



## **MEDIA MONITORING REPORT**

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

MONDAY, 20 MAY 2013

#### **SOUTH SUDAN**

- 24 killed in rebel vs. army battle in S. Sudan town overrun by fighters (*ABCNews.com*)
- Rumbek court sentences government official to two years in prison (*Sudantribune.com*)
- Murder suspect shot after escaping from Rumbek prison (*AllAfrica.com*)
- Deaths reported in South Sudan cattle raids (*Al-Jazeera News*)
- Five police and one soldier die in Koch-Mayom clashes (*AllAfrica.com*)
- Women, children most affected in South Sudan continuing violence: MSF (*Gurtong.net*)
- Deputy Governor urges Yau Yau to abandon rebellion (*Gurtong.net*)
- South Sudan denies marginalizing minority tribes in government (*Sudantribune.com*)
- SPLM urged to bring economic development or risk losing 2015 elections (*Gurtong.net*)
- Cabinet condemns heinous rape (*Radio Bakhita*)
- Fresh meningitis outbreak reported in Upper Nile (*Gurtong.net*)
- Humanitarian Air Service doubles prices (*Catholic Radio Network*)
- Cabinet resolves termination of foreign Employees contracts (*Gurtong.net*)

#### **SOUTH SUDAN, SUDAN**

- Increase of UN troops in Abyei is part of a previous agreement, Sudan says (*AllAfrica.com*)

#### **OTHER HIGHLIGHTS**

- CPJ urges Kerry to address AU summit on press freedom (*Sudantribune.com*)
- SRF conquest of Khartoum 'just a matter of time' - rebels (*Radio Dabanga*)
- Sudan's defence minister promises rebellion annihilation (*Sudantribne.com*)
- Sudan says South Kordofan town to be soon liberated (*Sudantribne.com*)
- UN Humanitarian Chief to visit Sudan (*AllAfrica.com*)
- SPLM-N calls for UN humanitarian chief to visit rebel-held conflict areas (*Sudantribne.com*)
- UN concerned over Khartoum's suspension of local NGO's activities (*Sudantribne.com*)
- Speculations about ministerial reshuffle in Sudan (*Sudantribne.com*)
- Khartoum behind fresh wave of violence over gold in Darfur - Report (*Sudantribne.com*)
- Uganda ready to help in Darfur conflict (*New Vision,*)

#### **EDITORIAL/ FEATURES/ OPINION**

- Is David Yau Yau really a Rebel? (*Gurtong.net*)
- The Invasion of Abyei: two years of more agony (*Sudantribne.com*)

#### **LINKS TO STORIES FROM THE MORNING MEDIA MONITOR**

- South Sudan army kills 20 rebels, captures weapons (*Gurtong.net*)
- Pibor county displaced families arrive in Bor (*Gurtong.net*)
- 29 killed in South Sudan cattle raid (*AFP/gurtong.net*)
- Machar tells SPLA to distance itself from politics (*Sudantribune.com*)
- SPLM deputy chairman says the party is in trouble (*Sudantribune.com*)
- S. Sudan warns security forces, militias over violence against civilians (*Sudantribune.com*)
- Western nations 'deeply disturbed' by Jonglei violence (*Agence France Presse (AFP)*)
- Government approves human rights package (*Radio Bakhita*)
- Kiir promises to investigate Khartoum's claims of support to rebels (*Sudantribune.com*)

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# Highlights

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## **24 killed in rebel vs. army battle in S. Sudan; town overrun by fighters**

*ABCNews.com Juba, 20/5/2013* – South Sudan's military spokesman says 24 people were killed and dozens wounded during a battle between government troops and rebels who had overrun a town.

Col. Philip Aguer said Monday that a battle in Jonglei state on Sunday killed 20 rebel fighters and four government troops.

Aguer said the army recaptured the town of Boma, near the border with Ethiopia, from rebels led by David Yau Yau who took over the town earlier this month.

Aguer said government forces found food manufactured in the East African country of Eritrea on the ground, but that officials don't have evidence that Eritrea is helping the rebels.

South Sudan accuses Sudan of supporting Yau Yau's rebellion in order to block South Sudan's plans to build an oil pipeline through Jonglei state and Ethiopia.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Rumbek court sentences government official to two years in prison**

*Sudantribune.com Juba, 18/5/2013* – Rumbek County court on Friday sentenced a government official to two years in prison for assaulting a reporter for *South Sudan Television (SSTV)* and threatening him with pistol in the Lakes state capital.

Johnson Poth Matur Akech, also well-known as Poth Johnson Matur Akech, came under attack on 21 April after a heated exchange of words with the acting director of the state-owned Radio FM-98.

Peter Maliap Chieng denied attacking Poth with a pistol during the altercation. Speaking during Maliap's sentencing hearing on Friday, Judge Santo Yuhana Yuggu said the two-year jail term was in line with South Sudan's criminal code under sections 226 and 249.

Poth welcomed the court's decision, saying he had feared for his life after being threatened at gunpoint.

The reporter added that he felt justice had been served, although the judge did not impose a full sentence. This is the first time that Rumbek county court has sentenced a government official to jail.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Murder suspect shot after escaping from Rumbek prison**

*AllAfrica.com Juba, 19/5/2013* – A murder suspect who escaped from Rumbek's main prison over a month ago was shot in the Malual-Kodi area of Lakes state on Thursday by wardens from South Sudan Prison Services.

A senior security official in Rumbek told Sudan Tribune that Maciec Maker Yomdit was shot during an operation to recapture him after they obtained information of his presence in the town.

"Our forces stopped him but he attempted to run away but during the process he was shot in his neck by our warden guard", said the officer who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Maker is now under close observation in a Lakes state hospital.

A number of inmates have escaped while in the custody of Lakes state's prison services, with some officials alleged to have colluded in the previous breakout.

According to an official at Rumbek Correctional Prison, inmates frequently complain about a lack of space and human rights abuses.

Wardens, meanwhile, complain that their salaries are not enough. A lack of judges in Lakes state has resulted in a backlog of cases, leaving many prisons overcrowded.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Deaths reported in South Sudan cattle raids**

*Al-Jazeera News, 19/5/2013* – At least 29 people have been killed after cattle raiders from a South Sudanese minority group opened fire on members of another minority in a village in Upper Nile state, according to a local official.

