



# United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit  
Communications & Public Information Office

## MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

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### MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

#### NATIONAL

- South Sudan Rebels Say Ready for Talks to End Unrest (*Voice Of America*)
- UN supports ongoing peace efforts in South Sudan (*Sudan Tribune*)
- Brize plane rescues 183 in S Sudan (*Witney Gazette*)
- Crisis deepens in Malakal as fighting goes street to street (*Radio Tamajuz*)
- Sudanese president pledges to hold 2015 elections on time (*Sudan Tribune*)
- UN: 120,000 People Displaced by S Sudan Violence (*ABC News/AP*)
- Defected general says Unity state oil production has stopped (*Sudan Tribune*)
- Awerial IDPs' Situation Worsens: Official (*Gurtong*)
- Hospital Seeks Medicines For Injured *Soldiers* (*Sudan Tribune*)

#### REGIONAL

- African leaders seek peace talks in South Sudan (*Khaleej Times*)
- South Sudan Mediation Talks Begin without Machar Rebels (*DW*)
- S'Sudan crisis: East Africa leaders hold emergency *talks* (*Punch*)
- IGAD leaders in Nairobi for South Sudan talks (*Capital FM, Kenya*)
- Leaders seek to end Juba war (*Daily Nation*)
- Sudanese refugees in S. Sudan facing difficult humanitarian situation: SPLM-N (*Sudan Tribune*)
- South Sudan evacuation to cost Kenya Sh260 million (*Standard Digital*)

#### INTERNATIONAL

- More Norwegian emergency aid to South Sudan (*The Norway Post*)
- Oil prices mixed ahead of US report (*Business Times/AFP*)
- Insurance companies up premiums for South Sudan flights (*Global Travel Industry News*)
- South Sudan Violence Hits Oil Industry (*VOA*)
- South Sudan: UN Hopes to Have Peacekeeping Reinforcements in Strife-Torn South Sudan Within 48 Hours (*UN News Service*)
- US to cut South Sudan aid if government toppled: official (*The Times*)
- Welthungerhilfe warns: South Sudan is facing an enormous humanitarian disaster -100,000 Euro emergency aid provided (*Thomson Reuters Foundation*)
- Pillay Urges S. Sudan Leadership to Curb Alarming Violence against Civilians (*Sudan Vision*)
- UN Admits "Didn't See This Coming" Regarding Conflict In South Sudan (*NTD TV*)
- Flydubai Juba service continues as violence grips South Sudan (*Gulf News*)

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## OPINION/EDITORIAL

- Editorial: South Sudan's Imperiled Future (*The New York Times*)
- Editorial: South Sudan peace trip highly timely (*Daily Nation*)
- South Sudan: Are we helping to create a country or merely creating ravenous clients for an army of Western experts and consultants? (*The Independent*)

# Highlights

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## South Sudan Rebels Say Ready for Talks to End Unrest (Voice Of America)

Kampala — Forces loyal to former South Sudan Vice President Riek Machar said Thursday they are prepared to take part in talks to end violence in the world's newest nation and have named delegates to the negotiations, which would be held in the Ethiopian capital.

But James Gatdet Dak, a spokesperson for Machar, insisted that, before the talks go ahead, President Salva Kiir release 11 political leaders who were detained when the violence first erupted -- because the detainees are part of the negotiating team chosen by the former vice president.

Machar "made it clear that he was ready for the talks, but the members of his delegation, most of them are in detention," Gatdet said.

"So President Kiir will release them, then they will be ready to go to Addis for talks," he said.

Kiir has said he is willing to meet with Machar for negotiations to end the violence that has raked South Sudan for 11 days, but only if there are no conditions set for the talks.

Kiir met Thursday in Juba with African officials including Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn to try to chart a way out of the crisis, which erupted on Dec. 15 in what Kiir said was a failed coup bid orchestrated by Machar.

South Sudanese Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Mawien Makol Arik said the meeting with the African leaders was still under way, and repeated that Kiir is willing to engage with rebels, regional and international actors to try to end the fighting that has displaced tens of thousands and claimed hundreds of lives.

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom said the leaders have discussed a range of issues, including a cessation of hostilities, the "immediate start of talks" between the two sides, and "the detainees who are suspects of the coup."

U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan, Donald Booth, confirmed after meeting with Kiir in Juba this week that the president has agreed to hold talks with Machar, without conditions, to try to resolve the conflict.

Booth said he also met with the group of 11 political leaders who are being held in Juba, and that they are "secure and well taken care of."

"These individuals communicated to me their desire - and their readiness - to play a constructive role in ending the crisis through peaceful political dialogue and national reconciliation," Booth said.

China has announced it is poised to send a special envoy to South Sudan to help mediate an end to the crisis.

## UN supports ongoing peace efforts in South Sudan (Sudan Tribune)

December 26, 2013 (JUBA) – The United Nations on Thursday reiterated calls for a peaceful end to South Sudan's ongoing conflict, days after regional leaders visited the capital, Juba for talks.

Heads of states from Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have been actively engaging parties involved in the conflict to embrace dialogue as a means to end political rivalry in the new nation.

South Sudan has lately been tense, after what government said was a botched coup attempt in the capital. All fingers were later pointed at former vice-president Riek Machar, who denied and claimed it was a move initiated to silence the opposition.

“The mission fully supports these intense and ongoing efforts of South Sudan’s neighbours to seek a peaceful resolution to the current crisis”, said Hilde Johnson, head of the UN mission in South Sudan. I have been in regular contact with President Kiir and other political leaders of South Sudan on this very critical process to bring an end to the fighting and violence that is unfolding as we speak, she added. Johnson also welcomed the Security Council resolution increasing the numbers of UN peacekeepers and police by 5,500. These were dispatched to enhance the mission’s capability to protect civilians. “The scale of the crisis has challenged an already overstretched mission,” she said, stressing that UN personnel must not only protect civilians within their premises, but those generally under threat.

#### **POLITICAL DETAINEES SAFE**

Meanwhile, Kenya president Uhuru Kenyatta and the Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn visited the 11 senior political figures, being held in Juba for alleged involvement with the violence. The detainees, mainly ex-ministers and a former state governor, were reportedly safe, properly fed and had access to medical supplies.

Donald Booth, the United States envoy to the two Sudans said those detained called for dialogue and national reconciliation so as to end the ongoing unrest in the country.

Booth, who visited the 11 senior political officials on Monday, admitted that all of them were “secure and well taken care of”.

“These individuals communicated to me their desire and their readiness to play a constructive role in ending the crisis through peaceful political dialogue and national reconciliation”, the US envoy said in a statement.

"I will be following up to see how the government may utilise this constructive position", he added. South Sudan witnessed the worst violence in its post-secession era, after over 500 people were killed and over 60,000 displaced in various parts of the country when violence broke out in the capital, Juba on 15 December.

#### **Brize plane rescues 183 in S Sudan (Witney Gazette )**

AN aircraft from Oxfordshire rescued 182 people from war-torn South Sudan.

The 266-tonne C-17 Globemaster aircraft left RAF Brize Norton last Thursday to take part in an evacuation, which was ordered after concerns about conditions in the country.

