



United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Media & Spokesperson Unit
Communications & Public Information Office

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

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Highlights

South Sudanese citizens react on exchange rates

Gurtong.net Juba, 13/11/2013 – The Central Bank of South Sudan governor Karlino Karyom on Monday fixed the official dollar exchange rate at 4.5 South Sudanese Pounds-from 3.2, in a move to ensure stability but the change has elicited mixed reactions from the citizens.

There has been a mixed reaction to the changes with some South Sudanese demanding immediate investigation of the Central Bank Boss to explain what made him change his mind to announce new rates without parliament notification.

A 30-year-old Chol Moses Maker said: “A hard currency is a currency from a country with a strong economy. But hard currency should not make domestic currency more valueless because that means our money will be regulated by external currencies meaning that when dollar is scarce, South Sudanese pound is scarce yet our economies are not at the same stand. The governor is either creating an economic suicide for the country or sweeping the bank.”

Some students and officials criticized the Central Bank for having overlooked country economic status and raised a rate of his aim undermining country currencies dignity.

Akeen Mou said that the bank should understand the current situation as not every citizen is a trader/businessmen but the life of the whole nation will be at risk.

Meanwhile Charles Chuol, said that this issue of hard currency will depreciate the price and the value of South Sudan pound, whereby the country will collapse in economics because the nations are highly on consumption imported products.

An official from the South Sudan army identified as Juliet Oscar said that the Central Bank has made the rate to cover their interest and they did not consider South Sudanese students in foreign countries.

“It become obvious seeing them make their minds and we start shouting, in fact, the decision to devalue South Sudan Pound is viewed as part of the so called economic agreements so far signed between Sudan and South Sudan however, the question in every one mind is; are we compelled to reunite the country barely two years after independence?,” Oscar asked.

Peter Mathiang Mayom, a student in Nairobi wrote on Facebook asking Central Bank to release more dollars into the black market instead of raising the exchange rate.

Meanwhile, Deng Gideon, Lakes state citizen reacted saying that the South Sudan pound is valueless.

Some MP’s say they are concerned that such a high fixed rate may cause prices to skyrocket and harm the local population. ([Back to Top](#))

South Sudan with enough reserves to shield new exchange rate

Catholic Radio Network, 13/11/2013 – The national finance minister said the country had almost one billion US dollars in reserves and would use some to defend its new exchange rate.

The Bank of South Sudan adopted new exchange rates for the Pound on Tuesday to encourage investment in the country.

With the new rates, the Pound suffered 42-percent devaluation.

"We will have to use part of our foreign exchange, particularly dollars, to protect the new position of the South Sudanese Pound," Finance Minister Aggrey Sabuni Tisa told Reuters in Geneva on Tuesday. He added that country should finish paying back foreign loans within two to three months.

Minister Sabuni said oil production should return to the levels before the shutdown within four to five months. ([Back to Top](#))

Juba fuel stations dry up

Catholic Radio Network, 13/11/2013 – A number of fuel stations dried up in Juba forcing drivers and motorbike riders to go long distances to refuel.

A CRN reporter went from Juba town to Juba Bridge looking for petrol and found all fuel stations empty.

He also went up to the foot of Körök Hill and found only station selling fuel with a very long cue of vehicles and people with empty jerricans struggling to get fuel.

One fuel seller at Customs market told CRN that the fuel shortage was caused by road problems between Uganda and South Sudan.

Due to fuel shortage, public transport vehicles were scarce and many people were going home on foot on Tuesday evening.

Boda-boda riders doubled their fees.

In the black market, one litre of petrol that used to cost ten pounds rose to 25. ([Back to Top](#))

Interior Minister launches Community Security Caravan

Radio Bakhita, 13/11/2013 – Interior Minister in partnership with United Nations Development Program or UNDP is launching a Community Security and Arms Control project on Wednesday in Juba.

Interior and Wildlife Conservation Minister Aleu Ayieny Aleu is officiating the launch of mobile community security caravan, UNDP said in a statement.

The Community Security Caravan aims to carry out community sensitisation and public awareness campaign with a lively musical procession to Konyokonyo Market via Juba University.

Drama actors of the Community Security Caravan will stage 20 shows in each state through an approach that combines education and entertainment, the statement added.

It also said the ultimate objective of the project was to disarm the minds of South Sudanese of the idea of possessing small arms and light weapons. ([Back to Top](#))

UNMISS refutes claims of siding with Murle tribe In Jonglei

Gurtong.net Juba, 13/11/2013 – The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General to South Sudan has refuted accusations that the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) sides with the Murle tribe in Jonglei State.

“It’s absolutely not true. The United Nations is a neutral institution. We are here to protect all civilians. We are greatly concerned with what happened in Twic East County,” Toby Lanzer told the press in Juba yesterday.

“The primary responsibility of protecting the lives of citizens is of the host state anywhere we have been. The state authorities in a country are primarily responsible for the protection of their citizens.”

The deputy SRSR and also the humanitarian coordinator in South Sudan blamed their inability to spread all over the country to protect the citizens to the small number of peacekeepers.

According to Lanzer, the Mission only has 7,000 peacekeepers in the country; Jonglei has only 500 of them which make it difficult for them to respond to attacks on counties easily coupled with the poor road network in the state.

“Not all the 7,000 peacekeepers are mobile and can be deployed to all the counties,” he said.

“Sometimes I am frustrated to see a place much smaller than Jonglei has more peacekeepers. A place like Kosovo when they had crises 10 years ago had 50,000 peacekeepers. In Jonglei, we just have 500 peacekeepers deployed,” he lamented.

Lanzer was answering to an accusation levelled against UNMISS for seemingly siding with Murle people.