The attackers crept into Tollerri village in Ulang County in the early hours of Saturday morning and sprayed it with bullets, killing 23 people instantly, Dak Tap Chuol, commissioner for the nearby town of Nasir, said on Sunday.

The victims of the attack were from the minority Jikany people, the official said, and the attackers were Murle, another minority tribe, who came from neighbouring Jonglei state.

"When people awoke they tried to shoot back but it was too late," Chuol told the AFP news agency.

"Eleven women and four children" were killed, with another 17 people wounded, he said.

Chuol said that one of a team of village youths that set off hours later to recover the stolen cows was also killed, along with three raiders.

### **Women and children injured**

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF), which travelled to the remote area by speedboat on Saturday, took back 16 people with bullet wounds to its Nasir hospital.

"Two of them have died as the result of their injuries, including one child eight years old," Raphael Gorgeu, MSF head of mission in South Sudan, said

Fourteen of the patients were women and children.

"This is of great concern that civilians, and especially women and children, are the most affected by such an attack," Gorgeu said.

Chuol said that the only other Murle attack on this area took place on May 19, 2011 and followed a raid by members of rival group, the Lou Nuer, who retreated north through Nasir County.

"It was assumed that time that they were mistaken," he said. "This time round they meant to attack us. This is the first intentional raid on us."

[Back to Top](#)

### **Five police and one soldier die in Koch-Mayom clashes**

*AllAfrica.com Bentiu, 19/5/2013* – Five Unity state policemen and one soldier were killed in Buoth district of Koch County on Friday in an attack local authorities have blamed on youth from neighbouring Mayom county.

The incident follows tension and clashes this week along the County border, which separates the Bul Nuer of Mayom and the Jageay Nuer of Koch County.

On Tuesday a cattle raid by Bul Nuer youth killed two civilians and injured three, according to officials. Youth from the Jageay responded with an attack on Mayom County on Wednesday, which killed five Bul Nuer civilians.

Unity state's deputy governor, Michael Chiengjiek Geay, told *Sudan Tribune* that the five police officers and a soldier from South Sudan's wild life services were murdered by a group of around 80 heavily armed young men from Mayom County in Friday's attack.

They managed to steal 28 cattle, killing one civilian in the process, he said.

Geay says the government has dispatched militarily police to restore calm among the population and has arrested five suspects, adding that civilians shooting dead police were unusual in Unity state.

Residents in Koch County told *Sudan Tribune* on Friday that an investigation was needed, alleging that Mayom County commissioner, Bol Mayak, had a role in mobilising the young men from his area to carrying out the attack.

*Sudan Tribune* was unable to reach the commissioner for comment on Friday but the deputy governor said that commissioner Mayak was denies the claims.

"We are working out as the government to find out who is behind these deaths of people and truth will be revealed out soon", he said.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Women, children most affected in South Sudan continuing violence: MSF**

*Gurtong.net Juba, 19/5/2013* – The international medical humanitarian organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has said that women and children are the most affected persons in the ongoing inter and intra-tribal conflicts in South Sudan states.

In a statement released on Saturday, MSF said it has treated up to 16 patients with gunshot wounds, with the fourteen victims all women and children following an armed cattle attack in the early hours of Saturday in a village in Ulang County, Upper Nile State.

“This is of great concern that civilians, and especially women and children are the most affected by such an attack”, said Raphael Gorgeu, MSF Head of Mission in South Sudan.

Two of the patients including an eight year old child died on due course of rescue as injuries they got were too much. One of them is a 12 years old girl with multiple small bowel injuries, left colon injuries and sacral fracture. Another one is a 20 years old woman with lacerations of the liver described the statement.

MSF said it is still expecting more victims for treatment. In Nasir, MSF runs 82-bed hospital offering primary and secondary healthcare, including surgery, emergency services, obstetric and pediatric care, treatment for HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis and treatment for malnutrition.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Deputy Governor urges Yau Yau to abandon rebellion**

*Gurtong.net Juba, 18/5/2013* – The Deputy Governor of Central Equatoria State, Manase Lomole Waya has called on the rebel group led by David Yau Yau to heed to the presidential amnesty granted to them to bring an end to the rampant killings in South Sudan.

“Brother Yau Yau should stop his nonsense and come home because it will take him nowhere and the people will be taken nowhere and the country because it will make the country sink,” he said.

The deputy Governor also said that the use of the gun to attack people on roads to Bor, Torit, Kajokeji, Yei, Nimule and Terekeka must also stop.

Lomole said that the minds of the people are only set for development and called on the responsible authorities to crack down the criminals by use of fire.

“These guys are carrying guns and the same medicine should be given to them. Pay them in their own currency,” he said.

Nevertheless, he called on cattle herders from the neighbouring Jonglei state to leave the state saying that it interrupting agriculture.

“This state of Central Equatoria is been infiltrated by cattle herders going to all villages causing us problems interrupting with agricultural productivity,” he added.

Meanwhile the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Gen. Malek Ruben Yaak confirmed that there is a problem of insecurity and the problem is rampant killing of innocent lives citing the ten year old girl who was raped this week and killed by an unknown person.

He said that because they are handling guns, the SPLA is being blamed but said crimes are done by criminals in hide outs.

Gen. Ruben said that a problem occurred in his house last year when it was attacked and his body guard was killed and after two weeks the attackers returned where they managed to kill one of them identified as a Ugandan.

He says the rampant killing is a social responsibility because the criminals hide within yet not detected to make a counter plan.

He urged people to dialogue and desists from hate speech so that issues of tribal alliances can be tackled including land grabbing.

[Back to Top](#)

### **South Sudan denies marginalizing minority tribes in government**

*Sudantribune.com* Juba, 18/5/2013 – South Sudan has denied allegations that it is marginalizing minority tribes in the government, asserting that those making such claims are individuals acting out of their own interests.

Speaking to *Sudan Tribune* on Saturday, South Sudanese minister of information and broadcasting services Barnaba Marial Benjamin described the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) – led by president Salva Kiir Mayardit and elected in a 93% landslide - as the “people's government”.

“It represents all the different faces of our communities. The voices talking about marginalization are individuals wanting to satisfy their own interest not the interest of those they claim to represent”, he said.

Marial was reacting to claims by the Jonglei-based rebel leader, David Yau Yau, that he is fighting for the creation of an independent state for minority tribes in the region, claiming they have been sidelined at all levels.

