



Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) Peace Operations Estimate – UNMISS

United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (updated 16 January 2018)



[UNMISS Deployment Map](#)

[Link to UNMISS Mission Website](#)

[Link to CIA Country Fact Sheet South Sudan](#)

UNMISS Executive Summary

The political, security, and humanitarian environment in the Republic of South Sudan remains one of the most complex among fragile states, creating “[the largest refugee crisis on the African continent](#),” according to some reports. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) predicts the refugee population could exceed three million by December 2018, with some observers currently reporting [almost 2 million Internally Displaced Persons \(IDPs\)](#).

In 2011, South Sudan gained formal independence from Sudan and was immersed in a civil war within two years. Although, in theory, a cease fire remains in place, the continuing violence among the disputing

parties—and the government—indicates that, in practice, the cease fire is not in effect. **Major considerations are:**

- In December 2017, the East African bloc of nations called the [Intergovernmental Authority on Development \(IGAD\)](#) initiated a “High Level Revitalization Forum.” The Forum concluded its first phase with an [“Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access”](#) being instituted later that same month. Despite the appearance of a cease-fire, the

The “revitalization” refers to the implementation resumption of the 2015 [Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan \(ARCISS\)](#), which failed almost immediately after it was signed.

Government of South Sudan (GoSS) officials and leaders of the various opposition parties [appear uncompromising](#) regarding their political disagreements during the ongoing discussions. Those disagreements revolve primarily around “power-sharing” and other security topics. According to some observers, the resolution of those topics is compounded by the proliferation of “parties” to the deliberations. As one observer [notes](#), “the peace deal [ARCISS] was signed

between two parties, but since that time, the opposition has fragmented, making the task of the peace mediators even more challenging...they actually have different positions [*than they did in 2015*].” Further, the major participants have different perspectives on the Forum’s ultimate purpose. For example, the IGAD, serving as the host for the deliberations, “has made it clear the forum is not a mediation or a new round of peace talks...” Yet many of the opposition groups and much of the other international participants want “a new power-sharing arrangement, which significantly weakens the government’s hand...” In contrast, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) “is quite keen that the existing arrangements are only slightly modified and that they remain in a powerful position.”

- The relationship between the UNMISS mission and the GoSS is tense at its best, and often hostile at its worst. GoSS agencies continue to interfere or disallow UNMISS or humanitarian aid ground and air movement requests or activities, and GoSS (or GoSS-affiliated) elements are often the suspects in [kidnappings and beatings](#) of UNMISS personnel. At the same time, many opposition groups criticize UNMISS as “pro-government” and propagate those charges through various media outlets. [From September to November 2017](#), UNMISS recorded 47 incidents involving violations of the status-of-forces agreement.

According to the UN Secretary-General’s [report](#): “Of particular concern was an incident that occurred in Juba on 21 September (in which) an UNMISS convoy...was stopped by National Security Service officers (GoSS forces) at a checkpoint...and assaulted the UNMISS commander...”

President Salva Kiir Mayardit (simply referred to as “Salva Kiir”), while participating in cease-fire agreements, seems inclined to maintain his distance from [“outside powers.”](#) Indicating in December 2017 that the people of South Sudan should be allowed to solve their problems their own way, he said:

I have always said this thing will not work. People from outside should not impose decisions and our people have always asked me...why we always accept what foreign countries impose on us...we are no longer open to the idea that someone will come to make peace for us. Our peace will be our peace because it will be made by us, for us.

- UNMISS personnel have an uneven reputation among the population and other humanitarian aid workers. UNMISS failed to prevent the deadliest attack on a Protection of Civilians (PoC) site to date, which killed 30 (and injured more) in [Malakal from February 17-18, 2016](#). Further, despite the subsequent attention applied to the UNMISS negligence in the wake of the Malakal tragedy,

UNMISS personnel [did not intercede](#) during a July 2016 GoSS soldiers' attack on predominately ethnic Nuer women and children just outside of their UN camp. At the same time, UN forces did not respond to appeals for protection by several foreign aid workers when their compound [was attacked](#) by GoSS soldiers and several workers were beaten, raped, or kidnapped. This disregard

In the [four days of July 2016's extreme violence](#), at least 300 people were killed, and tens of thousands fled their

to civilian and foreign national protection violated specified tasks in the UNMISS mandate.