Some Members of Parliament in the national assembly yesterday accused the UNMISS of failing to protect civilians in Twic East County last month and instead siding with the Murle, an accusation Lanzer firmly refuted. ([Back to Top](#))

38 cattle raid police graduate in Bor

Catholic Radio Network, 13/11/2013 – Thirty eight officers of the South Sudan National Police Service trained to address cattle raiding are to graduate from the Livestock Patrol Unit training centre in Malou, Bor County, in Jonglei State on Wednesday.

The officers underwent a rigorous two-month preparation that included physical training, English lessons, field craft, map reading, South Sudan law, memory training and observation, and criminal interrogation techniques.

South Sudan National Police Service, UNMISS, UNDP's Community Security and Small Arms Control project, Kenya and the United States are involved in Jonglei's Livestock Patrol Unit initiative. ([Back to Top](#))

Three state radio reporters sacked, two suspended by Lakes state government

Gurtong.net Rumbek, 13/11/2013 – Lakes State government has sacked three local radio journalists with two other reporters being suspended for three months without pay in a decision made by the State Ministry of Information and Communication in close consultation with Lakes Caretaker Governor Maj-Gen Matur Chut Dhuol.

The dismissed reporters are Abraham Jonglei Jamus, Peter Macuei Ater and Mabor Riak Magok. And the suspended reporters are Abraham Acien Deng and David Kuacreng Nhial.

One of the reporters dismissed said that he wrote complains through the Radio Station director demanding allowance covering a period since 2007. He said that they need promotion and safety claiming that their colleagues experience harassment from security agents at night.

It is alleged that the minister was not happy because the letter was copied to other institutions.

Dut Makoi Kuok, Minister of Information and Communication confirmed the decision.

“Since I wrote suspension letters and dismissal, many of those staffs wrote to me their apology letters and the ministry will reconsider the most constructive apology,” said the minister. ([Back to Top](#))

South Sudan misses U.N. Human Rights Council seat

Gurtong.net Torit, 13/11/2013 – As the UN General Assembly elected 14 new members to the 47-seat Geneva-based council, which can shine a spotlight on rights abuses by adopting resolutions when it chooses to do so, South Sudan has lost its chance to sit on the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council.

On Tuesday 12, the UN General Assembly in New York elected Algeria, China, Cuba, France, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Macedonia, Viet Nam, Russia, and UK to serve on the rights council.

The UN General Assembly also has dozens of special monitors watching problem countries and major issues ranging from executions to drone strikes.

Britain, France, the Maldives, Macedonia, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia and South Africa were also elected to three-year terms.

The 47-member council is an inter-governmental body within the UN system responsible for promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations and make recommendations on human rights violations.

Council members serve for a period of three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms. ([Back to Top](#))

UNPOL trains South Sudan police in Upper Nile

Gurtong.net Bunj, 13/11/2013 – The United Nation Mission in South Sudan Police Unit has trained 32 South Sudanese National Police Service in Bunj Town of Maban County in Upper Nile State.

Amongst the graduated cadre 2 were females and 30 were males integrated from different parts of the state.

The police officers were trained on different areas including child protection, women protections, protection of refugees, how to handle the criminals in the county, control and maintenance of law and order.

The integrative training took eight weeks and the final ceremony was graced by UNMISS Acting State Coordinator Madam Welmoet Wels, State police commissioner Maj. Gen. Thukul Ayom Deng, UNMISS/UNPOL Mr. Sangoroh Allan and UNMISS state advisor and many others.

Sangoroh Allan, the UNMISS/UNPOL representative thanked the SSNPS for their hard work since they started the training and encouraged the police officers to carry their duties and the knowledge they have achieved forward to be role models to the citizens of South Sudan.

The Maban County Commissioner Mr. James Basha Tewa said the trained police officers will play major role in combating crime in the area and control the host communities and refugees.

"This is a very big achievement which needs to be applauded," he said.

UNHCR representative Mr. Vincent Gule thanked the police for the successful completion of the training course and said that they should put more effort to combat crimes and problems in the county.

SSNPS were urged to make sure they unite the host communities with the refugees in the county.

UNMISS acting state coordinator Madam Welmoet Wels said that the government has the responsibility to protect civilians which is done mostly by police and that was why they trained the officers.

Upper Nile State Police Commissioner Maj. Gen. Thukul Ayom Deng, thanked the UNMISS/UNPOL for the training organized for the South Sudanese police services saying that without peace there is no development and asked the police officers to work hard so that they at least do something before the year comes to an end since they were a lot of interruption especially during the rainy season.

He urged the police officers to stop drinking alcohol saying that the alcohol causes the mismanagement in provision of services.

Representative of the trained officers, Sergeant Abil Samuel Luma said, "The training has given me a lot of skills in management of crimes in the communities, the training were 100 percent how to work, how to talk with the criminal." ([Back to Top](#))

1,600 women train on economic sustainability

Easter Radio, 13/11/2013 – One thousand and six hundred women are undergoing a livelihood economic training on vocational skills including agricultural production, bread making, sanitation and business entrepreneurship for self sustainability in the rural communities.

Women for Women International conducted the training in Mugwo Payam of Yei River County, Easter Radio reported.

Yei River County Assistant Commissioner for Gender and Social Development Victoria Nasirah Augustine said the training enabled women to improve sanitation and business management.

Beneficiaries of the training included women groups from Longamera, Payawa, Jombo-Mugwo Payam and Ronyi Boma of Yei Municipality. ([Back to Top](#))

South Sudan population over 11m: UN

Radio Miraya, 13/11/2013 – The United Nations estimates the population of South Sudan to be over 11 million, saying that over 1.9 million people have returned to the country since the 2008 census that put the population at 8.3 million.