In exclusive interview with *Sudan Tribune* on Friday, Yau Yau, who comes from the minority Murle tribe, said the rebel group was fighting for equality for all, including the press.

“Are you now free to write anything about the government? Some of you [journalists] are being killed because of telling our people what you should tell them. This is why you are afraid to talk about corruption, about tribalism, about the deliberate marginalization of minority tribes in the country, especially in Jonglei”. Yau Yau said, in reference to restrictions on press freedoms in South Sudan.

“We are also fighting for good governance, respect for diversity, adherence to rule of law, respect for human dignity which actually is one of the core values for human rights and development, you name them”, Yau Yau said.

The rebel leader also claimed SPLM's leadership had buried the values for which the decades-long north-South civil war was fought to win independence from neighbouring Sudan.

“We fought together but now there are people who think they fought the war alone and have decided to isolate others, especially the minority like Murle, the Anyuak, the Jie, and the Kachipo in Jonglei. The same thing is also happening in other states where there are minority tribes. The minority tribes do not have a voice at any level of government”, he said.

“We are fighting for our own freedoms, our rights and we will get it. We will get our own state where can we be represented at will ... Our people will choose who they want [as elected representatives] not anybody else”, he added.

Marial has dismissed the assertions made by the rebel leader, saying he is fighting only for his own interests and those of the Murle community.

“I said before, the current government is inclusive. In fact, our people are now complaining that this government is big. They want it to be trimmed. They need small government so that financial resources can be used to support other developmental projects”, he said, adding that Yau Yau's claims were incorrect and that he is fighting no genuine cause.

“He is fighting because he lost the [2010] election which is [in] his own interest. It does not represent the interest of the majority of the Murle community”. Marial said, describing Yau Yau “as one of those who do not want to see South Sudan emerging as stable, strong, prosperous and viable young nation because they have been overwhelmed with individual interests”.

Marial maintained the Murle community was well-represented in the SPLM, including a number who held sensitive positions.

“The under-secretary of our finance is a Murle. There is a minister at the cabinet level. They are also in the parliament represented in the state parliament and in the executive”, he added.

[Back to Top](#)

### **SPLM urged to bring economic development or risk losing 2015 elections**

*Gurtong.net Juba, 19/5/2013* – The Deputy Chairman of the ruling Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), Hon. James Wannu Igga has urged his party to work hard by empowering the people economically or risk losing to other parties in the 2015 general elections.

“If we don’t see well, SPLM will be thrown through the window if we do not bring economic development,” he warned.

He said that soon the people will forsake the SPLM and urged his party to ensure that the living standards of the South Sudanese are improved and that there is need to fight poverty.

Igga said that the people of South Sudan have a problem of implementation of the policies and the programs and that there is corruption.

The deputy chairman called on the party to do something to back up the independence that they struggled for.

He called for the need to have research; come with alternatives, follow up, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the success of the programs and policies.

“My problem always with the South and these decision makers we have big defects when it comes to making policies and planning for the success of this new country,” he said.

Nevertheless, he announced that the political bureau which is the highest decision making body of his party in their two documents of the constitution and the manifesto have given youth 20 per cent political participation and women 35 per cent.

“I want to announce here that in the last meeting of the SPLM political bureau in the two documents of the SPLM which includes the constitution and the manifesto in recognition of the role played by the youth during the 21 years of the SPLM/A the SPLM is going to give participation of the youth in all political posts 20 per cent,” he announced.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Cabinet condemns heinous rape**

*Radio Bakhita Juba, 19/5/2013* – The Council of Ministers condemned the rape of a ten-year old girl that led to her death, terming it a “heinous crime.”

On Monday, a small girl was raped in Munuki-Juba and left closed in a car. She died on Tuesday at Juba Teaching Hospital.

Government spokesperson Barnaba Marial Benjamin said on Friday that the Cabinet condemned the rape “in the strongest terms”.

He said the criminal should receive a severe punishment within the law. Dr Marial presented condolences to the victim’s family.

The rape and death of the ten-year old girl sent big shock wave and some groups are pressing the national parliament to act in order to protect victims and punish rapists.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Fresh meningitis outbreak reported in Upper Nile**

*Gurtong.net Malakal, 18/5/2013* – A fresh Meningitis outbreak has been reported in Baliet County, Upper Nile State, an official has announced.

The Upper Nile State Health Minister Dr.Charles Yor Odhok said that one person was reported by health personnel in the county to the state ministry confirming the outbreak of the disease in Baliet.

Yor added that the vaccination campaign will be extended to the county to curb the outbreak.

“We told the health county personnel to bring the case to Malakal teaching hospital for treatment,” the minister said.

“We assured the whole public and the entire people of the state to take much preventive measure in avoiding the spread of the disease,” he added.

“We have advised all the communities to report any case of incidence to the health personnel trained so that they quickly help to rescue the life of infected individuals,” he added.

The minister urges the communities to take much care and rescue of the sick by taking them to the teaching hospital rather than taking them to private clinics.

He said people confuse the sign and symptoms and that’s why people take them to the clinics.

The minister assured the public of the transmission routes of the disease saying; that the disease can be transmitted through respiratory droplets and secretion during close contact with infected persons adding that it should be avoided.

"Prevention is better than cure and so our people must do preventive measures," he said.

Meningitis outbreak last month broke out in April 15 and got noticed in April 30 in which the outbreak killed three people and with the series of infection from 38 to 70 said to be under medical treatment and care in Malakal teaching hospital.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Humanitarian Air Service doubles prices**

*Catholic Radio Network, 19/5/2013* – Humanitarian flights cost double since May 1 and have less aircraft due to lack of funds from donors.

UN Humanitarian Air Services or UNHAS increased its prices and a single journey costs from 200 to 400 US Dollars. A return ticket from Juba to Leer – a trip of about 90 minutes with a stopover in Rumbek, now costs 800 dollars.

A return ticket from Juba to Frankfurt, in Germany, can cost less than 600 dollars.

UNHAS says that at the end of March it received 5.74 million dollars from donors and had pledges for another 4.9 million.

The service run by World Food Programme has a budget of 31.6 million US dollars. Cuts in funding led to the reduction of UNHAS fleet from 11 to eight aircraft.