Mission Overview

1. Background. Sudan gained its independence in 1956 with the understanding the southern population would participate fully in the political system. However, when the Arab Khartoum government reneged on its promises, a mutiny began with two prolonged periods of conflict (1955-1972 and 1983-2005) in which an estimated 2.5 million people died due to starvation and drought in addition to direct conflict. In January 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed, which granted a six-year period of autonomy for the southern part of Sudan, with a referendum on final status. At the same time, the **United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)** was established by the [UN Security Council](#) under [Resolution 1590](#) (2005). The UNMIS tasks were to: support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement; perform certain functions relating to humanitarian assistance, protection, promotion of human rights, and support the [African Union Mission in Sudan](#) (AMIS). UNMIS' mandate was concluded in 2011, with its equipment and personnel transferred between United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and [UNMISS](#).

AMIS was an African Union (AU) peacekeeping force operating primarily in Darfur from 2004 to 2007. At its highest point, it was authorized 7,000 troops. AMIS was replaced by UNAMID on December 31, 2007.

The final referendum was conducted in January 2011 with 99% of voters in favor of secession. Consequently, the Republic of South Sudan achieved independence in July 2011 at the same time the UN Security Council adopted [UNSCR1996\(2011\)](#), which established the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). The original purpose for UNMISS was to support the new South Sudan government in developing its various governmental branches, from political and justice to security.

The current conflict erupted in December 2013 between President [Salva Kiir](#) and his First Vice-President [Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon](#) (simply referred to as "Riek Machar"), whom Kiir accused of planning a coup d'état against him. While there are important and varied issues to parse, it is essentially a conflict between the Dinka and Nuer ethnicities.

There have been several peace agreements and related cease-fires signed since 2013—all were broken within days or weeks. In 2015, the IGAD—with support from the UN, the U.S. and both the AU and European Union (EU)—facilitated the most recent comprehensive peace agreement, ARCISS. ARCISS established the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) which was intended to share government among leaders of the main groups, although smaller groups were not included. Considered by some observers as ["hurried and imposed,"](#) the agreement faltered almost immediately for a myriad of reasons. A major issue included (but was not limited to) that no single authority was defined to enforce that the conflicting parties met the peace agreement tenets. Violations of cease-fires continue to occur, with increasingly ethnic and tribal dimensions.

2. Mandate(s). While the UNMISS mandate has been in place since 2011, it was radically changed in 2014 to remove its support for the Government tasks, which was then viewed as a party to the renewed conflict. Another major change occurred with [UNSCR 2327\(2016\)](#), which specified the inclusion of a

4,000 troop-strength RPF, as well as other additional authorizations and requirements designed to more effectively implement the mission's tasks.

The current mandate was renewed in December 2017's [UNSCR 2392\(2017\)](#) for only a few months (until **March 2018**) "while awaiting the completion of an ongoing strategic review of operations." While the full text of the mandate renewal was short, it referred to previous mandates and was accompanied by a statement that:

*The "Regional Protection Force" or RPF operates at the direction of the UNMISS Force Commander with a [specified task](#) of **pro-active** protection of civilians (local nationals and foreign aid workers) as well as the mission personnel. It was initially described by some as similar to the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (or MONUSCO). However, the only resemblance between the FIB and the mandated RPF is that they are "extra" to their respective missions. The RPF is expected—if resourced and deployed—to have more limited protection tasks, such as the Juba airfield, or aid distribution routes and points. In contrast, MONUSCO's FIB actively seeks to destroy terrorist groups that operate in their mission area.*

- called for the GoSS "to stand by its ceasefire and for the opposition to reciprocate";
- "cited findings that the parties had failed to implement important elements of...(ARCISS)...and that conditions for credible elections did not presently exist";
- "supported the convening of an inclusive Forum as proposed by IGAD...(and)...called for strong, coordinated, and cohesive regional support...(with)...meaningful participation of women, youth and the broader South Sudanese civil society";
- "urged all parties to engage constructively in the process without preconditions";
- "urged the parties to agree to an implementation timeline" and "to agree on strong monitoring and enforcement mechanisms"; and
- condemned "actions against United Nations and humanitarian workers and civilians" and "highlighted the UNMISS mandate to investigate abuses of human rights and humanitarian law."