“So if you add the census results of 8.3 million and the number of South Sudanese who have returned here - 1.9 million - you are already at 10.2 million people in South Sudan,” said Toby Lanzer, UN Humanitarian Co-coordinator for South Sudan.

Mr Lanzer said that based on annual population growth estimate of 2.5 percent, South Sudan’s population may have grown by more than one million.

“We have nearly six years since the last census, so that is another 1.5 million. That takes to 11.7 million people in South Sudan,” he said.

The National Bureau of Statistics is due to organize a census in 2015. Mr Lanzer said the UN will support the count. ([Back to Top](#))

Ministry to assess more than 400 teachers

Gurtong.net Torit, 13/11/2013 – The Ministry of Education in Eastern Equatoria State has announced plans to examine about 402 Alternative Education System (AES) instructors in a bid to validate and accordingly re-absorb them into the government payroll system.

Ministry’s Acting Director General Adelio Ojina Quinto prejudices that out of the 402; only 167 are professionals while 235 are non-teachers without teaching related qualifications.

Already, the AES instructors have launched a sit-down strike over delayed salaries in the state.

The State Ministry has delayed to pay monthly salaries for about two months now, with the Alternative Education System (AES) instructors leaving about 4,000 learners stranded.

The ministry has not paid the salaries because they need to verify existence of the AES instructors in the state.

The Director General advocated for qualified teachers to improve quality learning for better performance but insists that they victims must demonstrate professionalism to provide knowledge to the learners.

The report according to World Bank shows that South Sudan is working hard to build an inclusive education system in the face of huge unmet needs.

However, the bank says to catch up with the rest of Africa, South Sudan needs consistent and higher investment in education for more classrooms, more schools in rural areas, more trained teachers and more equitable and efficient allocation of resources for education across the country.

Despite the impressive improvement in children’s enrollment, the completion and retention remain poor.

The report shows that the primary education completion rate is 26% for the first six years of primary education and only 8% complete the eight year-circle. After primary four (grade 4), the dropout rate is steep and persistent. ([Back to Top](#))

Schools reopened after 14-month closure

Gurtong.net Juba, 13/11/2013 – Two Primary Schools in Eastern Equatoria State’s Torit County have been reopened following their indefinite closure last year as result of delayed salaries for the teachers.

Ofiriha and Langario Loulang Primary Schools are to be reopened after assessments conducted by the State Ministry, officials have said.

The move was announced by the state Education Minister Michael Lopuke Lotyam after the state governor Louis Lobong Lojore instructed him to do so following their Saturday’s visit to the area.

The Ofiriha Community said the two schools started failing to function for reason that teachers' salaries had been detained by the State Ministry of Education as the last year's assessment team did not assess the two schools for evaluation.

Joseph Thomas a youth representative of Ofiriha Community cited challenges faced by the Community as poor road network, inadequate water, lack of health facility among others.

Thomas informed the state leaders that his community constructed the schools using local materials such as thatch grass classes to boost the young learners saying the missions of Dr. John Garang of taking town to the people must be implemented in all the areas of the state.

Additionally, the education Minister has been instructed to pay four teachers from Ofiriha Primary School their salary which had been held for 14 months.

The governor urged the four teachers to fully resume their work immediately upon getting their withheld pay.

The governor also advised the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) to value their work as key responsibility so their children attain improved education by working hand in hand together with Ofiriha area chiefs to supervise the school progress considering performance and more particularly teachers' commitment.

The move served as a response by the governor to complaints launched by Ofiriha Community on the absence of teacher's salaries to the Office the Governor Louis Lobong Lojore on the 8th of October 2013.

This followed a visit on Saturday 9, by the governor Lobong to the Ofiriha Boma of Kudo Payam, Torit County.

The governor who advised Ofiriha Community to embrace peace and unity among the neighbouring Communities to realize peaceful coexistence in the area to attract investors to come and invest in the area, was accompanied by his cabinet Ministers including the Education Minister Lopuke, Torit County Commissioner German Charles Ojok with one advisor Abdallah Kapelo.

The Ofiriha Community Chairperson Mr. Leo Otwari welcomed the visit by the State Governor Lobong to Ofiriha Community as a turning point to the history of the Marginalized people of Ofiriha.

Torit County Commissioner German Charles Ojok told the Ofiriha Community to enrol the children to school as the problem of teachers was resolved.

He advised the locals to construct the small tukul houses that would boost teacher's demands.

In a related development, the Education Minister Michael Lopuke advised the Ofiriha Primary School's volunteer teachers to submit their document for consideration. ([Back to Top](#))

Vivacell-Wau resumes service after 24-hour shutdown

Voice of Hope, 13/11/2013 – Vivacel mobile network resumed services on Tuesday evening after a 24-hour shutdown in Wau.

The network coverage was turned off on Monday due to a strike over pay rise by national staff, Voice of Hope reported.

Western Bahr El Ghazal Vivacell managing director and State Labour Minister met the striking staff on Monday to listen to their grievances and put an end to the stoppage.

Vivacell national staffs have been staging several seats down strikes over the year in Wau but with no fruits. Both strikers and management refused to meet the press. ([Back to Top](#))

Floods block business centres in Bor

Gurtong.net Bor, 13/11/2013 – Jonglei State is facing heavy floods which officials say have the same magnitude as the September floods which destroyed villages and left thousands of people homeless.

The Minister of Physical Infrastructure Manawe Peter Gatkuoth has said that floods became worse due to more water overflow from Malou, Achengdiir and Panliet areas near the river banks.

The Minister said that they are working near the road at Garden Resort Hotel, building small dykes which he said as temporary to protect the town from flooding, adding that they need long term projects so that they can build more dykes to protect the town in future.