UNOCHA said the cut that may affect the humanitarian air access especially during the rainy season. UNHAS provides air transport to remote areas of South Sudan.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Cabinet resolves termination of foreign Employees contracts**

**Gurtong.net Juba, 19/5/2013** – The National Council of Ministers on Friday reached a resolution that terminates all contracts of foreign employees in the Public Service after the move was presented by the Minister of Justice John Luk Jok.

South Sudan government's Spokesperson Dr. Barnaba Marial told journalists right after the sitting that, the decision was reached based on the South Sudan laws.

“The status of foreign nationals working in South Sudan Public Service is terminated,” Marial said.

The move is expected to take effect in the next three months. He said the employees after termination will receive their post service benefits.

Marial however, pointed out that, foreigners who have stayed for long in the country have got option to apply for residential permit according to the South Sudan's laws.

Though Marial did not outline that the move was as part of creating space for unemployed South Sudanese, it serves as one of the government's effort in creating space for unemployed but skilled South Sudanese nationals following outcry by many.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Increase of UN troops in Abyei is part of a previous agreement, Sudan says**

**AllAfrica.com Khartoum, 19/5/2013** – Sudan's foreign ministry has stated that the call of the UN secretary General for adding (1126) troops to the UN Interim Force for Abyei (UNISFA) came in the context of an earlier agreement between Sudan and South Sudan and the UN.

The foreign ministry's spokesperson, Abu-Bakr Al-Siddiq, on Saturday said however that they haven't officially received the request of the Secretary-General to increase the number of troops.

He further added they consider the move as part of the previous security agreement which stipulates that protection of the demilitarized zone including Abyei area is part of UNISFA's mandate.

The UN Secretary General has pointed out that Abyei area is experiencing increasing tension between the Dinka Ngok and Misseriya, saying these groups are still armed and exchanging hostility and suspicions.

The existing UNISFA is comprised of 3973 troops; most of them are Ethiopians, while its troop strength authorized by the UNSC is 4,200 soldiers.

The report said that "the remaining 227 troops will be deployed within the air aviation unit, as military observers, staff officers and as part of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism".

Moon further said that the delay of the referendum undermines efforts to maintain security and ensure stability of the humanitarian situation, stressing that it is the duty of Khartoum and Juba prevent unauthorized armed individuals from entering Abyei.

The African Union tried to break the deadlock last year, proposing that the plebiscite go ahead in October 2013, but only for those permanently residing in the area - effectively excluding the Misseriya nomads, leaving the Southern-aligned Dinka Ngok free to vote in favour of joining South Sudan.

Khartoum has rejected the plan, but AU mediators stress the exclusion of the Misseriya nomads is consistent with the decision of the International Court of Arbitration in July 2009, which defined Abyei's territory as the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms.

[Back to Top](#)

### **CPJ urges Kerry to address AU summit on press freedom**

**Sudantribune.com Addis Ababa, 19/5/2013** – The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has called on US secretary of state John Kerry to address African leaders on the issue of press freedom in Africa during an upcoming continental summit.

In a letter to the US official, CPJ urged Kerry to emphasis what the press freedom group calls Ethiopia's continued systematic crackdown on independent journalists.

“We are writing to bring to your attention the deteriorating state of press freedom in Ethiopia, where you will attend this year’s African Union (AU) summit. A vibrant press and civil society is fundamental to hold governments accountable and to ensure long-term development and stability”, the group said.

With seven journalists behind bars, Ethiopia is Africa’s foremost jailer of journalists after Eritrea.

An Ethiopian court this month rejected an appeal and upheld an 18-year prison sentence for blogger Eskinder Nega, who is being held on terrorism-related charges.

According to the US state department’s 2012 human rights report, “the most significant human rights problems included restrictions on freedom of expression and association through politically motivated trials and convictions of opposition political figures, activists, journalists and bloggers, as well as increased restrictions on print media”.

In comments marking World Press Freedom Day earlier this month, the CPJ called on the AU to promote press freedom and work for the release of all imprisoned journalists across the continent.

CPJ said that it was particularly disturbing that Ethiopia and the Gambia - which host offices of the AU - are among the nations holding journalists in prison.

CPJ’s latest calls come as Africa prepares to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the now defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the 10th anniversary of the AU, with celebrations due to be held next week.

“We ask that you [Kerry] include the issue of press freedom in your discussion of the challenges that Africa will face in the next half-century”, CPJ said in the letter.

Ethiopia is considered a close partner of the United States on security matters, despite the East African nation’s questionable record on human and press freedom rights.

“When US President Barack Obama laid out his administration’s agenda for sub-Saharan Africa last summer, he emphasized strong democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law, noting that these promote both prosperity and stability. But as long as journalists and political activists are imprisoned for speaking their truth to power, such principles will remain illusory”, CPJ said.

East African countries languished at the bottom end of the annual press freedom index published in January by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), amid increased censorship and crackdowns on press freedom.

Ethiopia was ranked at 137th out of 180 countries included in the index, slipping 10 places due its repressive application of the 2009 anti-terrorist law and the continued detention of several local journalists, while Eritrea ranked in last place for the sixth successive year.

Established on the 25 May 1963 in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, the OAU was launched to promote the unity and solidarity of African states.

South Sudan was the latest country to join the AU becoming the 54th member state after it officially proclaimed independence from Sudan in July 2011.

This year’s assembly of the heads of state and government will be held under the theme: “Pan Africanism and African Renaissance”.

According to the African Union Commission (AUC), 75 heads of state and 450 journalists will attend the AU summit which is expected to adopt a series of proclamations.

[Back to Top](#)

**SRF conquest of Khartoum 'just a matter of time' - rebels**

**Radio Dabanga Darfur, 19/5/2013** – The Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) claims that they will "reach and enter Khartoum through deeds not words". The SRF is an alliance of rebel forces recruiting primarily in Darfur and Kordofan whose objective is to topple the Sudanese regime "by all means".

Abdel Wahid Al Nur, the head of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA-AW) and Vice President of the SRF said in an interview with Radio Dabanga that the arrival of SRF forces in Khartoum under the leadership of Abdul Aziz Al Hilu is "just a matter of time".

The rebel leader said that they will advance on the Sudanese capital from several directions, but wished to reassure the Sudanese, both in Khartoum itself and in the various states, that the SRF forces "are not against any citizen, but against the National Congress Party (NCP) and its leadership in Khartoum".