After a nine-hour flight, covering nearly 3,500 miles, the aircrew managed to land at the airport in the South Sudanese capital Juba despite a crashed airplane on the runway.

Wing Commander Stuart Lindsell said: “We practise short landings in training but getting down on a runway with a crashed aircraft taking up a large part of it would really concentrate the mind and is way outside what we would normally expect.

“I think it’s fair to say that this C17 captain and his crew had one of the toughest days anyone on this squadron has had since we were stood up 12 years ago. It’s not just the aircrew but the RAF regiment who provided protection on the ground.

“The movers who helped get the passengers on board, the medics and the engineers – all of them have all performed brilliantly and I’m extremely proud of them.”

The aircraft picked up 182 passengers, including Britons, Commonwealth and EU citizens, who were quickly loaded before the short onward flight to Entebbe in Uganda.

#### **Crisis deepens in Malakal as fighting goes street to street (Radio Tamajuz)**

Upper Nile State saw continuing clashes for a fifth straight day with heavy street-to-street fighting in the capital and a deepening humanitarian crisis.

South Sudan's army (SPLA) is battling mutinous elements from various organized forces. Control over the state capital is contested and other towns have fallen.

Speaking to Radio Tamazuj from Malakal, a witness said that the situation is very bad and that clashes moved into residential areas after the defectors lost the main barracks to government forces.

"The barracks is empty – the government forces are following the defectors in the residential areas after they were driven out of the barracks that they occupied for days since the fighting broke out," he explained.

A second witness and resident of the town who spent two days hiding on the floor under a bed says that in his experience the fighting was worse than clashes in 2009 or 2011. "It is the worst fight that Malakal has witnessed, many people may be killed," he said.

He said that fighting moved into residential areas when the defecting forces were driven out of the barracks area and pursued by forces loyal to the government. He noted that combatants are both uniformed and non-uniformed.

### **Bodies in the streets**

According to the Upper Nile Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), fighting on Thursday was so heavy that bodies could not be removed from the streets. "There is no way – there is now no way because there is shooting," the director told Radio Tamazuj this afternoon.

Peter Pal Chol, RRC director in the state, said that he told his team "If the situation calms down you will go and collect the bodies, because they cannot do it now due to the shooting that is happening."

Chol called for an end to the fighting so that humanitarian workers can go out to their work. He said that his team is on standby to start working once the fighting ends in Malakal town.

He further declined to make an estimate of the number of casualties, but said he believes that casualties could be high because the fighting took place not only in the army barracks but also in areas occupied by the civil population.

### **Looting at market**

The entire market has been looted and some shops were set on fire. Several witnesses said that the looting was carried out by retreating defectors after they were driven out from an army barracks in the town.

One eyewitness speaking to Radio Tamazuj said that he saw the mutinous forces looting and carrying goods from the market to the southern outskirts of Malakal town.

The second witness confirmed the allegation that the defected forces were looting and breaking into the shops in Malakal market.

"The attackers were driven out and they came back in the town wearing South Sudan wildlife and prison warden uniforms," said the witness.

By evening it appeared that some southern residential areas were still under control of the so-called 'Machar' forces, while loyal government forces occupied more of the northern part of the town.

SPLA spokesman Col. Philip Aguer confirmed in an interview with AFP news agency that the town was still contested: "Our forces are in the northern part of Malakal and the rebels are on the southern part. We will flush them out of Malakal."

### **Civilians flee**

About 10,000 residents of Malakal fled to the UNMISS compound. Speaking to Radio Tamazuj, a university student who was among those in the compound said that children and women are the majority.

Many more people have left the city. Majok James, a civil society activist taking refuge at Akoka about 60 kilometres north of Malakal, said that the crowd of displaced there included some government officials such as the minister of finance, minister of information and speaker of parliament.

According to the director of the state relief commission, some citizens were unable to either leave the city or to enter the UN or were denied entry. "I am outside UN compound because they didn't want to let us in," he said. Many people were trapped in areas of the city without UN protection.

The director Peter Pal Chol said that those remaining are reported to have resorted to taking drinking water from the river because of lack of access elsewhere. "We try to contact UN agencies such as WFP and UNICEF to help people but it's not possible," he said

## **Sudanese president pledges to hold 2015 elections on time (Sudan Tribune)**

December 26, 2013 (KHARTOUM) - Sudanese president, Omer Al-Bashir, vowed to not postpone the general elections of 2015 saying "it will be held on time".

Speaking to the members of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) in Gadaref, eastern Sudan on Thursday Bashir said that the elections will be held as scheduled and "will not be delayed even for one hour".

He further said the voting process will be organised on one day, and the counting of votes and declaration of result will be done in the same day with the participation of parties' delegates to ensure the transparency of the elections and avoid any fraud.

Sudan's opposition parties call to form an inclusive government and to hold a national conference with the participation of rebel groups to discuss a peaceful solution for the conflicts in Darfur region, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile states.

They also say this interim government should organise general elections once a political agreement on the constitutional matters is reached, inaugurating a new democratic regime. But the NCP rejects this proposal saying opposition parties have to prepare for the 2015 elections and rebels should sign first peace accords.

Bashir who recently removed his first vice-president Ali Osman Taha and his influential aide Nafei Ali Nafei said the ruling party would elect a new chairman soon adding this elected leader will be the NCP candidate for the presidential election of May 2015.

He said that the ministerial change was discussed by the party's leadership before the establishment of a new party by a splinter faction led by Ghazi Salah Edeen Al Attabani.

Observers in Khartoum say that the appointment of Gen. Bakri Hassan Saleh as first vice-president should be seen as an additional signal that he would be the candidate of the NCP for the next presidential election in 2015.

The president Bashir further hailed the role of the Sudanese army in the South Kordofan where the military fight a rebellion erupted since 2011 led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North.

## **UN: 120,000 People Displaced by S Sudan Violence (ABC News/AP)**

The United Nations says more than 120,000 people have been displaced by continuing violence in South Sudan, and about half are now sheltering at U.N. compounds.

The number of internally displaced people has been rising since fighting started on Dec. 15 in the capital, Juba, before spreading across the oil-producing East African nation.

Aid agencies now need at least \$166 million to save lives, according to the U.N., which has urged South Sudan's leaders to start talks.

Regional leaders under a bloc called IGAD are meeting Friday in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi to discuss the crisis in South Sudan. That meeting is expected to produce a roadmap for peace talks between South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and the political rival he accuses of mounting a failed coup.

## **Defected general says Unity state oil production has stopped (Sudan Tribune)**

December 26, 2013 (BENTIU) - The commander of the South Sudanese army in Unity state who defected over the weekend claimed on Thursday that oil-production from fields in his state had to be halted due to lack of staff remaining at the oil fields.

James Koang Chuol, who took control of the army's fourth division in Unity state on Saturday, told Sudan Tribune that he had not ordered the shutdown. The decision, he said, was taken by oil technicians who were evacuated from the area on 25 December.

The UN says that over 1,000 are believed to have been killed in the fighting. Last week 16 oil workers were killed by their colleagues in a revenge attack for the alleged ethnic targeting of people in the capital Juba.

"We are not the one to stop the oil", said Koang, adding that the oil belonged to the South Sudanese people.

