regional sides to do likewise and that deeply concerns us; even Ethiopia has expressed its concern over these Ugandan military operations in South Sudan," he explained.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (Igad) will hold an urgent summit on Thursday in Juba to discuss the latest developments in the crisis. "The Igad summit to be held in Juba on Thursday will discuss the foreign intervention in South Sudan, beside the efforts of how to convince the warring parties to halt hostilities," said Mr Kartihas.

Sudanese political analyst Abdul Ali said to Africa Review on Monday that the Ugandan military intervention is very sensitive to the other countries in the region. He added that there will be conflict of interests and ambitions within the East African countries.

"I think this will also be of concern to the international community which pays special attention to the world's youngest and oil-rich state," he said. "For Sudan this situation is of great concern because of the oilfields and the flow of the southern crude through the Sudanese pipeline." (*Back to Top*)

#### Kenyan senators slam Museveni on South Sudan

*Daily Monitor Nairobi*, 21/01/14 - President Museveni has no moral authority to intervene in the South Sudan conflict, Kenyan senators have said.

The senators asked President Museveni to withdraw the UPDF from South Sudan. "Museveni has no moral authority to intervene in any form of conflict as he is also a cause for conflict over ownership of the Migingo Island between his country and Kenya," said Siaya Senator James Orengo.

Speaking at Jomo Kenyatta Sports Ground in Kisumu on Sunday, Mombasa Senator Mr Omar Hassan and his counterpart Mr Orengo also asked Uganda to withdraw from the Migingo Island "first before he meddles into other countries" political affairs."

Migingo Island has been at the centre of the storm between Uganda and Kenya for nearly four years now.

Uganda government spokesperson, Ofwono Opondo said Museveni rules Uganda basing on the wishes of the people and not foreigners. "The President of Uganda does not lead according to how Kenyans want but he leads according to how Ugandans want and therefore, that statement is outrageous" Mr Opondo said.

Meanwhile, the East African Community Parliament has called for a ceasefire between the warring parties. "As Eala, we join in the call for immediate cessation of hostilities in South Sudan and for the parties to sit on the table and deliberate on the restoration of peace. Peace is a cornerstone for development in any nation," said the Speaker Margaret Zziwa.

"We must assist these countries to ensure they come out of trouble. We therefore salute Uganda and Kenya for their concerted effort in ensuring security in South Sudan," she added.

President Museveni is today scheduled to preside over the official opening of the East African Legislative Assembly's (Eala) fourth meeting in Kampala.

EAC MPs are currently considering applications of war-troubled states of South Sudan and Somalia to join the regional body. The two countries expressed interest to join the EAC in 2011 for the case of South Sudan and 2014 for Somalia. The admission of South Sudan was put to a halt until partner states fully conform to EAC's desired needs. (*Back to Top*)

#### OPINION - An impotent African Union watches as killings continue in S Sudan

By Macharia Gaitho on The EastAfrican 20/01/14 - I have waited in vain for the African Union to summon an Extraordinary Heads of State Summit to discuss the disasters unfolding in South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

If the leaders of continental body can spare so much time and energy canvassing on behalf of some of their own who want to be held above the law, then surely they can find a little time to discuss relief for millions of ordinary Africans facing real threat of death and displacement as violence tears those two nations apart.

But no, the African Union is not about African citizens and their travails; it is about the rights and privileges of those who belong to that exclusive club of potentates who claim divine right to rob, loot and pillage with immunity and impunity.

The ethnic and political bouts in South Sudan and Central African Republic not only threaten to descend into civil war in both countries, but are also taking on all the characteristics of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

One would expect the leaders of a reformed African Union, successor to the much-maligned Organisation of African Unity, to rise to the occasion and demonstrate that Africa will no longer be a playground for ethnic warlords and their primitive taste for blood.

An African leadership that proclaims fidelity to universal standards of human rights and justice, as enunciated in the New Partnership for African Development and the African Peer Review Mechanism, would surely not countenance leaders within its ranks resorting to savagery in which the losers are desperate Africans.

On South Sudan, for instance, the international community has sat back and let Africa take responsibility for its own destiny.

The regional Inter-Governmental Authority of Development, Igad, is on behalf of the African Union, convenor for the South Sudan peace talks supposed to be taking place in Addis Ababa, the seat of the AU.

The role of the Western nations often accused of meddling in African affairs has been limited to bankrolling the mediation. But what has been achieved in Addis so far? Zilch. Zero.

President Salva Kiir and his foe, former Vice-President Riek Machar, have sent to the peace talks minions who can't make any decisions, while from different side of the divide they continue to send innocents to slaughter.

The Igad leaders, and by extension the AU leadership, have looked on impotently as the death toll rises and an increasing number of refugees stream out to Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and wherever else they can find safety.

An Igad Head of States Summit in the coming days will be followed by a gathering of AU leaders where South Sudan will be the only agenda item.

I can tell you for free that nothing concrete will come out of those talkfests. As long as African leaders refuse to wield the big stick, Salva Kiir and Riek Machar will never see sense.

And the two combatants both know that from their fellow African despots, there will be no threat of arrest and prosecution for genocide and war crimes.

The dictators' club has already set a precedent with the Kenyan case by lobbying strongly for President Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto to be excused from international justice mechanisms.

After floundering so badly on the mishandled Kenya case and generally under attack from the AU leadership, the International Criminal Court is unlikely to jump into the South Sudan and Central African Republic cauldrons.

So the world has forsaken the suffering citizens?

Not necessarily. In the face of African Union inaction, the United Nations must step in to establish special international tribunals, as it did with Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia and other areas deserving special attention.

It is only through mechanisms that promise punishment for leaders who kill and plunder that the culture of impunity will be dealt a blow, and the citizens will enjoy justice. (*Back to Top*)

For further information or media enquiries please contact: UNMISS Spokesperson
Tel.: +211 (0) 912 06 7149 or Mobile: +211 (0) 912 396 539