Peter said that most of the areas of Hai-Machuor, Akonybany, Panjak area, Marol II market and Akony-bany, Dhiam-dhiam and Thon-buor areas, parts of Lakyak, and Nigil were also flooded.

Most of the hotels in Bor covered by water are; Liberty Hotel, Ramchiel, Central Star, Nabasha, part of Garden Resort hotel, and cut off South Sudan Hotel.

The state government has not yet verified the number of the displaced people as the flood is advancing to the high grounds.

Philip Ajong whose family has been evacuated from Dhiam-Dhiam to Pakuau (airport area) told Gurtong that the flood water has come again with the same speed and volume with local reports indicating the White Nile River burst its bank near Bor, resulting in water pouring into residential areas through canals dug in 1970s for a rice irrigation scheme.

Government institutions including the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure, Gender, Child and Social Welfare and the office of the census have been flooded as well as Hai-machuar market, where water is above the knees of those trying to walk through the area.

Local people were actively involved in blocking and diverting the flow of water but their attempts proved largely futile. ([Back to Top](#))

Bus loads of travelers between Uganda and South Sudan struggle to reach their destinations

ETurboNews, 13/11/2013 – Appalling road conditions following extended torrential rains have damaged and in part flooded sections of the Uganda to South Sudan highway in particular along the stretch between Atiak in Uganda and Nimule in South Sudan. Trucks are reportedly piling up some 30 kilometers towards the main town of Gulu in Northern Uganda and only a fraction of the usual traffic appears to be crossing the border right now, leaving South Sudan’s import needs short of supplies and already leading to price rises in South Sudan. It is estimated that at least three quarters of all imports into South Sudan arrive by road via the border post of Nimule between Uganda and South Sudan, with the road forming the biggest bottleneck so far for trade between the two countries.

Busses carrying travellers from both directions are also said to be taking a lot longer to reach their destinations, leaving the only certain way of swift travel between Uganda and South Sudan to the daily connections by air, offered by Air Uganda’s two daily flights and the flights of South Supreme Airlines which only recently started operations out of Juba. A source close to Air Uganda has confirmed that demand for air travel between Entebbe and Juba remains high, perhaps reflecting the situation encountered by busses plying the route by the road. ([Back to Top](#))

UN to construct Akobo-Pochalla road

Radio Miraya, 13/11/2013 – The United Nations Development Programme has revealed a plan to construct a gravel road linking Akobo and Pochalla in Jonglei State this dry season.

The estimated 90km road is going to be constructed through mobilizing local communities, said UNDP Resident Coordinator Toby Lanzer.

He said the road will help in the transportation of goods and agricultural produces between Akobo and Pochalla Counties.

"I think we are a long way to connect the ten states [with] all weather roads because it is so expensive. So the United Nations for the case of Jonglei is engaged in humanitarian work, development work and peacekeeping," Mr Lanzer told reporters. ([Back to Top](#))

South Sudan can restore oil output, defend new FX rate: minister

Reuters Geneva/Juba, 13/11/2013 – South Sudan, which has just devalued its currency by 34 percent, can use some of its almost \$1 billion in foreign exchange reserves to defend the new rate, Finance Minister Aggrey Sabuni Tisa told Reuters.

He also predicted his country's oil output should return to levels reached before a row with neighbouring Sudan "maybe within the next four to five months. It's not very far (off)."

But Tisa, speaking on the sidelines of a UN debt management conference in Geneva, said: "We don't expect it to affect inflation all that seriously, simply because already the prices in the market are based upon the parallel (black market) exchange rate."

Economic analysts warned of quickening inflation.

"Adjusting the rate is very unfortunate for South Sudan but there is no way out. We now can't avoid inflation, definitely prices are going to go up," Kenyi Spencer, a World Bank economic consultant and a director of Equity Bank told Reuters.

"The black market will increase their rate, it will increase beyond five SSP (South Sudan pounds) for a dollar, this is going to affect a lot of businesses," he said.

Spencer said fuel shortages and rising fuel prices were also imminent after heavy rains flooded and blocked the main road to Uganda, a key link for South Sudan's food.

Taban Albert, treasurer at Eden Commercial Bank said neighbouring Uganda and Kenya, South Sudan's main trading partners, would also be affected by the price hikes.

"We think a better idea would have been to inject dollars into the market, that would be a better way to combat the black market," he said.

But minister Tisa said the government could not afford to keep "selling its foreign currency cheaply to the central bank and then to everybody else."

He also said the government was encouraging businesses outside the oil sector.

"Before the oil shutdown in January 2012 we were terribly neglecting our non-oil sector revenue and we were collecting only something like 35 million South Sudanese pounds," he said.

"We have since moved to something like 80 million a month, we could as well go to 100 (million) within the next two or three months... agriculture, services sector, hospitality industry, that's where we are diversifying."

But he added: "We are still emerging from the austerity measures that we went into following the shut down in oil production ... So making accurate forecasts on the basis of any austerity situation is not really a good thing to do." ([Back to Top](#))

Sudan central bank says devaluation was in effect prior to November

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/11/2013 – Sudan's central bank on Tuesday issued a statement denying a report carried by Reuters yesterday stating that the pound has been devalued by 22.6% against the US dollar.

Bidding prices for the pound were stated as 5.6871 for one dollar, compared with 4.4 previously, central bank data on Reuters terminals showed on Monday. Ask prices were 5.7155. In 2011, the official rate was around 3.

A central bank official, asking not to be named, told Reuters the rate had been already changed in September when the government cut fuel subsidies. He did not elaborate.

But the spokesman for the Central Bank of Sudan (CBoS) Azhari al-Tayeb al-Faki that what Reuters reported is "baseless" and that these rates were in place prior to the subsidies cut.

Al-Faki noted that the official exchange rates are regularly updated on CBoS website.