South Sudan's former vice-president, Riek Machar, who is leading the rebellions in Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile states, said on 23 December that forces under his command will divert oil revenues accrued from the country's oil wells.

Machar denies plotting to overthrow president Kiir but says he was forced to flee Juba in the aftermath of fighting between members of the presidential guards. He told Sudan Tribune that he intended to stop oil revenue remittances reaching the government in Juba.

"There is no administration in the country so the oil money cannot be taken by one side, we are not longer in the side of Kiir we have already decide break away from his administration so it is right that and good enough for Machar to say that the oil money to go to International community until we sought our problem", commander Koang said.

Koang, who declared himself Unity state's new governor on Saturday said the conflict in South Sudan was not about money. The reason for the defection of the army in Unity state, where most of the population is from the Nuer ethnic group, was anger at reports of mass killings of civilians from their community in Juba. Since the reports of Nuer being targetted in the capital revenge attacks have taken place against Dinka civilians in other parts of South Sudan. Two peacekeepers were killed with around 20 Dinka civilians in an attack on the UN base in Akobo, in the far east of Jonglei state last week.

Another Nuer General, Peter Gadet Yaak, defected on 18 December, taking control of Jonglei's capital Bor for several days until it was reclaimed by government forces 24 December

Machar has also claimed to be in control of Upper Nile state, South Sudan's second largest oil-producer. Fierce fighting has been reported in Malakal with both sides claiming to be in control of the state capital.

### **Awerial IDPs' Situation Worsens: Official (Gurtong)**

**RUMBEK, 27 December 2013 (Gurtong)** – South Sudan Relief Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) in Lakes state called upon central government and humanitarian organization to quickly respond to assist the IDP in Guol-yar of Awerial County.

Philip Kot Job on Thursday said that "situation is very critical and urgent assist to IDP is needed."

Kot explained that the people who have been displaced from Bor, by that fight between the government forces and the rebel forces have crossed the river in big numbers.

"These people most of them are women and children. These people are now just under the trees, they have no shelters. And they are drinking water direct from the river which is contaminated," he said.

However, the South Sudan Red Cross reported that 26 children had died among the people who have fled fighting in Bor and across into Lakes state since last weekend.

The Red Cross branch director, David Gai Deer said IDPs need shelters, water, and food drug and sanitation hygiene.

Deer say that "seven children drowned on Tuesday night after falling into the river during an attempted crossing from Bor to Guol-yar, a village within Awerial County of Lakes state."

"They don't have shelter because they run away with no even item along with them," he says. "So they have really nothing. So they are facing shelter problem, food problem and medicine and this the really priorities." He said there are about 31,564 IDPs stationed in Guol-yar and more are still coming from Bor daily by boats. There are at least 90,000 people who have been displaced in the past days'.

### **Hospital Seeks Medicines For Injured Soldiers (Sudan Tribune)**

**RUMBEK, 26 December 2013 (Gurtong)** - The 50 soldiers sustained gunshot wounds as they were deployed in Unity state in Division four where their commander, James Koang Chuol, decided to desert from the SPLA and joined anti-government forces loyal to Dr Riek Machar Teny.

Paul Dhel Gum, Minister of Health in Warrap State government said that "Twic county hospital received 30 wounded soldiers and they are admitted in hospital there – there are 20 other refer state headquarters at

Kuacjok hospital undergoing treatment from gunshot wounds. All those 50 soldiers were from SPLA deployed in division four but they were being targeted by their commander by disarming them and they were followed and later a gunfire were being opened on them – they escaped death and more wounded started arriving Twic on December 24 till date 26.”

Dhel said that there were no civilians being brought to their two separate hospitals in Twic neither in Kuacjok state referral hospital as part of South Sudan unrest power political wrangling in the country. Dhel said that “we are still expecting the arrival of more soldiers from the border of unity state. I am requesting our national ministry of health to support our state hospital with antibiotics and fluid injections to rescue the situation which seems to likely increase due the bad security situation in unity state.” He also added that the national government must treat their request as an urgent matter to save lives of gallant soldiers who sacrificed their lives in defending the sovereignty of the nation.

The Minister blamed international media for having misinterpreted the South Sudan “political power struggling within a party” by turning it as “a ethnic violence” in their reporting style.

“Our state is very peaceful - we try to protect all Nuer civilians who are serving under various section within our state – we believe as Warrap State government, South Sudan is not ready for any violence neither politically or socially - we need peace

and we are one citizen serving this nation – we are being define by world and international communities as South Sudanese and not as Nuer or Dinka,” Dhel said.

## REGIONAL

### **African leaders seek peace talks in South Sudan (Khaleej Times)**

African leaders tried on Thursday to advance peace talks between South Sudan’s president and political rivals he accuses of attempting a coup to topple the government of the world’s newest country.

As fighting persisted in parts of South Sudan’s oil-producing region, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn had “a constructive dialogue” with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, according to Kiir’s foreign minister. But the fugitive former deputy president who now leads renegade troops was not represented, and no political breakthrough emerged.

The next round of meetings will be held in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, where regional leaders under a bloc known as IGAD are to meet Friday to discuss a report from Thursday’s meeting, South Sudanese Foreign Minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin said.

Kiir agreed “in principle” to stop hostilities and to negotiate with former Vice President Riek Machar, who is expected to be formally invited by IGAD to attend upcoming peace talks, said Benjamin, who offered no details.

It was not possible to reach Machar, as his known phone numbers were switched off.

Government troops are trying to retake control of Bentiu, the capital of Unity state, from forces loyal to Machar. Fighting was also reported in Malakal, capital of Upper Nile state. Upper Nile and Unity comprise the country’s key oil-producing region, raising concerns that unrest there could cut off the economic lifeblood of the young nation, which gets nearly its entire government budget from oil.

Citing more progress against rebels on the battlefield, South Sudan’s minister of information told reporters that national forces on Thursday regained “full control” of Malakal. Michael Makuei Lueth said “criminal elements” had been looting the town, but the army now had it under control.

Military spokesman Col. Philip Aguer said government troops were “preparing to retake Bentiu as soon as possible.”

The government said its forces retook Bor, the capital of Jonglei state, earlier this week, but Hilde Johnson, head of the UN mission in South Sudan, said there was still fighting in the city on Thursday.

The fighting has provoked fears of a civil war in the country that peacefully broke away from Sudan in 2011 following a 2005 peace deal.

"The nation painstakingly built over decades of conflict and strife is at stake," Johnson told reporters at UN headquarters in New York by videoconference from Juba. "I therefore call on the political leaders of South Sudan to order their forces to lay down their arms and to give peace a chance, and to do so urgently." The United States, Norway and Ethiopia are leading efforts to open peace talks between Kiir and his political rivals. Kiir said in a Christmas address that he is willing to "dialogue" with all his opponents. The United Nations is investigating reports of mass killings since violence began spreading after a Dec. 15 fight among the presidential guards that pitted soldiers from Kiir's Dinka ethnic group against those from the Nuer ethnic group of Machar.

"It's very important to underline this is a political struggle," Johnson said, stressing that there is "multi-ethnic representation on both sides."