The full text of UNSCR 2392(2017) reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Recalling its previous resolutions 1996 (2011), 2046 (2012), 2057 (2012), 2109 (2013), 2132 (2013), 2155 (2014), 2187 (2014), 2206 (2015), 2223 (2015), 2241 (2015), 2252 (2015), 2302 (2016), 2304 (2016) and 2327 (2016), and statements by its President [S/PRST/2014/16](#), [S/PRST/2014/26](#), [S/PRST/2015/9](#), [S/PRST/2016/1](#), [S/PRST/2016/3](#) and [S/PRST/2017/4](#),

"Determining that the situation in South Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security,

"Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

"1. Decides to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as set out in resolution 2327 (2016), until 15 March 2018, and authorizes UNMISS to use all necessary means to carry out its tasks;

"2. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter."

Another UN resolution series with significance to South Sudan regards sanctions and similar discretionary bans and prohibitions. [UNSCR 2353\(2017\)](#), originally imposed by UNSCR 2206(2015), was renewed until **31 May 2018**. It outlines specified travel bans, freezes assets, and imposes sanctions on selected individuals and government entities. It also maintains the Panel of Experts, comprised of five individuals based in South Sudan, until **30 June 2018**.

In December 2016, another targeted sanctions resolution founded in the Security Council. The rationale for non-support of the proposed resolution was reflective of the 9 December 2016 IGAD's communiqué which stated, in part, that "an arms embargo or sanctions on South Sudan will not provide the solution being sought for permanent peace and stability in the country" and would be "counterproductive" instead.

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The Panel mandated tasks include, but not limited to:

- Gather, examine and analyse *[sic]* information regarding the implementation of the measures...in particular incidents of non-compliance...
- Gather, examine and analyse *[sic]* information regarding the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel and related military or other assistance, including through illicit trafficking networks, to individuals and entities undermining political processes to reach a final peace agreement or participating in acts that violate international human rights law or international humanitarian law, as applicable...
- Provide...report(s)...of the current security threats facing the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU), and its needs to maintain law and order in South Sudan, as well as further analysis on the role of transfers of arms and related materiel coming into South Sudan since the formation of the TGNU with respect to implementation of the Agreement and threats to UNMISS and other UN and international humanitarian personnel; and
- Assist...in refining and updating information on the list of individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by resolution...including through the provision of identifying information and additional information for the publicly-available narrative summary of reasons for listing.

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is also serving in South Sudan. During the three month [reporting period from September to November 2017](#), UNMAS removed one item of unexploded ordnance from one UNMISS base and destroyed another 2,466 explosive hazards and 2,990 small arms and ammunition.

3. Deployment. [As of November 2017](#), UNMISS was second only to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in size. The December 2017's [UNSCR 2392\(2017\)](#), increased “the overall force levels of UNMISS by maintaining a troop ceiling of 17,000 troops, including 4,000 for a Regional Protection Force, and increasing the police ceiling to 2,101 police personnel.”

Currently deployed:

374 staff officers
170 experts
1,595 police
12,414 troops

The largest [Troop Contributing Countries \(TCCs\)](#) as of December 2017 includes Rwanda (2,414), India (2,398), Nepal (2,090), Bangladesh (1,639), Ethiopia (1,494), China (1,061), and Ghana (1,022).

The UN [repatriated](#) a selected number of UN peacekeeping units and individuals after the [February 2016 Malakal UN camp attack](#). Kenya, which had been a significant TCC for UNMISS, withdrew its troops from the mission after the UN Secretary-General [replaced the Kenyan UNMISS force commander](#), Lieutenant General Johnson Ondieki. Ondieki was removed following the release of the UN report of the [July 2016 Juba violence](#), which charged the UNMISS commander with negligence in addressing the PoC task of the mandate. In late January 2017, Kenya agreed to [resume its participation](#) in UNMISS following a meeting between the Kenyan president and the (then) newly installed UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Russian Federation provides 31 personnel to UNMISS, while the United States contribution to UNMISS remains at 13 police or staff officers, of which two are women. A Ghanaian formed police unit (FPU) (170 officers) and an all-female Rwandan FPU [are expected in country](#) in February 2018. Until that deployment, there are only **711** women deployed in UNMISS, or **4.9%** of the total uniformed force.

As of mid-November 2017, the UN Secretary-General [reported](#) that only 742 troops (of the authorized 4000-strong RPF) “have been inducted to date, including 11 out of the 55-person headquarters element, full complements of the Bangladesh Engineering Unit and the Nepalese High Readiness Company, and the advance infantry companies of the Ethiopian and Rwandan Battalions.”