A research made by Sudan Tribune showed the official exchange rate to have held since January 2013 at 4.4 pounds to the dollar up until September 25 when it changed to around 5.7.

On September 23rd, the Sudanese cabinet formally endorsed the cut in fuel subsidies by which prices of gasoline and diesel were increased by almost 100%.

State media said at the time that the cabinet also raised the US dollar exchange rate for importing purposes only to 5.7 pounds.

The Sudanese pound lost more than half its value against the US dollar in the black market since the secession of the oil-rich south in July 2011. At one point it reached 8.2 pounds to the dollar in last September compared to the official rate of 4.4.

The CBoS refuses to disclose the amount of Forex reserves it holds but a report released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) shows it having \$1.6 billion in 2013 which covers only 2 months of imports compared to \$1.7 billion in 2012.

An IMF online survey published in 2011 argues that that a country must hold Forex reserves that cover 3 months of imports at a minimum.

The low level of reserves means that the government has little leverage to intervene in the market to bring down the exchange rate and cut demand in the black market.

In May of last year, CBoS allowed government-licensed Forex bureaus to determine their own rates in buying and selling currencies but within a certain range in an effort to curb the flourishing black market.

The devaluation means that Sudan will pay more to import food which is vital to plug the deficiency in local food production. It also hurt businessmen and foreign companies that desperately seek to repatriate profits abroad.

This week, Zain, Kuwait's No. 1 telecom operator, said that its Sudan unit saw a plunge in profit for the third quarter which it blamed on foreign exchange fluctuation. ([Back to Top](#))

UN agencies urge Security Council to unlock access for polio vaccination in Sudan's areas

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/11/2013 – UN emergency coordinator, John Ging, has called on the Security Council to ensure unimpeded access to the rebel areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states in order to carry out a polio vaccination campaign .

UN humanitarian agencies were hopeful to reach some 165,000 children under five years in the rebel held areas in the framework of a national vaccination campaign launched on 5 November.

But the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) failed to strike a deal on how this humanitarian operation can be implemented. The government declared a unilateral cessation of hostilities from 1 to 12 November but refused to meet the rebels to discuss the technical details of the operation.

The SPLM-N, on the other hand, insisted that a negotiated accord is crucial for the operation and also raised the need to agree on the transportation of the vaccines. The rebels reject the participation of the Sudanese government humanitarian body in the process.

Following a briefing for the UN Security Council on 11 November on the situation in the two areas, John Ging, director of operations for the UN OCHA, told reporters that, UN agencies had been unable to deal with the outbreak of polio in the region, due to the failure of the two parties to reach a deal over the technical issues.

"The purpose of the briefing to the Council is to appeal to them for an intervention (to resolve this situation). They have their own authority, they have their own instruments", said Ging who seemed dismayed by the situation.

He further expressed hope that the Council will reengage in an effective way with the parties, stressing that they are looking for a "different and more effective engagement" from the 15-members body as the precedent attempts did not yield a positive outcome.

The Irish diplomat said every side has its excuses and argument but in the end, the parties to the conflict "do not pay the price".

The Sudanese government and the SPLM-n issued two statements on Tuesday accusing each other of obstructing the vaccination campaign.

The Humanitarian Aid Commission in Khartoum denounced the SPLM-N's "intransigence" and "its quest to exploit the situation to achieve some gains that have nothing to do with the humanitarian and moral dimension to the campaign".

The humanitarian body said they were ready to launch the campaign, finalised all the preparations jointly with the UN agencies and formed joint teams to monitor the operation at the level of the two states.

On the other side, SPLM-N secretary general Yasir Arman issued a statement underlining that it was the government which refused to attend a meeting called by the African Union mediation (AUHIP) in Addis Ababa on 4 November to discuss the technical measures including the cessation of hostilities.

"The meeting was scheduled to resolve the technical issues, mainly to reach a credible ceasefire for the duration of the campaign that would convince the families of the children to bring them to the sites of the vaccination centers and that the Sudan government will not attack them by air or by ground", he further said.

Arman further accused the government of launching "biggest ever campaign" against the rebel positions in the two states.

The conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile displaced thousands and forced more to flee to the neighbouring countries; Ethiopia and South Sudan.

The UN Security Council and the African Union urged the government to allow unrestricted humanitarian access to the affected civilians in the SPLM-N areas, but Khartoum says the rebels will benefit from the food and rejected the request.

Ging said the failure to vaccinate the children in the two states hampers their plans to eradicate polio disease from the planet.

However he added that they are ready to carry out the operation in few days if the Security Council brings the two sides to accept a cessation of hostilities.

"If we get the green light, we, on the United Nations side, are ready and it will only take four days to vaccinate the children", he said. ([Back to Top](#))

S. defense minister kicks off military operations against rebels in multiple states

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 13/11/2013 – The Sudanese defense minister, Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein, announced the beginning of military operations which aims to end rebellion in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile.

Hussein said that troops are heading towards the military operations zones, asserting that this offensive shall witness the end of rebellion.

He affirmed the completion of preparations, plans and the simultaneous mechanical movement in the various battlefronts.

"We made huge and excellent preparations and our troops are moving to end the rebellion once and for good", Hussein said.

The country's top military official, who testified before the parliament on Tuesday, acknowledged that performance of the armed forces in Darfur was negatively affected by the lack of capacity of the police, saying that the armed forces directed its efforts to control the tribal clashes instead of carrying out its military tasks.

He claimed that the rebel coalition known as Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) that consists of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/North (SPLM-N) and several Darfur rebel groups plan to carry out assassination and kidnapping operations against government officials as well as attacking major cities.

Hussein acknowledged that wars in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile along with the tribal conflicts and armed robbery in Darfur represent a real security threat.