The United Nations estimates "well over a thousand killed" in the 11 days of fighting, Johnson said. Although the capital, Juba, is now calm, fighting appears to be expanding, stretching the limits of humanitarian workers and aid agencies. The UN humanitarian office said aid agencies need \$166 million to save lives amid the continuing violence.

The money will be used to provide water, sanitation, shelter, food and health care, plus protection for vulnerable people, the office said in a statement.

Some 58,000 people have taken refuge in and around UN bases in South Sudan, and more than 92,000 have fled their homes as a result of fighting, according to the UN.

The UN Security Council last week voted unanimously to beef up its peacekeeping force in South Sudan from about 8,000 troops and police to nearly 14,000 and send attack helicopters and other equipment. Johnson said she expects some military reinforcements and equipment to start arriving in 48 hours to help protect civilians seeking refuge at UN bases.

Before the 2005 peace agreement, the region that is now South Sudan fought decades of war with Sudan. One of the world's least developed countries; it still has pockets of rebel resistance and sees cyclical, tribal clashes that result in hundreds of deaths.

## **South Sudan Mediation Talks Begin Without Machar Rebels (DW)**

South Sudanese President Salva Kiir has begun crisis talks with fellow African leaders aimed averting a possible civil war. China, which has significant oil interests in the country, has also said it will send an envoy.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn were in the South Sudanese capital Juba on Thursday to attempt to mediate in the conflict.

Hundreds of people have been killed since last week, when a growing power struggle between President Kiir and his former vice president, Riek Machar, turned violent.

Fighting between troops loyal to either side became particularly intense in the Central Equatoria, Unity and Jonglei states, with hundreds of people killed and tens of thousands displaced.

"There are now people who are targeting others because of their tribal affiliation," Kiir said in a Christmas message. Kiir and Machar men are from different ethnic groups, which has exacerbated tensions.

### **Mass graves in capital**

UN human rights chief Navi Pillay said a mass grave had been found in rebel-held Bentiu. She also cited reports of at least two more such graves in Juba.

Kiir, an ethnic Dinka - the largest group in South Sudan - has said he is willing to negotiate and enter talks unconditionally.

Machar - ethnically Nuer - who is in hiding, is demanding that Kiir step down, accusing him of being dictatorial. But he has also expressed an interest in talks, calling for any negotiations to be held in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

South Sudanese Information Minister Michael Makuei Leuth said the government has not yet established formal contact with Machar. "For us, we are not talking with him," Leuth said.



Machar has submitted a list of potential delegates, including the former Sudan People's Liberation Movement secretary general Pagan Amum Okiech. Other senior party leaders from the movement, currently imprisoned in Juba, are also on the list.

## **S’Sudan crisis: East Africa leaders hold emergency talks (Punch)**

East Africa’s leaders are to meet in Kenya to discuss growing violence in South Sudan, where more than 1,000 people are believed to have died.

The talks come a day after South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir met the prime ministers of Kenya and Ethiopia.

Meanwhile, the UN said the first peacekeeping reinforcements were expected to arrive in 48 hours. Violence erupted 12 days ago between forces loyal to Mr Kiir and those backing his ex-deputy Riek Machar. More than 50,000 civilians have sought refuge at UN compounds in South Sudan.

East African regional leaders from the eight-member bloc, known as Igad, will meet in Kenya’s capital Nairobi to follow up on issues raised during Thursday’s talks with President Kiir in South Sudan’s capital Juba.

The talks were described by Ethiopia as “very constructive and very candid”.

However, South Sudan Information Minister Makuei Lueth told the Associated Press news agency that no contact with Mr Machar had yet been established.

The head of the UN mission in South Sudan, Hilde Johnson, earlier urgently called on the country’s political leaders “to give peace a chance”.

“The nation that [was] painstakingly built over decades of conflict and strife is at stake,” she said, speaking via a video link from Juba.

Ms Johnson said “well over 1,000” people had been killed since the start of the violence on 15 December and the casualty figures were likely to rise. She said she expected some UN military reinforcements and critically needed equipment within 48 hours. This came after the UN Security Council voted to almost double the number of peacekeepers to 12,500 in the world’s newest state.

Ms Johnson said there had been heavy fighting in Malakal and Bor, while the town of Bentiu had become calmer. The Bishop of Malakal, Hilary Garang, said the situation in the main town in Upper Nile state was one of lawlessness.

“There is no government functioning, there is no light, there is no water and people are fleeing, are going away. The town is divided in two,” he told the BBC’s Newshour programme.

“The two sides are taking positions and fighting can erupt any time they choose.

The fighting is also affecting oil production, which accounts for 98% of government revenue.

“Some oil wells are in the hands of rebel soldiers loyal to... Machar and we fear they may cause damage to the facilities and the environment,” Petroleum Minister Stephen Dhieu Dau told Reuters news agency.

He said the Thar Jath oil field in Unity state had been captured by the rebels.

Ms Johnson said there had been internal tension within the governing Sudan People’s Liberation Movement before the outbreak of violence. But, she said, no-one had expected “the unravelling of [South Sudan's] stability so quickly”.

She insisted that while the rival leaders came from different ethnic groups – Mr Kiir is a Dinka and Mr Machar is from the Nuer tribe – the conflict was political.

The violence first erupted after a meeting of the SPLM’s high council, when President Kiir accused the former vice-president, who had been sacked in July, of plotting a coup.

Mr Machar denied any involvement and said the accusations were an attempt by Mr Kiir to get rid of his political rivals. The fighting quickly spread to half of Sudan’s 10 states.

South Sudan has struggled to achieve a stable government since becoming independent from Sudan in 2011.

## **IGAD leaders in Nairobi for South Sudan talks (Capital FM, Kenya)**

NAIROBI, Kenya, Dec 27 – Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member states were on Friday morning expected to meet for an extraordinary session to discuss the situation in South Sudan and Somalia.

Heads of State from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia were to converge at State House Nairobi at 11am to discuss the security situation in the two countries.

“The communiqué should be expected much later,” the IGAD Secretariat Communications and Media Advisor Brazille Musumba communicated.

On Thursday President Uhuru Kenyatta who is the East African Community Chairman held talks with South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir in the company of the African Union Chairperson Hailemariam Desalegn.

It is unclear what the outcome of Thursday’s peace talks were but the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs did say they were also looking to open communication lines with rebel leader Riek Machar.

“We are trying to talk to Riek Machar. Very few people in the world have managed to talk to him. But we have an envoy from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and we are trying,” the Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Karanja Kibicho said on Thursday as he received 236 Kenyans evacuated from the conflict zone. By getting Machar to the negotiating table the Kenyan government hopes to ensure the safety of 1,200 Kenyans who are trapped in the rebel controlled region of Bor.

So far over 1,000 Kenyans have been evacuated by plane from South Sudan with charter planes being used within the two-year-old nation to transport Kenyans to Juba for their flight back home.

“I was working in a hotel in Bentiu on Sunday when they (she’s not clear which faction) came in shooting. I was lucky I just got shot. The Eritrean women I was working with were raped,” one of the returnees, Emily Wasike, recounted on Thursday.

Kenya Airways is expected to continue the evacuation exercise as more Kenyans make their way to the Kenyan embassy and the United Nations compound in Juba.