According to the UN’s database, there have been **34** [sexual exploitation and abuse \(SEA\)](#) allegations against UNMISS personnel (civilians and uniformed) since 2011, involving 30 alleged perpetrators. In

2017, there were only three SEA allegations, in stark contrast to the 12 SEA allegations against UNMISS personnel recorded in 2014.

There were 18 alleged SEA perpetrators in UNMIS from 2010-11. Data prior to 2010 is unavailable.

The only recorded perpetrator nationalities to date are Ethiopia and Nepal. The UN only began to formally record the nationalities of its members accused of SEA misconduct in 2015.

In 2017, **62** UNMISS personnel (civilians and uniformed) were alleged to engage in “[other misconduct](#),” marking UNMISS as the second most undisciplined UN mission for that year (behind United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or MONUSCO, with 71 allegations). Of the 62, however, only 14 were uniformed personnel. The average number of “other misconduct” allegations per year for the past seven years among uniformed members only (nationality not provided) is 22, with a significant peak of 56 in 2015. In comparison, 110 uniformed UNMIS members were accused of “other misconduct” from 2005 to 2010—and almost 40% of the total allegations occurred in 2010 prior to transition to UNMISS.

“Other misconduct” may range in behaviors from traffic violations to extortion, embezzlement, and other abuses of authority. They are also categorized by levels (1 or 2), “depending on the risk such incidents would present to the organization.”

4. [Casualties](#). The UN estimates it’s UNMISS fatalities at 51 personnel in the mission’s seven years (since 2011) ([as of November 2017](#)). Of the 51 fatalities, just over one quarter (25.5%, or 13) were due to “malicious acts,” with 40% (or 21) due to illness. This contrasts significantly with the previous mission’s fatalities. In the six years of UNMIS, the mission suffered 60 fatalities. However, only 7% were due to malicious acts and over 68% were due to illness.

The UN Development Program, Malicious Acts Insurance Policy, February 4, 2003, defines “[malicious acts](#)” as fatalities as a result of “war; invasion; hostilities; acts of foreign enemies, whether war be declared or not; civil war; revolution; rebellion; insurrection; military or usurped power; riots or civil commotion; sabotage; explosion of war weapons; or terrorist activities.” In contrast, “accidents” is defined to include “stray bullets, friendly fire, and road accidents” and other incidents, such as natural disasters.

The Troop/Police Contributing Country (T/PCC) with the largest fatality number for UNMISS is India, which lost ten peacekeepers in the past seven years, or 19% of the total. The Russian Federation and South Sudan each lost seven (13% each), and Rwanda lost five (10%).

However, the total number of fatalities do not reflect the overall level of violence against UNMISS personnel or facilities, which has included helicopter shoot-downs, convoy and camp attacks, seizures of equipment, and kidnappings of personnel. It also does not include the fatalities attributed to other UN missions in the region, such as the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID; 259 fatalities since 2007) or UNISFA (24 fatalities since 2011).

Situation

5. Drivers of Conflict. In early 2017, one observer [noted](#):

South Sudan is engulfed in a mutually-reinforcing war system that involves more than the two principal players – the government, led by the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement, and the opposition. Several drivers of conflict, some new and others accentuated by the conflict, have emerged –badly managed

decentralisation *[sic]*, corruption, marginalisation *[sic]*, ethnic rivalries and exclusionary politics, and unaddressed local grievances...

One year later, nothing much has changed regarding the conflict drivers in South Sudan except that the humanitarian situation is more appalling. While secession from Sudan marked a major milestone and a fresh opportunity for South Sudanese, massive state-corroding corruption, political instability within the ruling party [the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)], and persistent tensions with Sudan over the sharing of oil revenues left South Sudan deeply vulnerable to renewed conflict. Lack of accountability for decades of violence during Sudan's long civil war helped fuel the conflict that erupted in December 2013.

Despite a number of agreements or cease-fires since 2013, the parties seem interested only in escalating the conflict, leading the UN to consider an [arms embargo](#). Both military and political leaders fail to make any serious attempt to reduce abuses committed by their forces, or to hold them to account according to [Human Rights Watch](#) 2017 Report. Human rights violations continue, including extrajudicial killings, torture, sexual violence, extrajudicial arrest and detention, abductions, forced displacement, the use and recruitment of children, beatings, looting and the destruction of livelihoods and homes.