Abdel Wahid said "the first and last task of the SRF is to bring about regime change in Khartoum, as well as to create a transitional government including the full Sudanese political, social and civil spectrum." Its objective is also to create a new constitution for the country, to make it impossible for any would-be tyrannical government to rise to power again, he said.

"Our mission is to uproot the National Congress Party in Khartoum and create a transitional government tasked with maintaining security, order, returning of refugees and displaced persons to their villages, granting everybody their due right and returning the country that has been looted and pillaged by the NCP and its Islamists re-stating to the Sudanese people."

On 9 May SLA leader Minni Minawi made similar claims to Radio Dabanga saying "The route to toppling the National Congress Party is not through capturing the towns of Nyala, El Obeid, Dongola, Medani or Umm Rawaba but by occupying the Presidential Palace in Khartoum."

[Back to Top](#)

### **Sudan's defence minister promises rebellion annihilation**

**Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 18/5/2013** – The Sudanese defence minister, Abdel-Rahim Hussein, has reiterated the ability of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) to defeat the rebel groups, stressing that they would completely annihilate rebellion from the country.

The Minister addressed a farewell celebration for the battalions of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) heading to the military operation zones on Saturday and said that SAF, NISS, and other regular forces are continuing "holy crawl" to achieve their objectives.

The Sudanese official further praised efforts of NISS's operations department which he said has been supporting SAF in all war zones including Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile.

NISS armed units are established by the former head of the intelligence and security service Salah Gosh. They appeared for the first time during the fight against JEM rebels when they attacked Omdurman in May 2008. At the time, SAF was critical to their role but since they coordinate with the army.

The NISS director, Mohamed Atta, for his part, said that NISS will remain a strong supporter for SAF and the armed forces and the Mujahideen (holy fighters) until the country overcomes the challenges ahead and enjoys lasting stability and development.

The Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) rebels extended last month their attacks to Um Rawaba in North Kordofan state before to redeploys its fighters to Abu-Kershola in South Kordofan on the border between the two states.

SRF is an alliance between Sudanese rebel groups from Blue Nile, Darfur, and South Kordofan opposed to the government led by president Omer Hassan al-Bashir. It was declared on 12 November 2011.

The alliance brings together the two main factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army, as well as the Justice and Equality Movement, and the SPLM-North.

The governor of Khartoum, Abdel Rahman Al-Khidir, and his cabinet will attend a prayer organized by the Quran Society on Sunday to supplicate to Allah (GOD) to defeat the enemies of the country.

The event is part of the government efforts to mobilise the Sudanese street and to deter any vacuum the opposition may try to use against the regime or to organise any activities hostile to the government in the capital.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Sudan says South Kordofan town to be soon liberated**

*Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 19/5/2013* – The spokesperson of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) announced that they would soon retake the Abu Karshola in South Kordofan from the rebels who seized the area last April.

The fighter of the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) repulsed for the second time on Monday 13 May an attack SAF forces carried out on their positions in Abu Kershola and inflicted heavy losses on the army and its militia.

SRF rebels control the area since 27 April when they launched an attack on several locations including Um Rawaba in North Kordofan.

Al-Sawarmi Khaled stated on Sunday that the "decisive hour is nearing" to liberate Abu Kershola from the rebels, adding that SAF and the other armed forces are fulfilling their duties and would not stop at rumours circulated by the rebel groups.

The military spokesperson was alluding to the statements by leaders of different rebel groups who speak about an imminent attack on the capital Khartoum.

Reports from the South and North Kordofan say the army is recruiting and arming local population in the areas the rebel attacked recently.

Sources also underline that the killing of local leaders and dignitaries by the assailant rebels facilitated the enrolment operations.

Khartoum said 45 people were killed by the rebels after the capture of Abu Kershola and other localities in South and North Kordofan.

[Back to Top](#)

### **UN Humanitarian Chief to visit Sudan**

*AllAfrica.com Khartoum, 19/5/2013* – The head of the UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is scheduled to make a three-day visit to Sudan later this month.

Valerie Amos, the under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, is due to arrive on 20 May.

OCHA says she plans to meet with officials from the Sudanese government and representatives from humanitarian organisations, with discussions to focus on ways to improve humanitarian access to people affected by conflict and displacement, particularly in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur, where the security situation remains fragile.

The under-secretary-general is also expected to travel to Darfur to see for herself the ongoing humanitarian operation 10 years after the current conflict began.

Amos will hold a press conference on 23 May in Khartoum at the conclusion of her visit.

OCHA is responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies, including the deployment of rapid-response teams, securing funds and the facilitation of civil-military coordination.

The humanitarian operation in Sudan is one of the largest in the world, targeting over 4.4 million Sudanese civilians in 2013.

As part of its mandate, OCHA is working with both the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

[Back to Top](#)

### **SPLM-N calls for UN humanitarian chief to visit rebel-held conflict areas**

*Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 18/5/2013* – The rebel Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) has called on the head of the UN’s humanitarian agency to visit areas in Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur outside of Sudanese government control that have been off-limits for the past two years.

SPLM-N secretary-general Yasir Arman made the comments in a statement issued ahead of a scheduled three-day visit to Sudan by the head of the UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Valerie Amos.

Amos, the under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, is due to arrive in Khartoum on Monday.

Arman says the visit comes at a critical time, with Sudan witnessing a worsening humanitarian crisis in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, North Kordofan and Darfur states.

He says an estimated 4 million civilians have been displaced as a result of the decade-long war in Darfur, while the Sudanese government continues to deny humanitarian access in the border states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan, where its army (SAF) simultaneously carries out aerial and ground bombardments against the civilian population.

#### **MAGNITUDE OF THE CRISIS**

In its statement, the SPLM-N called on Amos to consider visiting rebel-held areas which have previously been off-limits in order to report to the international community the true depth of the humanitarian crisis in the region, rather than visiting areas pre-selected by the government that do not reflect the magnitude of the crisis.

There are also calls for Amos to meet with the SPLM’s political leadership and its humanitarian wing during her upcoming visit in order to obtain information from both parties to the conflict.

“Khartoum is not interested in addressing the humanitarian situation and as usual is buying time, using the visits of high profile international officials to give lip service to the humanitarian situation”, said Arman.