He said that the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement/Minni Minnawi (SLM-MM) and Sudan Liberation Movement Abdul Wahid (SLM-AW) are currently active in Darfur states in cooperation with some tribal groups.

The defense minister added that SLM-MM is the largest rebel group in Darfur, affirming that it plays the most significant role in the lack of security and stability in the region.

He predicted that rebel groups would attack the army's small stations in Jebel Marra besides targeting major cities, the United Nations African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) forces, and oil exploration sites.

Hussein added that the SRF forces in South Kordofan are estimated to consist of 1,000 troops and more than 130 vehicles while the SPLM-N alone has 18 battalions including approximately 8,000 troops.

He revealed that the government reached an agreement with two armed factions that are active in west and central Darfur states, pointing that this pact would enhance stability of the two states.

The Sudanese presidential assistant, Nafie Ali Nafie, had announced previously that troops are heading to Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile, saying that the government troops would carry out a major military campaign to eliminate the armed rebellion.

The minister of interior, Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid, also said that the military campaign is carried out under the direct supervision of president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir. ([Back to Top](#))

Concerns over new UN Human Rights Council members

BBC News, 13/11/2013 – China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Vietnam have been elected to the UN's human rights watchdog, despite concerns about their rights records.

Campaign groups have condemned the election of the countries to the 47-seat Human Rights Council.

Human Rights Watch said some new members had denied access to UN monitors investigating alleged abuses.

The UN General Assembly elected a total of 14 new members to the Geneva-based council on Tuesday.

'Explaining to do'

China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Algeria and Cuba won seats unopposed, but human rights groups have complained that they are the countries that the body should be censuring.

New York-based Human Rights Watch singled out five countries - China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam and Algeria - which have denied access to UN human rights monitors keen to investigate alleged abuses.

"Countries that haven't allowed UN experts appointed by the council to visit have a lot of explaining to do," said Peggy Hicks, the group's global advocacy director.

And UN Watch, a frequent critic of UN practices, also accused these countries, along with Algeria, of systematically violating the rights of their citizens.

The newly members will be on the council for three years from 2014. The body aims to shine a spotlight on rights abuses by adopting resolutions.

UN Watch made a broader criticism of the Human Rights Council, accusing it of repeatedly criticising Israel while failing to adopt a resolution that has been critical of China, Russia or Saudi Arabia.

The Human Rights Council was created in 2006 to replace the UN's widely discredited Human Rights Commission.

But the council has faced similar criticism to the commission, with the election of countries with questionable track records in human rights.

South Sudan and Uruguay failed to win seats in the competitive elections for their regional grouping on Tuesday. The other regions had uncontested votes. ([Back to Top](#))

Will South Sudan score its millennium development goals?

TheNiles.org Kamapala, 13/11/2013 – South Sudan is lagging behind most African countries in the race to reach the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by 2015, targets which range from halving extreme poverty to tackling HIV/AIDS. Women in Kegulu, Yei County, March 7, 2007. The Niles | Nik Lehnert South Sudan became independent in July 2011, ten years after the Millennium Development Goals were drawn up. So far South Sudan has difficulties to tackle the eight United Nations goals -- leaving many sceptical that it will meet the targets by the 2015 deadline. Wande Aida Eriminio, Member of Parliament representing Nzara Constituency in Western Equatoria State.

The Niles | Abraham Daljang MakerWande Aida Eriminio, a Member of Parliament representing Nzara Constituency in Western Equatoria State, told The Niles that it is impossible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing child mortality rates and improving maternal health, both areas where the young nation has one of the worst track records on the planet. “Our women are dying daily,” Eriminio said. “We cannot reach the target unless the government builds maternity centres in all the ten states of South Sudan,” she said, underlining the need for good facilities and qualified health workers. According to Medical Team International, a christian global health organisation, South Sudan has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world, with more than 2,000 women dying for every 100,000 live births. Only 10 percent of births are attended by skilled assistants. More than 190 of every 1,000 children die before their fifth birthdays. Adongkena Kenneth, Deputy Director of Studies in Rumbek Secondary School. The Niles | Abraham Daljang MakerThe goal of achieving universal primary education is also a massive challenge. A report by the World Bank in September 2012 indicated that South Sudan trails most African countries, with a 60 percent dropout rate in lower primary education in most rural areas. Despite the problems, some remain determined that South Sudan will make the grade. “We are not badly off in terms of primary enrolment,” said Adongkena Kenneth, Deputy Director of Studies in Rumbek National Secondary School, he added, however, that the country still has a long way to go as children from Central Equatoria State often get primary leaving certificates in Uganda. The world’s newest nation lacks behind most African countries. It has a high illiteracy rate and about 90 percent of its population living in rural areas under abject poverty, fallout from the more than two-decade-long civil war that devastated the country. ([Back to Top](#))

The dilemmas of nationalism, tribal politics, and personal interest in South Sudan

South Sudan News Agency, 12/11/2013 – South Sudanese are face with serious tripartite dilemmas when it comes to politics and how the affairs of the nascent nation are handled. The writer of this article has found himself engulf or puzzled with the same dilemmas, as human being thrives for better future in any country where respect for rules of laws, respect of human dignity and Rights are supposedly are the pillars of daily operation of the government. A question however be asked as to whether these dilemmas are created by the government in

having loss direction where decisions are left hanging without being taken or are caused by some unknown factors having forces of their own beyond human control? My personal opinion is that, the mess this country is facing and will dearly pay for in the long run is engineered by individual (s) whose interests might have been driven by tribal aspirations/influences and personal interest rather than that of the national interest.