In addition to the almost 4 million displaced persons (combining refugee and IDP numbers, of which 85 percent are women and children), [observers note](#):

- Nearly 5 million people are severely food insecure. Earlier this year, pockets of the country plunged briefly into famine.
- The fighting has killed tens of thousands of people since it started in late 2013.
- Only 22 percent of South Sudan health facilities are fully operational.
- Some 900,000 children suffer from psychological distress and 2 million are out of school.

6. Significant Events.

a. Recent Events.

- [16 January 2018](#). Ceasefire violations on all sides of the conflict are reported.
- [January 2018](#). The Secretary-General provides his monthly assessment of the deployment and future requirements of the RPF and impediments to UNMISS in carrying out its mandate.
- [21 December 2017](#). The IGAD announced a cease-fire (as part of its "High Level Revitalization Forum".)
- [14 December 2017](#). The Security Council voted to renew the mandate of the UNMISS until **March 2018** with reauthorization of the Regional Protection Force (RPF).
- **11 November 2017**. The UN Sanctions Committee accuses President Kiir of using food as a weapon of war, targeting civilians by denying them food aid.
- [24 October 2017](#). The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, was evacuated from a UN camp for displaced people in South Sudan because of a demonstration against President Salva Kiir.
- [17 October 2017](#). Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix briefed the Council on the deployment of the RPF and any obstructions to UNMISS as well as the general situation in the country, indicating the deployment of Rwandan and Ethiopian battalions was underway.
- [16 - 18 October 2017](#). Several opposition groups met in Kenya to harmonize their positions. Participants agreed to principles and a framework document for cooperation and to cease hostilities and negative propaganda towards each other.

- **9 September 2017.** The National Elections Commission announced the start of the pre-election period, aligned with the GoSS' stated intent to hold elections as outlined in the ARCISS, despite the UN assessment that the situation is not conducive to fair elections.
- **6 September 2017.** The U.S. [announced targeted sanctions](#) for three South Sudanese officials for their roles in threatening the peace, security and stability of South Sudan (Malek Reuben Riak Rengu, Deputy Chief of Defence [*sic*] and Inspector General of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA); Michael Makuei Lueth, Minister of Information, Communications Technology and Postal Services; and Paul Malong Awan, former Chief of General Staff of SPLA).
- **[August and September 2017](#).** Various UN authorities and experts briefed the Security Council regarding several aspects of the UNMISS mandate and the humanitarian, security, and political situation of South Sudan. During this period, the Security Council condemned the ongoing fighting and the GoSS' obstructions to UNMISS and the RPF.
- **20 - 21 July 2017.** President Kiir blocked access to several media websites and replaced six members of the transitional parliament.
- **20 July 2017.** The Troika (U.S., Norway, and the EU) condemned the GoSS offensive against SPLM-IO near Pagak, which they label a clear violation of the ceasefire agreed to by the Kiir government.
- **July 2017.** [Amnesty International reported](#) that "thousands of South Sudanese have been subjected to sexual violence including rape, gang rape, sexual slavery, sexual mutilation, torture, castration, or forced nudity."
- **26 June 2017.** The [New Nubia Alliance](#), a group that has fought government forces in Blue Nile and South Kordofan in Sudan, announces plans to ally with the SPLA-North.
- **5 June 2017.** A SPLA-IO breakaway group led by Brigadier General Hillary Edson Yakini signs a ceasefire with the government.
- **24 May 2017.** The Security Council unanimously adopted [UNSCR 2353\(2017\)](#) which renews the South Sudan sanctions regime and the mandate for the South Sudan Panel of Experts for an additional year.
- **22 May 2017.** Following the largely successful late April government counteroffensive, President Kiir announces a unilateral ceasefire and pardon, allegedly to encourage a national dialogue for peace.
- **[3 - 5 May 2017](#).** The Security Council condemned the 3 May attack on UNMISS personnel, expressing appreciation of the efforts taken by peacekeepers to repel the attack.
- **May 2017.** Several rebel groups (NSF, SPLM-IO, and SPLM-DC/NDM) agreed to an alliance against President Kiir, but could not determine a common leader. Meanwhile, President Kiir restructured the military, renaming the SPLA-IG "the South Sudan Defense Forces (SSDF)". He replaced his Army Chief of Staff (and fellow Dinka tribal member) with another political ally. His former Chief subsequently left Juba with many of the armed forces.
- **April 2017.** The first of the UNMISS RPF peacekeepers under Brigadier General Jean Mupenzi of Rwanda arrive in South Sudan.
- **[10 March 2017](#).** The Security Council heard from UN authorities that the South Sudan "situation is worse than it has ever been."
- **February 2017.** Lieutenant General Thomas Cirillo Swaka accused President Kiir of ethnic bias and resigned, forming the National Salvation Front (NAS/NSF) and launching a rebellion against Kiir. Lieutenant General Gabriel Duop Lam and several other high ranking officers also resigned and aligned themselves with Machar.