“The Sudanese regime and [Sudanese president] general [Omer] al-Bashir have been the largest manufacturer of the humanitarian crisis in Africa for 24 years continuously and the present regime has a long record of targeting civilian populations and destroying lives. They are permanently on the humanitarian crisis list for almost a quarter of a century - the same regime with the same personalities”, he added.

OCHA says Amos plans to meet with officials from the Sudanese government, including Bashir, as well as representatives from humanitarian organisations, with discussions to focus on ways to improve humanitarian access to people affected by conflict and displacement, particularly in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur.

The under-secretary-general is also expected to travel to Darfur to see for herself the ongoing humanitarian operation in Sudan’s western region.

#### **TOUGH STANCE NEEDED**

Arman has urged Amos to take a firm stance on the Sudanese government’s continued refusal to allow unfettered humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas, saying it constituted a war crime under international humanitarian law.

He said the SPLM-N stood ready to work with OCHA on a proposed vaccination program to target preventable diseases, such as pertussis and measles.

“We equally stated the need for a brief cessation of hostilities to carry out the vaccination plan since Khartoum [has] refused - for more than one-year - a full humanitarian cessation of hostilities. In the absence of a humanitarian agreement with Khartoum and given the war situation, there is a need to agree on where the vaccination program will originate from”, he said.

Fighting erupted in South Kordofan in September 2011 when Southern-aligned SPLM-N rebels launched an insurgency against the Khartoum government, with the conflict spreading to neighbouring Blue Nile state a few months later.

According to Arman, some 24 civilians were killed in the last three months alone in Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains, with many more injured as a result of aerial bombardments.

More than 700 people, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and SPLM-N activists, have been arrested in government-held areas. Some of them were subjected to torture, while others were sentenced to death. Those arrested include 138 in Blue Nile state and about 200 from the Nuba Mountains area in South Kordofan state, including 45 women – some of whom are pregnant – as well as more than 50 leaders of the SPLM-N.

Meanwhile, more than 200 people have been arrested from Darfur and North Kordofan, including SPLM-N activists.

[Back to Top](#)

### **UN concerned over Khartoum’s suspension of local NGO’s activities**

*Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 18/5/2013* – United Nations (UN) has expressed its concern over suspending activities of the Sudanese aid group Al- Manar which provides food for about 528 malnourished children in Khartoum’s neighbourhoods of Mayo and Mandela as well as Omdurman women’s prison.

A report issued by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on Sunday, pointed that Al- Manar was recently forced by security officials in Khartoum State to stop its projects for malnourished children in Mayo and Mandella camps for displaced people and in Omdurman women’s prison.

According to the report, earlier this month Al- Manar was forced to stop these projects when Sudanese authorities refused to grant it access permits for these areas.

"UN agencies are following up to try to ascertain the reason for closure of these projects and to advocate for them to be allowed to continue", said the report.

Al- Manar had been running projects to provide nutritional support for over 400 severely malnourished children in the camps and for 128 children who are staying with their mothers in the Omdurman women’s prison.

The report added that Al-Manar projects are funded by the United Nations Common Humanitarian Fund because reducing malnutrition and developing capacities for national Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are among priorities of the UN.

The Government of Sudan has consistently appealed to the UN to invest more in strengthening national capacities. Since 2010, the UN has doubled the amount of funding that it has channelled through national NGOs in Sudan.

Sudanese authorities are highly suspicious of the activities of NGOs. The latter are often suspected of collaborating with opposition and rebel groups or with the war crimes courts in The Hague.

Last December, three NGOs have been closed and their staff harassed and questioned by the National Security Service (NSS). They were accused of threatening national security because they receive foreign funding.

In 2008, Sudan expelled 13 foreign aid groups and suspended a few local NGOs accusing them of cooperating with the International Criminal Court (ICC) after it issued an arrest warrant for President

Omer Al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in the western region of Darfur. He was later accused of genocide also.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Speculations about ministerial reshuffle in Sudan**

*Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 19/5/2013* – Different sources have expected a large ministerial reshuffle in Khartoum, saying that the first vice-president Ali Osman Taha might be relieved from his position.

A presidential source told Sudan Tribune on Sunday that First Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha is one of the most prominent figure that will quit the government in the upcoming reshuffle, adding he will dedicate his time as deputy chairman to the management of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

The source further revealed that defence Minister Gen. Abdel-Rahim Hussein, will also be among those who will lose their ministerial portfolios.

Abdel Rahim recently disclosed to several journalists in Khartoum that he demanded to be relieved from his position for health reasons. The minister suffers herniated disc in his back.

Gen. Bakri Hassan Saleh, minister of the presidential affairs, is among the most prominent candidates to succeed him. Saleh is appreciated from the army and at different times the military preferred to speak with him about the problems they face than Hussein.

However other sources ruled out to appoint him at this position because he holds a prominent position in the Islamist Movement. In the past also, some sources speculated that Bashir was preparing him for the presidency of the country.

Finance minister Ali Mahmoud is also cited among those who will be removed in the expected ministerial reshuffle.

Also, the presidential assistant Jaffar Al-Mirghani would be appointed minister at an important portfolio and quit his current post.

The source stressed that the reshuffle will be comprehensive and touches most of the cabinet members.

The new cabinet was scheduled to be announced before the end of April but the attacks of the rebel groups in Kordofan region forced the presidency to defer it, it was learnt.

It was also reported that presidential assistant and NCP deputy chairman Nafie Ali Nafie is strongly opposed to the ministerial reshuffle because he says the moment is not opportune to make such important changes.

He also argues that the reshuffle may create a vacuum in the executive body.

But sources said that Nafie probably fears that Ali Osman may delimit his role in the leadership of the ruling party.

Currently, Omer Al-Bashir is the leader of the ruling party, Ali Osman is the NCP deputy chairman for executive affairs and Nafie is the deputy chairman for the party's affairs.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Khartoum behind fresh wave of violence over gold in Darfur - Report**

*Sudantribne.com Khartoum, 19/5/2013* – A new report argues that the Sudanese government's struggle for control of Darfur's gold resources, rather than inter-tribal conflicts is behind the recent surge in violence in the war-torn western region.

The report, titled Darfur's Gold Rush: State-Sponsored Atrocities 10 Years after the Genocide, has cast doubt on official rhetoric from Khartoum that tribal rivalries are to blame for rising instability.