The belief expressed above, came as a result of careful consideration of the current political situation and actions which has been taken by decision making body in the government, for instance, the dissolution of the entire government without previous preparation as to how it was to be replaced and the unprecedented interfering of the President in the parliamentary procedures relating to the election of the new Speaker, shows interests which were involved in such decisions. In order for one to comprehend the full meaning of this article, we must first define and examine the characteristics of the tripartite dilemmas subject to this article first of which Nationalism and its relative components.

Nationalism:

1. Nationalism, Nationalist and Nationalistic: All these three words have almost the same meaning; however the characteristics of their applications differ slightly, for instance:

a. Nationalism: is defined as the desire by a group of people who share the same race, culture, language, etc, to form an independent country, also as a feeling of a love for and pride in your country and the feeling that your country is better than any other country.

b. Nationalist: Is defined as a person who wants their country to be independent, and also as a person who has a great love for and pride in their country; a person who has a feeling that their country is better than any other country.

c. Nationalistic: Is defined as having very strong feelings of love and pride in your country, so that you think that it is better than any other country.

The definitions and the meanings of all three words as readers can see above, carry nearly the same expression, however, one can also see the distinctive characteristics of each word and how it can apply to different scenarios or mind set. We can all agree to greater extent that (b) and (c) in context of the South Sudanese applies uniformly as we can collectively claim to have struggled for the independence of this country which is now achieved. We can also claim individually our love and pride to have achieved the independence of South Sudan and our great feeling that South Sudan is better than any other country. Now, the question to be asked relating to (a) the Nationalism, is whether as a group, the definition of Nationalism is applicable in our context since South Sudan comprises of many tribes who speak different languages or dialects? We have had a great desire and pride for an independent South Sudan otherwise we could not have fought the Sudan government for almost over half a century as we did. The half of the definition of Nationalism does apply to us in a group context as we all had yearned for an independent South Sudan. Now the areas to be considered within the definition of Nationalism is the Language and Tribe since we are from one race in South Sudan. We as South Sudanese use words like Patriot/patriotic to express our love for South Sudan; which in definition carry similar meaning as nationalist/Nationalistic, and early on I agreed that we South Sudanese share an equal desire and love for an independent South Sudan and also feel that South Sudan is better than any other country, therefore having link Patriot/patriotic with nationalist/nationalistic, we must now look into whether nationalism as defined above is in part or whole can be achieved in South Sudan.

South Sudan comprises of at least sixty (60) tribes, as such we speak different languages or dialects, our love for South Sudan collectively and individually is unequivocally unquestionable, however is it possible for us to claim Nationalism when tribal aspirations come first and the nation second? It is in human nature to dodge the truth and choose to live in denial, as such for many of us myself included, we would rather like to think that we are nationalist or patriotic and believe in nationalism without actually testing ourselves by fitting our actions and beliefs against the meaning of those words. We must accept the fact that South Sudan is enriched with diversity and therefore care should be taken in dealing with national

issues as we all can be collectively affect by those issues irrespective of whether you come from small tribe or large tribe.

I personally think that for nationalism to be achieve in South Sudan, there must be an acceptance from a person of his/her negative feelings against members of other tribes, only when one accept the existing of such feelings, this is where one would be able to mitigate those feelings and be able to turn those negative feelings into positive one for the betterment of the nation.

The answer to the question as to whether nationalism is achievable in South Sudan or in any Nation is yes; but have we as South Sudanese at this stage achieved nationalism in part or whole? The answer to this question is that we have only achieved half of it. Yes, we gained our independent because of our high desires and love for South Sudan, therefore nationalism in part is achieved by South Sudanese through hard and long struggled. We have not by a long short achieved the most important part of Nationalism as far as I am concern, we are people divided by tribes and languages or dialects, therefore must struggle even harder to breach these tribal differences for South Sudanese to achieve an absolute nationalism. The existing of many tribes who speak different languages/dialects should not be uses as a blocking stone by those in power so as to prevent the citizens of South Sudan from considering themselves as equal stakeholders of their country.

Tribal politics:

2. Tribal Politics: At its roots, is about the identity of a given group that is based on common ethnic or cultural factors that are thought to coalesce the group into a functional political unit. Factors other than that of religion can also be the basis for tribal unity and thus employ tribal politics in order to maintain the status quo. This is broader and not specifically in the context of South Sudan, however when we explore its application in South Sudan, this concept would yield negative result rather the positive one. The tribal politics in South Sudan is being exercise by individual (s) who believe in superiority of one or two tribes over 60 other tribes. While the formation of groups or tribe has many advantages, such as clear communication and establishment of traditions that are expected to be observed, tribal politics can also have a negative side as well. The tribal politics can works well in subgroup but act as a bearer between various subgroups. When this is put in context of South Sudan, tribal politics has been the basis in which government decisions are makes, and as well been the basis in which some politicians want to capture the leadership power by hosting the incumbent government through democratic mean or mechanism or else. The biggest problems with tribal politics in South Sudan is that the two major tribes playing this game are pushing each other to the limited so as to achieve an absolute political divorce from one another where each group would exist separately and completely segregated so as to form its own political institution that is based on tribal believes. What is not being watch closely or ignored entirely by these two large tribes is the existing of more than sixty other different tribes in South Sudan beside the two; these other sixty tribes regardless of how small some of them might be, has more or less contributed significantly to the liberation of this nation and have significant shares and says on how South Sudan should be govern or rule. When one reads articles in the internet nowadays, one can tells from first paragraph as to which tribes among the two or other does the author belong because tribal politics has consumed completely any impartiality that might had exist within them.