b. Upcoming Events.

- **March 2018.** UNMISS mandate [UNSCR 2392\(2017\)](#) expires.
- **April 2018.** Scheduled conclusion of the TGNU's [national reconciliation dialogue](#).

- **May 2018.** The mandate of the South Sudan sanctions regime [UNSCR 2353\(2017\)](#) expires.
- **June 2018.** The mandate for the Panel of Experts expires.
- **July 2018:** According to the peace agreement (ARCISS), the President and Parliamentarian terms were to expire in July 2018, with planned elections. However, the recent UNMISS [mandate renewal language](#) indicates:

...that the parties to the conflict have failed to implement substantive elements of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (the Agreement), and that conditions for credible elections do not presently exist.

Operational Environment (GPMESII)

7. Geographic. South Sudan is hot with seasonal rainfall influenced by the annual shift of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone; rainfall is heaviest in the upland areas of the south and diminishes to the north. The terrain gradually rises from plains in the north and center to southern highlands along the border with Uganda and Kenya; the White Nile, flowing north out of the uplands of Central Africa, is the major geographic feature of the country supporting agriculture and extensive wild animal populations.

With almost no access to irrigation, food production is largely determined by rainfall. During the dry season (October to March), fields of six-foot-tall grass are burned, causing haze and falling ash. The dry season always brings the possibility of renewed violence and clashes. While violence continues throughout the rainy season, the dry season makes movement possible again and brings with it renewed insecurity. In the dry season, there is an increased risk of local road blocks and extortion, armed robbery and poor quality roads damaged by the previous rainy season. April is the beginning of what is called "The Hunger Gap," as the previous year's food stores run thin and the next harvest is not until September.



8. Political. Continued conflict deprives South Sudan of a viable political system.

The Republic of South Sudan recognizes July 9th as its Independence Day. In July 2011, South Sudan was declared a presidential republic with former General Salva Kiir Mayerdit (called Kiir) as its first elected president. Kiir quickly apportioned power among the many military factions, including himself and his Vice-President, Dr. Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon (called Machar). Other military leaders became governors of South Sudan's ten states. In 2013, Machar declared his intention to run for president of the party (and, in effect, the president of the nation) for the projected 2015 elections. At this time, Kiir alleged that Machar was planning a coup d'état, so he dismissed the entire cabinet.

While this political crisis involves a multiplicity of domestic, regional and international players with diverse interests and objectives, it is essentially a conflict between two ethnicities, the Dinkas (represented by Kiir) and the Nuers (represented by Machar). Key ministries in Kiir's government are in the hands of ethnic Dinkas. Machar remains in control of the ethnic Nuer led Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-in Opposition forces. In 2015, the opposing parties met and came to agreement (ARCISS). One of the tenets of the agreement included the return of Machar to the vice-presidency. However, peace implementation stalled when President Kiir further divided the country into 28 states (not

recognized internationally), instead of maintaining the original ten states that the peace agreements were based on.

Machar did not return to his position until April 2016, despite [entreaties](#) from his government peers and the international community, because of [security concerns](#) for himself. His concerns were validated in the Juba violence in July 2016. In August 2016, President Kiir once again [removed Machar as First Vice-President](#), and replaced him with Taban Deng Gai, a former peace negotiator.

The SPLM was the ruling party as South Sudan gained independence from Sudan. It fractured beginning in 2013 into [three major parts](#): the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) led by President Kiir;

Kiir's SPLM party is sometimes referred to as "SPLM-Juba" or "SPLM in Government" (SPLM-IG).

the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO) led by Dr. Machar; and the SPLM-Democratic Change (since renamed "Democratic Change") led by Onyoti Adigo Nyikwec.