It found that the Sudanese government is complicit in a violent power play for control of North Darfur's lucrative gold mines, as part of its heightened economic interest in the region and an ongoing campaign of "state-sponsored atrocity".

According to the report released earlier this month by the US-based Enough Project, Arab Abbala tribesmen are being armed by Khartoum as part of a bid to wrest control of gold fields in Jebel Amer from the Beni Hussein tribe, who are the traditional custodians of the area.

"While we do not have documented evidence that the government of Sudan ordered the Abbala offensive, it's clear that the historically state-aligned tribe, with ties to the janjaweed, was not acting without at least tacit government consent", researchers noted.

### **VIOLENCE ESCALATES:**

The escalation of violence since January 2013 has plunged the region into the worst humanitarian crisis in recent years.

The UN estimates that some 150,000 people have been displaced following a spate of attacks by armed Abbala militias, elements of which include the notorious janjaweed forces, which hit the headlines 10 years ago for brutal atrocities allegedly committed at the behest of the Sudanese government.

The report argues that Khartoum has again reprised the role of Abbala militia as a "tool of state repression", suggesting the government is employing the same "paralleling tactics" it used during the height of the conflict in 2003-04.

"For over a decade, the government of Sudan has pursued a strategy of economic plunder of the periphery through violence and forcible demographic change", the report said.

A sedentary farming and cattle-rearing Arab community, the Beni Hussein have historically been exempted from attack by state-sponsored militias. However, the recent discovery of gold reserves in their home area, and intense economic pressure on the Sudanese government following South Sudan's secession and the subsequent loss of oil revenues, has fundamentally altered that dynamic, the report said.

[Back to Top](#)

### **Uganda ready to help in Darfur conflict**

*New Vision, 20/5/2013* – Uganda could play a key role in ending the conflict in Darfur, Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi has said.

Mbabazi said the UPDF – now in Central African Republic – would pursue the Lord's Resistance Army rebels if they meted terror on Darfur, in western Sudan.

"If there is any hand that we can give, we shall gladly do so because it is our duty to help," Mbabazi told a delegation led by head of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the joint chief mediator, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas. They are in Uganda to consult on how to solve the conflict in Darfur.

Mbabazi has said Uganda is ready to help in bringing an end to the conflict in Darfur. Mbabazi said the UPDF – now in Central African Republic – would pursue the Lord's Resistance Army rebels if they meted terror on Darfur.

He said competition for resources, including, gold and oil, were key drivers of the conflict. On April 19, a peacekeeper was shot dead and two others injured when assailants attacked the UNAMID base in Muhajiriya.

"We came to Uganda to seek advice on the way forward," Chambas said. "I will work tirelessly to accomplish the tasks, including advancing the agenda of peace and stability in Darfur," he said, adding: "Only an all-inclusive peace can bring a lasting solution to the suffering of millions of men, women and children in this region."

The delegation at Friday's meeting also included Lt. Gen. Wynjones Kisamba, the UNAMID force commander and his chief of staff, Johnson Aniefiok.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Is David Yau Yau really a Rebel?**

*Gurtong.net, 20/5/2013* - "...it is quite possible that we may be mislabeling a terrorist, a warlord or a plain psychopath with an army as a rebel."

Who is a rebel? The question has been lingering on my head since defecting SPLA generals have been labelled long before we had an established post-CPA government. Then, it made SPLA defectors rebels against rebels and that is absurd indeed. Now people are calling David Yau Yau and his motley crew a rebel group making it timely to ask what makes a particular enemy of the government (Yau Yau for example) a rebel and not others (the opposition parties for example).

A rebel, both in popular dictionaries and political science literature, has particular characteristics. In popular usage, the Oxford English Dictionary defines a rebel as "a person who rises in opposition or armed resistance against an established government or leader... a person who resists authority, control, or convention." At first glance this definition makes rebels of opposition parties as well as armed guerrillas. However, there are implicit factors in this definition that political scientists explicate.

In political science literature, rebellion is defined as a political expression, by a specified political community, when all other means of civil debate has lost its ability for persuasion. Of course, political scientists still debate what a "political community" is or what constitutes a "civil debate" or "persuasion" but those are secondary matters. The key point here is that rebellion should come as a last. Hence, political parties and other civil society groups that consistently oppose the government without resorting to violence are not rebels.

Rebels, furthermore, should be firmly aligned with the political group they represent and their political objective must be clear both to the people they represent and to the wider world, including the government they seek to overthrow. Given these two definitions, we can easily determine if David Yau Yau is a rebel or something else by answering the following definitional questions:

Who does David Yau Yau represent? What grievances does the group Yau Yau represents have? Has this group attempted all other means of civil debate to seek a better outcome? What are the explicit political goals David Yau Yau is pursuing on behalf of this group?

The truth test: Does Yau Yau really represent the group (if identified in question 1), if so are the grievances (if listed at question 2) true, if so why (if listed at question three) has civil debate failed)?

These five criteria establish, for analytical purposes, whether we are dealing with a rebel. If these five criteria are not met, it is quite possible that we may be mislabeling a terrorist, a warlord or a plain psychopath with an army as a rebel.

[Back to Top](#)

## **The Invasion of Abyei: two years of more agony**

*Sudantirbune.com, 19/5/2013* – On 21st May 2013, the people of Abyei have spent two years of more agony and they will remember again the sad memories of how their lives and livelihoods were shattered by Bashir when he invaded Abyei in May 2011. But such memories will be bitterer this year as their Paramount Chief Kuol Deng has been assassinated not by any other person but by Bashir. Bashir seems to be specialized in selecting May as the month in which he causes suffering to the Ngok Dinka. He devastated Abyei in May 2008 and May 2011 and now assassinated its paramount chief in May 2013. This assassination happened by the time the people of Abyei are returning back to their home areas and to start afresh with a long journey of recovering from the devastation of Abyei area and trauma caused on them by Bashir. This insatiable appetite of Bashir for causing agony on Ngok Dinka has reached its climax when he killed their paramount chief on 4th May 2013.