Moreover, South Sudan though its human inhabitants went through rough and agonizingly extensive civil war not to mentioned its high human costs which was driven by common interest and aspirations, the results of unintended and unpunished actions of some members within the SPLA and other Armed groups during struggle against the very people that they pledged to have struggled for and liberated from unjust Islamic government system of Sudan as well as the failure to hold those accountable for such actions, contributed enormously to tribal sentiments that are making it difficult to achieve nationalism. When these ideas are put in context to today's political situation in South Sudan, one would have to be grievously brain dead not to comprehend the factors at add and reasons that allows for such decisions to be taken. There might had been calls from South Sudan intellectuals for new faces in the government, however

only an absent minded person would take such call literally and act accordingly without considering the mentality behind such calls. Many South Sudanese intellectuals who were not in the government has been taking advantages of high illitricity rates in South Sudan to their advantages and have claims to have been advocating on behalf of the people while their ideas had been driven by tribal and personal interests, for instance there had been journalists who wrote articles directing their blames on others who has for the last eight years been appointed to various Ministerial posts in the government by the President without examining the reasons with which the President kept appointing these individuals to such posts. How realistic and feasible such blames are? and whether the individuals leveling such blames seriously and with clear conscious exempt the President from corruption and give him or any other person who shall letter become a President a blank check by excluding the office of the President from blame being leveled against individuals whom he has kept in the government for the last eight years? Can we said for the sake of accommodation of the ideas of those who praises the President in changes he makes in the recent reshuffling of the government without considering the contribution of those who had for the past eight years served this nation proudly and dignifiedly without squandering public resources, that he indeed makes such decision freely without tribal and individual interest from those who were closed to him during the process? How difficulty is it to swallow one's pride and allow the President to destroy the integrity built by few of the former Ministers who has remember that the two and half million that has said to have died during struggle had actually died and is not a simple figure used to achieve independent of South Sudan? The most tragic irony is that many South Sudanese have had seen enough death and does not want to see anymore, therefore nevertheless would allow region dictatorship to prevail even though in the long run will yield the same results.

Therefore, the elements of tribal politics in Africa context in general and South Sudan in particular are dangerous and may escalate or causes tribal conflicts as it was the case with the 2007 Kenya election which resulted in tribal conflicts and great loss of human lives. The question as to whether Nationalism can be achieve in a multicultural and more diverse country, is indeed deplorable. The best example where an absolute nationalism is achieved with a more diverse background is USA. The system of governance in USA is a product of a well written constitution frame by people whose interests was to create a system where equilibrium of its citizens was the guiding principle. Though such equilibrium was achieved through great sacrifices by influential leaders who were willing to paid the ultimate prizes and forfeit their lives in order to force the implementation of the provisions of the supreme of law of the land, nevertheless and regardless of it cost nationalism at long last is achieved.

Personal/self-interests:

3. Personal/Self-interest: Self-Interest is defined as someone who in any situation only cares for him/herself without consideration of other people. This factor is very difficult to digest for the simple reason that every human being consider his/her welfare before others, therefore the logical reasons for any person not considering his/herself interest before others are to be ascertain. The enormous challenge present by Tribal politic and self-interests in South Sudan is devastating to the life of innocent people who after decades of war felt relief by the signing of CPA and subsequently the referendum that earned them their freedom, dignity and independent. For South Sudanese to achieve Nationalism there must be a radical change in leadership from top down, the leadership must first and foremost put the nation and its people at forefront of its daily planning and thinking. When a person is elected by people as their President, any tribal thinking/sentiments and accommodations to me would amount to treason, because when an elected President start displaying tribal behaviors while elected by people of all tribes is not only a disgrace but betrayal of the people's trust and hope. Though excluding the President from demonstrating behaviors that are likely to increase tribal conflicts in South Sudan is inexcusable, it is however this author's believe individuals whose interest driven by tribal politics and self-interests are to shoulder some of the blames, there are elements closes to the President who have scores to settle and those in the receiving end of their aggressions seems to include the President himself. Among these individuals Telar have to rank number one. Telar is perceived by people of greater Bar El Ghazal as hero; however it has to be minus people of

Lakes State, because it would be difficult for any person from Lakes State to convince me of the relevancy of Telar being so selfish to nominate himself for two positions leaving Lakes State at his mercy. Lakes State in previous government had four Ministers and one Deputy Minister, and all these were able to be trade in for the price of one with an exception of the position of the Deputy Minister. It would have been understandable if all the stakeholders of the Lakes State had agreed, even then, how realistic would it have been for the whole State to stand behind this immoral and selfish interest? These individuals Telar Included, has managed halfway to destroy the great legacy and integrity of the President whom he has built beyond my expectations within a relatively very short period of time.

Though removing his Vice President was within his prerogatives and his powers as well as the right thing to do considering his political fallout with the President, there nevertheless should had been consultation between the President and the members of the Political Bureau of his party. The President for long time has been harboring unity among South Sudanese by declaring many unconditional amnesty to armed groups who has causes more death of South Sudanese after the independent, however in light of recent political development in South Sudan, the behaviors being displayed by the President are nearly surprising to many people in a sense that it is contrary to everything that he has been fostering and believe in or at least I thought he believed in. This is because he has tried for the last eight years to unite South Sudanese by even forgiven those who have committed some hideous crimes against innocent citizens of South Sudan. The question however becomes, what has happened that forces the President to makes a complete U-Turn contrary to his humble action of the last eight years? The unfortunate reality is that, South Sudan is over flooded with individuals whose interest superseded people's interest making it difficult to build statehood whose citizens sees themselves as equal shareholders of its affairs; therefore it is up to the President to seek advice from individuals who believes and respects the interest of the people. The actions of the President lately must be influence by factors beyond his control because they completely are contradictory to his past believes. In a nutshell, South Sudanese shall only achieve nationalism under leadership which highly regards with respect the Supreme Law of the Land framed to safeguards and protect the social lives and social orders of the people. (*[Back to Top](#)*)

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