Another emerging party from the fractured SPLM is the [SPLM Former Detainees, or FDs](#). One reference describes the FDs as "a group of high-level South Sudan ruling party (SPLM) leaders who were arrested but later released at the start of the country's civil war in December 2013...(then)...went into exile in the neighbouring [*sic*] countries." While many of them now hold positions in the current government, this group advocates for the removal of both Kiir and Machar from any future government positions, suggesting they are "the main protagonists whose actions are holding the country hostage out of fears of being held accountable for the crimes their forces committed during the current civil war."

The SPLM-FDs propose that Kiir and Machar should both [exit the country](#) to allow the formation of an alternate government, with a package that includes: "(1) asylum for the two in a willing country or countries, (2) amnesty for specified crimes committed (crimes against humanity, human rights crimes and crime under international humanitarian law) from 15 December, 2013 to the end of the transition or date of the deal, with conditions attached and (3) reasonable financial incentives that assure them of decent living in exile."

Despite a [recent Egypt-facilitated agreement](#) between the SPLM-IG and the SPLM-FDs, the continued involvement of the SPLM-FDs in current deliberations confounds other members of the ruling government. Representatives indicate they will not participate in sessions with the SPLM-FDs "because they are not a rebel group but part of the ruling coalition."

Meanwhile, the planned 2015 elections were postponed to 2018. While the GoSS indicates readiness for those elections, the UN and other international and regional observers express concern. Suffrage is universal for citizens over 18 years of age. However, among the electoral readiness concerns is the South Sudan's definition of citizenship. At this time, citizenship is authorized only by descent (one parent must be a citizen). However, the refugee and IDP crisis complicates the means for appropriate identification.

9. Military/Security. Almost immediately following Vice President Machar's first removal from power, the government's military splintered along ethnic lines: Dinka soldiers remained loyal to President Kiir, and others remained loyal to Machar, a Nuer. In addition to a divided national armed forces, South Sudan has [over 40 militia groups](#) that act on their own initiative in defense of their own interests, but are also influenced by national elites vying for power.

The [UN Secretary-General's report](#) (for September through mid-November 2017) warned: "...more violence and upheaval is to be expected with the imminent start of the dry season and as various political struggles are triggered by a push to end the transition in 2018 and hold elections." **Key actors are:**

a. National Military Forces. The security situation is one of divided loyalties, weak chains of command, generals controlling their own private fiefdoms, and fractured opposition President Kiir, himself a former guerrilla commander, promised to unite the military forces by May 2016 and make it “completely subordinate to the authority of a civilian government.” It did not happen. A recent report outlines [massive corruption](#) within the national army that includes “procurement fraud, irregular spending unchecked by civilian authority, and bloated troop rosters.”

One of the SPLA’s spokesperson [denied corruption charges](#) as “baseless” and “mere propaganda” intended “to tarnish the institutional image of the South Sudanese army.”

Also referred to as the [South Sudan Defense Forces \(SSDF\)](#), 18 years is the legal minimum age for compulsory and voluntary military service in the national armed forces. However, while the government signed agreements regarding the demobilization of all child soldiers within the armed forces and opposition, the recruitment of child soldiers by all parties continues. The UN estimates that more than 17,000 child soldiers have participated in the conflict in the past four years.

There are essentially two national-level military forces, separated along ethnic/tribal and political affiliations:

- **Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA).** The SPLA, still associated with President Kiir, has divided loyalties. Allegations of human rights abuses specifically targeting civilians has marred any real reform or accountability. Actual SPLA strength is unknown. The SPLA was responsible for shooting down a UN helicopter in 2012 (and possibly again in 2014) and targeting UN humanitarian aid contractors repeatedly since 2014.

Allegations against the [Army Chief of Staff General Paul Malong](#) serve as an example of the fracturing of the current government. A former colleague of President Kiir, he was placed under house arrest in May 2017 after several other senior military generals resigned while alleging abuse and ethnic bias against Kiir. By November 2017, Kiir sent Malong to exile in Kenya while other Malong associates began to join the rebels and other opposition armed groups. Lately, the GoSS accused Malong as “being behind a series of attacks.”

- **Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO).** Despite the single name, the SPLM/A-IO [is not a unified group](#). The chain of command is weak, with Riek Machar as political leader and various other individuals as military leaders. They lead an increasingly organized but disparate collection of defected SPLA units and community based, largely Nuer militias.