“We think the evacuation efforts will go on for a while because we understand that the numbers in Juba are continuing to increase and we are here to support the initiative for as long as it takes,” Kenya Airways Chief Finance Officer Alex Mbugua pledged on Thursday.

And as the evacuation exercise continues the Kenyan government continues to transport food and medical supplies to South Sudan with 55,000 tonnes transported so far.

## **Leaders seek to end Juba war (Daily Nation)**

Regional leaders Thursday stepped up efforts to broker a peace deal in the violence-stricken South Sudan. President Kenyatta and Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn held talks with President Salva Kiir, in the latest bid to stop the political crisis that has led to the deaths, injuries and displacement of many.

President Kenyatta urged the South Sudanese leadership to initiate dialogue that would end the political crisis.

“We in Kenya and the region are concerned about the loss of lives and resultant humanitarian crisis and would like to see the government taking the initiative to end hostilities,” he said.

President Kenyatta, who is the chairman of East African Community, spoke during a three-hour crisis meeting with the council of ministers of South Sudan at State House, Juba.

The President regretted that the crisis, which started as a party dispute, had been portrayed as ethnic cleansing by the media, NGOs and others.

“We should strive to correct that negative impression,” he said.

### **Good progress**

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tedros Ghebreyesus said “good progress” was made in the talks.

He told the AFP news agency that among issues discussed was the possible release of the 11 senior figures allied to former Vice President Riek Machar, who were arrested in the wake of the violence.

“The release of the detainees is part of what we discussed. The release of the detainees could be part of the solution,” he said.

Kenya is Friday expected to host a special Inter Governmental Authority on Development (Igad) summit to discuss the violence.

The new development came as more than 250 Kenyans were evacuated from Juba. Two planes carrying the evacuees landed at Jomo Kenyatta airport and the victims were received by Foreign Affairs principal secretary Dr Karanja Kibicho and his Devolution counterpart John Konchela.

Dr Kibicho said 1,200 Kenyans were still awaiting evacuation and some were in remote areas.

Yesterday, the ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was collecting information on Kenyans in South Sudan who needed assistance.

The data, according to a statement, would be used to “enhance planning and execution of evacuation plans.”

Those with relatives or friends in the violence-stricken country are required to send an SMS to +254 717865554 with the details of the person in South Sudan requiring assistance. This includes name, their location, number of Kenyans there, the security situation and the nearest access point.

### **Sudanese refugees in S. Sudan facing difficult humanitarian situation: SPLM-N (Sudan Tribune)**

December 26, 2013 (KHARTOUM) - Sudanese refugees in South Sudan near the border areas between the two countries are facing difficult humanitarian conditions as result of the ongoing crisis in South Sudan, said the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N).

SPLM-N secretary-general, Yasir Arman, said in a statement issued on Thursday that the workers of UN agencies and humanitarian groups left the Sudanese refugees residing camps near the border after the start of fighting between South Sudanese army and troops loyal to the former vice-president Riek Machar in different parts of the country.

"They are facing difficult choices of either staying without humanitarian assistance, especially the new arrivals among them, or going back to the war zone to join around 1 million internally displaced in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile", Arman said.

The rebel leader further called on the African Union and the United Nations to pay attention to the deteriorating situation in the refugee camps as thousands of South Sudanese sought refuge in UN bases and others fled their homes and villages following the eruption of fighting in the country.

"The situation of more than a quarter of a million of (Sudanese) refugees and around a million internally displaced in the two areas is very critical", he emphasised.

Thousands of Sudanese are now living in refugees camps in the border areas between the two countries since the start of the conflict between the Sudanese army and the SPLA-N fighters in June 2011.

The AU Peace and Security Council and UN Security Council at different times demanded Khartoum to allow humanitarian access to the civilians in the rebel controlled areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile but the Sudanese officials say such measure can be implemented after political agreement with the rebels.

Arman who also leads the rebel negotiating team reiterated the SPLM-N readiness for talks with the Sudanese government to reach a humanitarian cessation of hostilities agreement, saying it is more than ever needed to save Sudanese and South Sudanese affected civilians.

Sudanese government and SPLM-N delegations were expected to meet earlier this December but the death of the former South African leader Nelson Mandela led postpone the meeting.

However the two parties still diverge on the agenda of the talks as Khartoum proposes to negotiate only a settlement of the conflict in Blue Nile and south Kordofan while the SPLM-N demands to hold a comprehensive process on the two states and Darfur region.

### **South Sudan evacuation to cost Kenya Sh260 million (Standard Digital)**

South Sudan: The Government may spend as much as Sh260 million to evacuate Kenyans living in South Sudan and provide them with humanitarian relief. President Uhuru Kenyatta arrived in South Sudan’s capital Juba yesterday morning for a one-day official visit to assess the extent of the turmoil that has

engulfed Africa's new state. Uhuru is expected to lead a fresh round of diplomatic talks with South Sudan's President Salva Kiir together with Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn. Evacuations continue today from the oil-rich nation as the Government admitted it does not know how many Kenyans live in South Sudan, a country that has been rocked by violence for the 12th consecutive day. "This is a very costly affair. Evacuations alone through chartered planes and buses or through other government resources are expected to hit the Sh100 million mark any time now," explained Karanja Kibicho, Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary. Dr Kibicho was speaking at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) as he led a Government delegation to welcome 232 Kenyans flown home via two Kenya Airways planes. "To charter one plane the size of the ones we are seeing today is costing us \$32,000 (Sh2.7 million), and given the fact that more trips are being made by road and air, the costs could even go up," he explained. Devolution PS John Konchellah further added that more costs were going towards logistics and humanitarian expenses towards Kenyans living in South Sudan. "As at today, we shall have airlifted 55,000 tonnes of food to Kenyans in South Sudan affected by the turmoil, and more will be needed. The cost is expected to go to sh169 million," said Konchellah. Heavy fighting broke out in the country on December 15 when rival factions of South Sudan's army clashed in several parts of the capital. The chaos was reportedly sparked by a disagreement at a meeting on that date for the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) over post of the deputy ruling party leader. ([Read More](#))

## INTERNATIONAL

### **More Norwegian emergency aid to South Sudan (The Norway Post)**

The Norwegian Government is granting an additional NOK 50 million in emergency aid to South Sudan, in response to a UN appeal for immediate help to handle the growing humanitarian crisis in the country.

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan is worsening as a result of the increasing fighting across the country. We will follow the situation closely and consider further contributions, says Norwegian Foreign Minister Børge Brende. Earlier this month, Norway already paid NOK 35 million in additional support to the International Red Cross, the World Food Program and the Refugee Council. These funds are now being used in the relief work in South Sudan.

Norway also provides aid through funds already allocated for the UN Emergency Relief Fund (CERF).

### **Oil prices mixed ahead of US report (Business Times/AFP)**

SINGAPORE: Oil prices were mixed in Asian trade Friday as dealers looked ahead to a US stockpiles report expected to indicate bullish demand in the world's top crude consumer, analysts said.

New York's main contract, West Texas Intermediate for February delivery, was up six cents at US\$99.61 in afternoon trade while Brent North Sea crude for February eased 24 cents to US\$111.74.