Based on the trauma survey conducted by Kush Inc. among the displaced Ngok Dinka, about 82% of people with children had a child or children who became ill or injured as a result of the attack of Abyei by Bashir in May 2011. More than half (51%) of the displaced population became ill or injured as a result of the attack but higher among women with 58.3% of them became ill or injured. Almost 38% of the displaced population met the criteria for the Post-Trauma Stress Disorder illness but higher among women with more than half (51%) affected by the illness. This illness diminishes a person's

ability to function independently, regulate behavior, reason and solve problems such as reconciliation with former enemies. These statistics are astonishing and extremely high compared with other post-conflict contexts but they clearly reflect the amount of suffering caused by Bashir on the people of Abyei.

With the assassination of their chief, the people of Abyei are becoming even more traumatized. If one could imagine the feeling of an old woman who returned to Abyei after a long displacement in the North since mid-1980s and she got displaced in May 2008 when she was about to settle down; returned back to settle down but displaced again in May 2011 and returned back in 2013 to hear that her paramount chief has been assassinated. With the news about the death their chief, at least one adult person in every household of Ngok Dinka shed tears and even more during his burial ceremony. When Edward Lino, the prominent leader of Ngok Dinka, shed tears on the day of the burial, many Ngok Dinka and others were moved and sobbed as well. If one could imagine the amount of tears shed all over the world for the untimely death of Chief Kuol, then you can assess the level of agony and suffering inflicted again by Bashir on the people of Abyei. I shed tears that day in the same way I wept when Dr John died because I saw in their untimely death a real loss of the much-needed wisdom and leadership during critical times of peace-building in Abyei and South.

Chief Kuol Deng inherited the Ngok Dinka Chieftainship from his brother Chief Moyak Deng who was also assassinated in 1970 by Sudan Government in Abyei town with others including his two brothers (Bulabek and Chan) and his uncle (Arop Mahdi). Chief Moyak was accused of supporting Abyei Anya Nya insurgent initiated in 1964 and headed by his brother Arop Deng as a reaction to the atrocities committed by the Government of Sudan in Abyei. These atrocities included the massive devastation and displacement of the Ngok Dinka from their villages along Ngol River and the burning to death of more than 200 Southern Sudanese including the mother of Minister Deng Alor in the presence of government officials and the paramount chief of Misseriyia in their major towns of Muglad and Babanusa.

After his assumption of chieftainship in 1976, Chief Kuol provided a solid and people-servant leadership during the relative peace after Addis Ababa Peace Accords in 1972 but also during the most difficult times of prolonged second civil war that ended in 2005. He managed to keep the voices of people Abyei alive during the difficult times such as the 1977 massacre when more than 100 Ngok Dinka including the late Mijak Abiem who were travelling to Abyei town from Muglad and wiping out any presence of Ngok Dinka in Abyei area in the mid 1980s. He survived assassination attempt in Abyei town in 1981 when Sudan Government attacked him with some members of his family who gathered for a dinner and that resulted in the killing of his cousin Alor Arop. He was arrested in December 1982 by Sudan Government with other leaders of Ngok Dinka as they were accused of organizing Anya Nya II insurgency in Abyei and Bahr el Ghazal region under the leadership of his brother Miokol Deng.

Ten days before his assassination, two Misseriyia delegations from traditional authorities and senior officers of the notorious Popular Defence Force went to Khartoum and met with national government (National Security, Presidency, Defense, Misseriyia clique around Bashir) to discuss their settlement plan in Abyei and ways of discouraging the return of Ngok Dinka to their home areas. In these meetings the role of Chief Kuol was discussed as the symbol of the return of Ngok Dinka to their home areas and hard supporter of the conduct of Abyei Referendum to ensure Abyei joining the South. His presence in Abyei area was seen by Sudan Government as an obstacle to its settlement plan in Abyei. In fact his assassination was part of a mega plan developed by the Sudan Government to settle Arab nomads in Abyei area while destabilizing the return of Ngok Dinka to their home areas.

As Sudan Government is trying to twist facts around the incident, it is important to put some of these facts straight. Chief Kuol and other members of Ngok Dinka were moving with UN on 4th May as part of their normal visit to inspect the areas of Abyei, particularly the northern areas. On their way back to Abyei town, the armed Arab militias supported by Sudan Government stopped the UN vehicles and asked instead the UN to hand them the Ngok Dinka passengers in the UN vehicles, particularly the Paramount Chief with clear intention of assassinating them. The UN force commander refused their demand and negotiated with them for almost six hours to allow them to proceed to Abyei town.

During the six hours negotiation, the armed Arab militias used all possible means to provoke and humiliate UN forces and Ngok Dinka passengers. When the UN force commander accepted their demand to return back with UN vehicles to the oilfield area of Kec (Differa), one of the armed Arab militia singled out Paramount Chief and shot him in the UN vehicle and died instantly.

The reaction to the death of paramount chief was overwhelming. In Abyei, the Ngok Dinka showed special respect to their leader by the huge presence of almost every Ngok Dinka adult during the burial. I have never seen Ngok Dinka so united as they put behind their minor differences. The people of the South in all ten states remarkably showed their solidarity with the people of Abyei and mourned the death of Chief Kuol almost in the same way they mourned the death of their founding leader; Dr John Garang. In fact President Salva expressed it all the overwhelming feeling of the people of the South in his powerful and emotional statement on the death of Chief Kuol. This reaction of the South to the death of Chief Kuol was a real public plebiscite of how the people of the South see Abyei as an integral part of the South.

While Government of Sudan, unsurprisingly, embarked on blaming the deceased for provoking the armed Arab nomads to overact, the Sudanese people, civil society organizations and other political parties abhorred the assassination of paramount chief and some even held the Sudan Government responsible. The reaction of African Union, UN, European Union, leaders of the neighbouring countries and some other leaders was spontaneous and with one key message not to delay again the resolution of the final status of Abyei.

There is no doubt that Chief Kuol Deng has been exceptionally honoured by his people in Abyei, people of the South, people of Sudan and indeed the international community. If Chief Kuol were to rise to see how he was mourned, he would know how much legacy he left behind. As Chief Kuol was a source of hope, resilience and endurance for the people of Abyei area, his death should make the people of Abyei more determined to protect their ancestral land and to ensure Abyei remaining as part and parcel of the South and to nurture the values and principles for which he fought for during his life. The real redemption for the death of Chief Kuol is to mobilize all available efforts to ensure Abyei is peaceful and prosperous within the Republic of South Sudan by May 2014. In fact the assassination of Chief Kuol Deng was by itself a referendum for the final status of Abyei.

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[Back to Top](#)

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