

Security Council Briefing Papers



The Issue of the South Sudanese Civil War

South Sudan sought independence from the north, due to the social and religious divide in the population of Sudan; the North was Muslim, and the South was predominantly Christian. The government of Sudan was based in the North, in Khartoum, increasingly centralised around a small group of elites. The Sudanese government became increasingly predatory, enriching wealth in the North of the country by seizing natural resources from the South, ignoring the desperate needs of the people. In 2005, a comprehensive peace agreement was reached between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the government of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The agreement was facilitated in part by a group of African nations known as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as the United States, United Kingdom, Norway, and Italy. The United States was particularly active in the peace process, mainly due to the efforts of a small bipartisan coalition of members of Congress (known as the Sudan Caucus). After 22 years of civil war, South Sudan became independent from the North in January 2011, after a referendum was held with nearly 99% of the South Sudanese voting in favor of independence. There was hope that 60 years of socio-political turmoil would end. However, self-determination was not the solution to their problems.

South Sudan contains over 60 ethnic groups, and during the final push for independence, many of the tensions among these groups were set aside without being resolved. Those in the South agreed to overlook these lesser conflicts in order to achieve independence from the north. The two largest groups, the Dinka (35.8%) and the Nuer (15.6%) formed a government on July 9. The first President, Salva Kiir, was a Dinka, and in an expression of unity, invited Riek Machar to be his Vice President. This was significant because Machar was an ethnic Nuer, and had also actually led a brutal massacre back in 1991 in which Nuer fighters slaughtered some 2,000 Dinka civilians in the town of Bor. However, the agreement didn't last and the peace was short-lived, since those underlying ethnic tensions never actually went away. Generals and war-lords, famous for their victories in the Civil War, were given political roles they were not qualified for, and the International Community stepped away once South Sudan had gained independence. Vice President Machar began publicly criticising President Kiir, and announced that he would run against him in the next election.

In December 2013, forces loyal to Machar (the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition [SPLM-IO]) clashed with troops loyal to Kiir (the Sudan People's Liberation Army [SSLA]), and the seeds for another political crisis had been sewn. The ethnic division was exploited, mobilising sectarian militias and using hate speech to encourage violence in the country. The political fight quickly

morphed into an all-out ethnic conflict, with people loyal to both sides taking up arms and slaughtering each other. In the first week of fighting alone, over 1,000 were killed and 100,000 were displaced. Since then, other tribes have joined the fight, and a cycle of violence fuelled by both parties has led to fierce competition over resources. North Sudan and Uganda have intervened, economically supporting and offering troops to government forces respectively.

In late August 2015, a peace agreement was signed by President Kiir, mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which reinstated Machar as Vice President. The violence decreased slightly following this agreement, erupted once again in July 2016, after an attack outside of where President Kiir and Riek Machar were meeting in Juba, causing fighting to spread throughout the city. President Kiir Vice-President Machar initially ordered a ceasefire after days of intense violence, to no avail. Soon after Machar, with assistance from the UN, went to exile, in South Africa, where he is allegedly kept under house arrest. During his exile, in September 2016, Machar announced a call for armed struggle against Kiir, rejecting the peace deal entirely and sparking further violence between government troops and SPLM-IO forces. At this time also, The Greater Pibor Forces split off from the Cobra Faction, which had signed a peace agreement with the government.

As of current, between 50,000 and 300,000 have been killed, almost 2 million displaced, 6 million live without food security, and millions of children have lost their right to education after 70% of schools being forced to close. More than 17,000 children have been used in the conflict. There is a huge risk that the Civil War will/has developed into a genocide, due to ethnic divisions between the Dinka, Nuer, Murle, Shilluk, Fertit-Jur, Inter and Equatorian tribes. Most notably: forces identified by the UN as SPLM-IO massacred about 200 mostly non-Nuer civilians in April 2014; in 2016, groups of ethnic Dinka youth and the SPLA targeted members of the Fertit, killing dozens and forcing more than 120,000 to flee their homes. In an attempt to reduce the number of casualties, the US proposed an arms embargo; however, the UNSC has failed to pass any resolution on the issue thus far.

Figure 1: Map to show the territories occupied by the government and opposition forces.

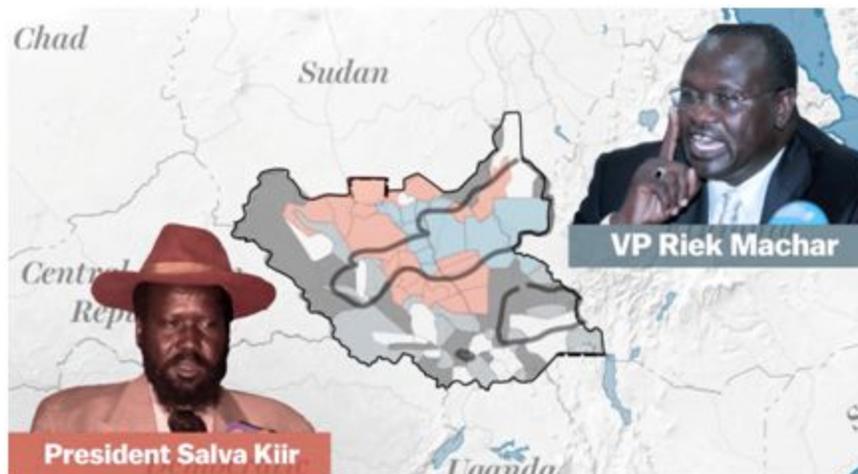


Figure 2: Diagram to show the potential difficulties facing the passing of a UNSC resolution.