Despite crude coming under pressure in Asian trading hours, Ric Spooner, chief market analyst at CMC Markets in Sydney, said prices retained support as traders anticipated the US report would show a significant fall in petroleum supplies. Traders are "positioning themselves for the possibility of some good inventory figures", Spooner told AFP.

The report from the US Department of Energy is usually released on Wednesdays, but it has been delayed until Friday due to the Christmas holidays.

Analysts expect a decline in US supplies of 2.2 million barrels, according to a survey by the Wall Street Journal. This would mean a fourth consecutive drop after a 10-week run of rises that added 35 million barrels to total stockpiles.

A dip in US stockpiles indicates strong demand in the world's biggest economy and oil consuming nation, propping up prices. Investors are also keeping an eye on developments in oil producer South Sudan, where

output has been threatened following a wave of deadly ethnic violence. The United Nations said Thursday it was speeding up reinforcements to its peacekeeping force in the African state amid ferocious fighting in its oil-producing north.

Analysts say the fledgling producer usually exports about 220,000 barrels a day to Japan, Malaysia and China

### **Insurance companies up premiums for South Sudan flights (Global Travel Industry News)**

BY PROF. DR. WOLFGANG H. THOME, DEC 27, 2013

Airline personnel still remaining on site at Juba's International Airport are lamenting the low passenger numbers presently arriving on flights, but also acknowledge that in spite of Juba being by and large calm, the country overall may presently not be on the bucket list of travelers and that few of the South Sudanese who sought refuge abroad in the immediate aftermath of the start of the fighting are simply not coming back at this time.

Kenya Airways, which operated government evacuation flights yesterday, while President Kenyatta was in Juba for multilateral talks with the regime, has suspended commercial flights until at least December 31. Other airlines flying from Nairobi, Entebbe, and Addis Ababa presently are continuing their flights, as is Fly Dubai which operates 4 flights a week at present. All of them, according to a source, are in constant contact with their station managers in Juba to get first-hand information before a flight is then allowed to take off for Juba.

While flights out of Juba are now regularly full, inbound load factors have plummeted, making routes commercially hard to sustain in the long term while at the same time insurance companies are demanding higher premiums for flights to the South Sudan, which is now categorized as a war zone

Most countries with diplomatic offices in South Sudan have either already evacuated their nationals or continue to do so, especially those countries like Kenya and Uganda with thousands of their citizens stuck. Kenya's interior ministry in fact made history yesterday when establishing communication channels via Twitter and Facebook, besides providing conventional phone hotlines, to get as much information about Kenyans being unable so far to leave the country and return home. Information from Nairobi suggests that the Kenyan government will continue to offer assistance to leave the country once people have reached either the main airport in Juba or other airfields considered safe for evacuation flights.

While some sort of agreement was reached in talks between neighboring countries and the two opposing sides in South Sudan, meetings – due to be hosted by the Ethiopian government in Addis Ababa, are not expected to go underway just yet as several delegation members for the talks nominated are reportedly being held by the regime in Juba which has refused to let them go free.

Meanwhile have prices for commodities, if available that is, risen in Juba as supplies normally coming in by road from Uganda are slow in making their way into South Sudan over fears of the potential loss of cargos, damage to vehicles and risk for the drivers and turn boys. A large number of trucks are waiting on the Ugandan side of the border to Nimule, either hoping for military escorts or else until sit it out until the situation has calmed down sufficiently and their security can be assured. Not a Merry Christmas for sure it was in Juba and across the neither South Sudan nor will it be a Happy New Year either on Tuesday next week at midnight for many of that country's beleaguered citizens.

### **South Sudan Violence Hits Oil Industry (VOA)**

Bentiu — Days of clashes in South Sudan have hit the country's largest source of revenue as oil production was halted in Unity state after foreign workers fled the oil fields over fears of more fighting in the region.

"Unfortunately, the workers have closed the oil. Nobody closed it from us here," said former army General James Koang Chuol, who defected last week and took control of Bentiu, the capital of Unity state.

"It is those technicians, fearing what is going on in South Sudan... yesterday they evacuated the area," he said, adding that production has been declining all week.

A spokesman for the South Sudanese army said Wednesday that government forces are preparing to launch an imminent offensive to recapture the town.

Foreign workers are key to the functioning of South Sudan's oil industry, which provides the country with its only significant export and is the main source of government revenues.

Before a disagreement with Khartoum led to a production shutdown in January 2012, which was only lifted earlier this year, South Sudan produced half a million barrels of crude a day, accounting for 98 percent of government revenues and about 80 percent of gross domestic product, according to the Revenue Watch Institute. The Unity State oil fields are run by the Greater Pioneer Operating Company, a consortium of Chinese, Malaysian, Indian and South Sudanese interests.

A statement on the website of the Indian company in the consortium says they shut down production four days ago, "due to the adverse security situation."

The Indian company, ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), confirms on its website that it and its foreign partners in the consortium have evacuated their personnel from South Sudan.

OVL said the shutdown was only temporary, and "operations will be resumed once the situation is normalized."

The South Sudanese Petroleum Ministry says Unity produced around 15 percent of the country's total oil output before the latest shutdown, which came hard on the heels of Koang's seizure of Bentiu at the weekend.

### **'We Are No Longer Loyal to President Kiir'**

Koang said he wanted to divert oil revenue away from the government in Juba and had no interest in halting production.

"There is no administration in the country, so the oil money cannot be taken by one side," said Koang, who has declared himself loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar, whom President Salva Kiir accused of orchestrating a failed coup bid which triggered the violence that has rocked South Sudan for 11 days. (Read More)

### **South Sudan: UN Hopes to Have Peacekeeping Reinforcements in Strife-Torn South Sudan Within 48 Hours (UN News Service)**

The United Nations hopes to have peacekeeping reinforcements on the ground in strife-torn South Sudan within the next 48 hours, including both troops and critical assets such as helicopters, as it seeks to protect civilians in a conflict that is already estimated to have claimed well over 1,000 lives, the top UN official in the country said today.

The UN is trying to put an "end to this nightmare and give peace a chance," Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative Hilde Johnson told a video news conference from Juba, South Sudan's capital, noting that over 50,000 civilians have already sought refuge at UN bases.

Two days ago the Security Council authorized almost doubling the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to nearly 14,000 personnel through the transfer of units if necessary from other UN forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Darfur, Abyei, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

Tensions within South Sudan, the world's youngest country which only gained independence in 2011 after seceding from Sudan, burst out into open conflict on 15 December when President Salva Kiir's Government said soldiers loyal to former deputy president Riek Machar, dismissed in July, launched an attempted coup.

### **US to cut South Sudan aid if government toppled: official (The Times)**

The United States on Thursday reaffirmed its vow to cut aid to violence-wracked South Sudan if the government of President Salva Kiir is overthrown in a coup.

Troops loyal to Kiir have been battling forces allied to former vice president Riek Machar in a wave of ethnic violence that has left thousands dead, according to the United Nations.

"We continue to call on all sides of the conflict to work through their differences peacefully and democratically," a State Department official told AFP.

“We’ve made clear that any effort to seize power through the use of military force will result in the end of longstanding support from the United States and the international community.”

The official said Washington’s special envoy to the country, Donald Booth, was still “on the ground in Juba, urging calm and a peaceful resolution to the crisis.”

The remarks followed an appeal Tuesday by Secretary of State John Kerry in which he urged Machar to declare a ceasefire and talk to Kiir.

Both men have said they are ready to take part in peace talks, but violence has continued. Forces loyal to Kiir and Machar are battling for territory and control of oil resources.

Washington was a key sponsor of the deal that led to the creation of South Sudan, the world’s newest nation, in July 2011, and has provided important diplomatic and economic support since then.

### **Welthungerhilfe warns: South Sudan is facing an enormous humanitarian disaster -100,000 Euro emergency aid provided (Thomson Reuters Foundation)**

The people in South Sudan are facing a humanitarian disaster of a tremendous dimension due to the escalation of violence.

In the capital city Juba alone, some ten thousands of people have sought refuge on the site of the UN peace keeping mission UNMISS.

"The situation is getting worse day by day. We try to help people in need under all circumstances, even if we have to cope with chaotic situations. Health care is a big issue right now, there is a danger that diseases like cholera might break out. Welthungerhilfe has decided to provide emergency funds of around 100,000 Euro to be able to start emergency interventions immediately”, Mathias Mogge, Welthungerhilfe Executive Director Progammes, explains.

As an immediate relief measure Welthungerhilfe is distributing 704 water cans with a volume of 20 litres each. Besides clean water, latrines and food are needed, especially for children.

It was only in 2011 that South Sudan became an independent state. In the civil war between 1983 and 2005 more than 2 million people were killed.

Even in the present security situation Welthungerhilfe has to act very carefully, so as not to put its own staff in extreme danger, Welthungerhilfe however, does not plan to stop its ongoing activities.

### **Pillay Urges S. Sudan Leadership to Curb Alarming Violence against Civilians (Sudan Vision)**

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on Tuesday expressed grave concern over the serious and growing human rights violations taking place daily in South Sudan during the past 10 days, calling on the leadership on both sides to protect civilians and refrain from instigating violence based on ethnic grounds.

“Mass extrajudicial killings, the targeting of individuals on the basis of their ethnicity and arbitrary detentions have been documented in recent days,” Pillay said. “We have discovered a mass grave in Bentiu, in Unity State, and there are reportedly at least two other mass graves in Juba.”

The High Commissioner also expressed serious concern about the safety of those who have been arrested and are being held in unknown locations, including several hundred civilians who were reportedly arrested during house-to-house searches and from various hotels in Juba. Hundreds of members of the South Sudan National Police Service were also reportedly ordered to be disarmed and arrested from police stations across Juba.

Pillay reiterated her call on the authorities to reveal the whereabouts of all those who have been detained, including political leaders, and to refrain from conducting further arbitrary detentions.

The violence in South Sudan has already sparked massive displacement, with more than 40.000 internally displaced people who have sought refuge in the compounds of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

The total number of the displaced population is expected to be much higher, with people reportedly seeking shelters in churches and other locations.

“There is a palpable fear among civilians of both Dinka and Nuer backgrounds that they will be killed on the basis of their ethnicity,” Pillay said. “There need to be clear statements and clear steps from all those in positions of political and military control that human rights violations will not be tolerated and those responsible will be brought to justice.”

Under international law, those in positions of political and military control can be held responsible for violations committed by those under their leadership. The High Commissioner urged all senior leaders, both within and outside the Government, to take immediate steps to prevent further human rights violations.

She also called on the international community to strengthen its efforts to assist in the protection of civilians and the UN presence, including through a strengthened UNMISS.

### **UN Admits "Didn't See This Coming" Regarding Conflict In South Sudan (NTD TV)**

The United Nations admits it was caught off-guard by the recent violence in South Sudan that has pushed the world's newest nation to the verge of civil war. Hilde Johnson, head of the U.N. mission in South Sudan, known as UNMISS, told reporters by video link from the capital, Juba, "We did not see this coming. We knew that there were tensions and that this could lead to problems. But I don't think any South Sudanese, or any of us observers in country, and outside, expected an unraveling of the stability so quickly."

The United Nations on Thursday (December 26) said it hopes to begin receiving within the next 48 hours critical reinforcements of military hardware and personnel for its overstretched peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, which gained independence from Sudan in 2011.

Johnson confirmed estimates that well over 1,000 people had died in 12 days of fighting, while dismissing reports that the death toll was in the multiple thousands. Johnson also said that her mission would not abandon South Sudan, vowing, "We are here to stay and we are here to protect."

Some 50,000 civilians were seeking protection at U.N. bases across South Sudan, according to Johnson.

"All peacekeepers are under the instruction to use force when civilians are under imminent threat, within their capabilities," she said. Western powers and east African states, keen to prevent more chaos in a fragile region, are trying to mediate between President Salva Kiir, a Dinka, and rebel leader Riek Machar, a Nuer, who was vice president until Kiir sacked him in July. But so far negotiations have not resolved the crisis.

Most fighting has involved Dinka and Nuer factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, with militias and marauding youths also reported to be attacking rival ethnic groups. Kiir and Machar both have said the conflict is political, not tribal. The violence, which erupted in Juba on Dec. 15, has quickly spread to oil producing regions and beyond, dividing the landlocked country of 10.8 million along ethnic lines

The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday (December 24) unanimously authorized a plan by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to boost the strength of the force in South Sudan to 12,500 troops and 1,323 police. Ban has said the additional 5,500 peacekeeping troops and 423 police would be drawn from nearby U.N. and African Union missions in Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and the Sudanese regions of Darfur and Abyei.

The fighting is affecting oil production in South Sudan, which accounts for 98 percent of government



revenue. Rebels in South Sudan have seized some oil wells and may damage them, the petroleum ministry said. Petroleum Minister Stephen Dhieu Dau said earlier this week that output had fallen by 45,000 barrels per day to 200,000 bpd after Unity state oil fields shut down.

Johnson said her mission was also investigating reports of atrocities, including summary executions and the circumstances surrounding the discovery of a mass grave. She welcomed Kiir's stated determination to look into the allegations.

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn spoke with Kiir in Juba amid fears that violence in South Sudan could mount and plunge the country into an ethnic-based civil war.

It was not clear whether the delegation also met the rebel leader, former vice president Riek Machar.

China, which has significant oil interests in South Sudan, said on Thursday it would send its special envoy for Africa to help bring about talks between Kiir and Machar.

### **Flydubai Juba service continues as violence grips South Sudan (Gulf News)**

Dubai: Flydubai's four weekly services between Dubai and South Sudan remain unchanged as reports that ethnic-motivated killings have spread across the young African country.

"flydubai's flights to Juba are flying to schedule. We will continue to monitor the situation in Juba closely and will make any changes to the schedule as necessary," a flydubai spokesperson stated to Gulf News in an email.

Flydubai has operated the service to Jubai, the South Sudan capital, since April 2013.

Violence erupted in South Sudan on December 15 when President Salva Kiir accused his former Vice President Riek Machar of plotting a coup. Machar denies the allegation.