The Issue of the United States' Involvement in the Yemeni Civil War

Since March 26th 2015, military intervention by a coalition of nine African & Middle Eastern countries (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan & Qatar [until 2017]), led by Saudi Arabia and supported by the United States of America, began in Yemen. This intervention came in response to an uprising by a group of Zaidi Shia Muslims, known as The *Houthis*, thought to be supported by Iran, whose population is a primarily Shia. The Houthi rebels took control of the Yemeni government from *Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi*, a Sunni Muslim who won the 2012 elections after the 2011 Arab Spring, between 21 September 2014 and 6 February 2015. The Houthis declared the House of Representatives defunct, and named a Revolutionary Committee led by *Mohammed Ali al-Houthi* as the acting authority in Yemen. On March 25th, former president *Hadi* called on UN Security Council to authorise, "willing countries that wish to help Yemen to provide immediate support for the legitimate authority by all means and measures to protect Yemen and deter the Houthi aggression", with Yemen's foreign minister also calling for support from the Arab League.

Since the intervention began, according to the United Nations and other outside monitors, the fighting has killed over 10,000, left 370,000 children malnourished and 10,000 more dead of preventable disease, with nearly 3 million Yemenis have been displaced.

The United States has condemned the civilian death toll, and urged the Saudis to exert more restraint, whilst at the same time, the US has supported Saudi Arabia militarily, since World War Two. The US sells arms (March 2015 and January 2016, 20 billion dollars' worth; and President Trump's new 10-year \$350 billion deal), provides military aid and trains the Saudi army on how to use US manufactured planes, tanks and other weapons. The US has helped Saudi Arabia with their bombing campaign, also. It has flown roughly two refueling missions a day, linking up with US-manufactured F15 fighter jets, used by the Saudi's to bomb Yemen, thus making it easier for Saudi Arabia to bomb the country, which is directly contributed to Yemen's suffering. Saudi Arabia is mainly using cluster bombs in their air campaign, banned by most of the international community, but sold to them by the US.

The human rights violations during the Yemeni civil war have been huge; according to a UN report released in early 2016, it is believed that the Saudi Arabian led coalition could be deliberately targeting civilians. the UN panel who worked on the report also claimed that the coalition targeted "civilian gatherings, including weddings; civilian vehicles, including buses; civilian residential areas;

medical facilities; schools; mosques; markets, factories and food storage warehouses; and other essential civilian infrastructure, such as the airport in Sana'a, the port in Hudaydah and domestic transit routes", and concluded this was in violation of international law."

With no end in sight to the monumental civilian suffering in Yemen, the Security Council must consider the role that the United States has taken in this conflict, and decide whether or not it can be held accountable for aiding potential human rights violations and war crimes.

Figure 1:
Map to show the nations involved in the Yemeni Civil War (directly, or indirectly - minus the United States).



Figure 2:
Map to show the top six buyers from the United States, in terms of military sales between 2010 and 2015.

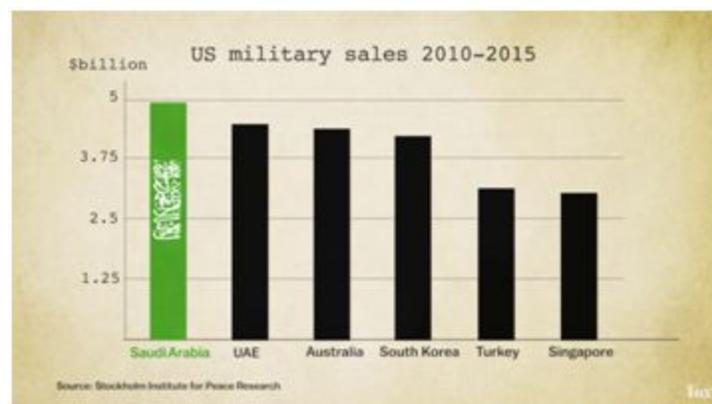


Figure 3:

Map to show the military situation of Yemen, in terms of territorial occupation (subject to change).



-  Controlled by Houthi (Ansar Allah) and Saleh loyalists
-  Controlled by Hadi loyalists
-  Controlled by Al-Qaeda/Ansar al-Sharia forces
-  Controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – Yemen Province