## **OPINION/EDITORIAL/ANALYSIS**

### **Editorial: South Sudan's Imperiled Future (The New York Times)**

Two years after South Sudan declared independence from Sudan, political tensions between President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the former vice president, have erupted into violence, raising the possibility of civil war and ethnic cleansing.

Some 50,000 civilians are seeking protection at United Nations bases across South Sudan. The United Nations Security Council **voted** on Tuesday to nearly double its peacekeeping force in that country to 12,500 troops and now must make sure that those reinforcements arrive as soon as possible.

There is fault on both sides. Mr. Kiir's initial accusation that Mr. Machar, a rival and critic of the Kiir government, was plotting a coup against him likely was overblown. The violence has its roots in a longstanding political rivalry, ethnic tensions and the fact that **in July**, Mr. Kiir, who comes from the Dinka tribe, fired Mr. Machar, who is a Nuer. Since then, Mr. Machar has allied himself with other rebel groups and has refused to negotiate unless his political allies are freed from detention.

The leader of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, Hilde Johnson, **said** on Thursday that "well over a thousand" people have been killed in 11 days of fighting.

Fears of a broader blood bath are growing, as are concerns that the country will unravel; that production at South Sudan-based oil fields, which are crucial to the economies of both Sudan and South Sudan, will be interrupted; and the fighting will draw in neighboring countries. On Thursday, rebels loyal to Mr. Machar **captured** some oil wells in oil-rich Unity State.

The United States, which played a major role in South Sudan's birth as an independent state, has a special responsibility to mediate a political solution. In a **message last week**, Susan Rice, President Obama's national security adviser and an Africa expert who has long worked on issues connected to Sudan, urged

leaders on all sides to renounce violence and engage in peaceful dialogue. She also warned that if Mr. Kiir and Mr. Machar insist on using force and mass violence, “the United States will have no choice but to withdraw our traditional, robust support.”

On Monday, South Sudan’s government threatened a major offensive to retake strategic towns seized by the rebels. But Donald Booth, the special United States envoy, met with Mr. Kiir, and afterward he said that Mr. Kiir was ready to begin talks to end the crisis. The fighting has already spread to half the country’s 10 states.

The United States, European partners, and leaders of Kenya and Ethiopia who arrived in the capital of Juba on Thursday should be pressing for negotiations and make clear that South Sudan’s leaders will face sanctions if they drag their fragile country into another senseless war.

Sudan and South Sudan fought a civil war that killed more than two million people before a peace deal was reached in 2005. It is unfathomable that having achieved independence from Khartoum, Mr. Kiir and Mr. Machar would again risk their country’s future by waging a conflict in which all sides will surely lose.

### **Editorial: South Sudan peace trip highly timely (Daily Nation)**

President Kenyatta’s trip to South Sudan on a mission that can only be to seek peace could not have come at a more opportune moment.

The President, who is chairman of the East African Community, intends to hold talks with President Salva Kiir.

However, there is no mention of any meeting with former Vice-President Riek Machar, who is supposedly in hiding. That fact alone could make the visit lose some significance in the short term.

If, on the other hand, he makes President Kiir see the need for peace, then he will have achieved a measure of success.

Kenya, and the regional bloc that makes up the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (Igad) have invested heavily in a peaceful South Sudan right from the days of the civil war with Sudan, and it would make no sense for the region’s leaders to look on as the unfortunate country descends into another war. The first thing the President should ask his counterpart is to halt what is fast turning into a purge of Dr Machar’s supporters.

The international community is hardly buying the idea of a coup attempt, but President Kenyatta should not be seen as taking sides.

### **South Sudan: Are we helping to create a country or merely creating ravenous clients for an army of Western experts and consultants? (The Independent)**

*PETER POPHAM* - South Sudan, the world’s newest country, racked by civil war for the past fortnight, has one fundamental problem – and Bishop Santo Pio put his finger on it in his Christmas sermon.

Addressing not only his usual congregation but the hundreds cramming Juba’s cathedral who had taken shelter there from the fighting outside, he said: “We have never been a country before. We were communities under tribal chiefs, a monarchy where the whole community would follow one person. We were clans, tribes, communities... These are the different groups that we are to make a nation from.”

How do you make a nation from scratch? After nearly 40 years of civil war with the far stronger Arab and Muslim north, South Sudan felt strongly enough about its identity to vote overwhelmingly for independence in 2011’s referendum. But is collective hatred of a bully enough to make a nation? The vicious inter-tribal fighting of the past few weeks says not.

As the bishop pointed out, South Sudan never existed as a nation before but only as an aggregation of tribes. Africa’s difficulty in creating effective nation states is often laid at the door of the colonial powers and the arbitrary borders they created, but in fact those borders have often had a legitimising function. South Sudan lacked even that.

To the east, on the far side of Ethiopia, is the self-declared state of Somaliland. Its claim to legitimacy is that its borders are those of the short-lived colony of British Somaliland. It gained independence from Britain in 1960 and soon afterwards sank its fortunes in the dream of a pan-Somalian state, which would

include parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti. When that dream turned into a bloody nightmare in 1991, Somaliland remembered its colonial past and unilaterally declared itself independent within those borders. In stark contrast to the rest of Somalia, it has been at peace ever since. It has also been regularly and universally snubbed by the outside world, which refuses to recognise it as a nation.

South Sudan, by contrast, was brought into being with extravagant assistance from the outside world, which has poured around \$1bn per year into building up its strength. We in Britain have played a large part. If you were to scan the Department for International Development's website, you would have to conclude that it's all gone rather well. Among the many programmes we have financed there, the South Sudan Peace Building Programme, for example, was "successfully implemented", with the expenditure of £4 less than the £5,503,065 budget. The programme's objectives, "to improve the effectiveness of key institutions and mitigate conflict and foster peace in South Sudan," were said to be 100 per cent complete by the project's conclusion in April last year.

Likewise DfID's South Sudan Recovery Fund, which was set up "to assist the government of South Sudan expedite delivery of post-conflict recovery assistance," etc, is expected to have eaten up more than £52m of its budget by June 2014. It too is well on track to achieve "successful implementation". "Continued slow but steady improvement in the performance of the state stabilisation programmes" is reported. The only serious problem – the perennial lament – is a feared "funding shortfall".

Yet despite all that money, all the acronyms and "implementation modalities," the years of dedicated work by an army of experts and consultants, South Sudan still only exists as a state in the most fragile and contingent of fashions. Its government, while notionally democratic, is little more than a loose affiliation of mutually antagonistic warlords, yoked together by the copious funds provided by the western world. And often the money is tragically counter-productive. Donors quite understandably pour money into education and health – freeing the rulers to use the state's oil revenue to create and fund thousands of state jobs. The new employees become their dependents.

After years of cultivation by the West, people like President Salva Kiir and his nemesis, ex-Vice President Riek Machar, know exactly what 'democratic' hoops they must crawl through to obtain the funds that keep them in business. But does any of that help to create a country? Or does it merely create ravenous clients? Somaliland came into existence in the teeth of universal hostility and disapproval, and has created a national identity through defiance of the world's opinion. Today it has plenty of problems, but it is proud, peaceful and relatively prosperous. There are lessons there to ponder.