For several years, UN officials have suggested an arms embargo for South Sudan. In 2014, the government bought at least four Mi-24 attack helicopters from a private Ukrainian company at a cost of nearly \$43 million, after which the opposition rebels attempted to acquire shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. Independent sources told a UN panel: “...there is a “standing unwritten agreement” whereby Uganda acts as a regional conduit for transfers of arms and ammunition. Israeli Micro Galil rifles seen in Upper Nile State, for instance, were originally exported by Israel to Uganda in 2007, but were subsequently sold on to the South Sudanese...although opposition forces were also using ammunition originating in China and the former Soviet Union.”

b. Non State Armed Groups.

- **Local Militia:** Local communities, often well-armed and not involved in elite politics, engage in the conflict on their own terms. Armed youth from different ethnic groups mobilize and respond to attacks against community members elsewhere in a widening circle of reprisal and revenge according to Human Rights Watch. These fighters do not directly report to any political leader.

- **Organized Criminal Elements (Domestic and Transnational):** Both organized crime and “opportunity crime” [exists at all levels of society and in many forms](#).

c. Other International Actors. Beyond the UN and its UNMISS, there are many other international actors and organizations as well as regional neighbors interested in the long-term stability—or instability—of South Sudan (albeit within their own national or regional concerns). The following list is not complete, but provides examples:

- **Regional Neighbors.**

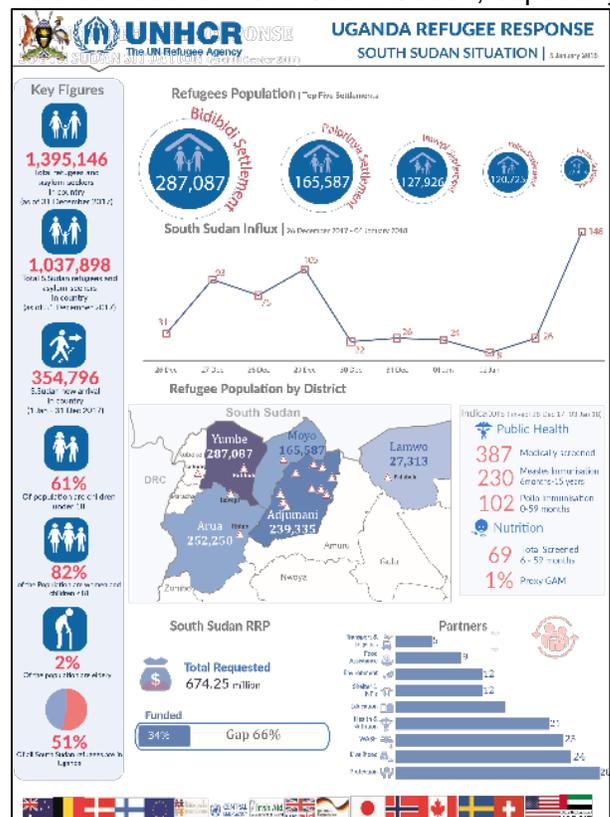
Central African Republic (CAR). The border between South Sudan and the CAR has [“violent skirmishes”](#) over water and grazing rights.

Kenya. Kenya plays a prominent regional role regarding counter-terrorism efforts and President Kenyatta also actively participated in peace negotiations in South Sudan. Kenya also administers the [“Ilemi Triangle,”](#) the boundary that separates Kenya and South Sudan.

Ethiopia. Ethiopia and South Sudan are engaged in a [“diplomatic row”](#) based on stories that President Salva Kiir has allowed Ethiopian rebels to open their office in the capital Juba. In addition, issues of water allocation (regarding the [Ethiopian Renaissance Dam](#)) further complicate diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Sudan. Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and SPLA have skirmished along the Sudan – South Sudan border, especially in the contested Abyei region. Sudan has bombed towns in South Sudan, especially in oil producing areas such as Unity State in South Sudan. Because Uganda and Sudan are regional rivals, Sudan has supported SPLM/A-IO to counter Ugandan influence. [Sudanese rebels have also supported the SPLA.](#)

Uganda. Uganda has a long relationship with the SPLA, including decades of joint military deployments. When conflict broke out in December 2013, the Ugandan People’s Defense Force (UPDF) was deployed beside the SPLA as part of a regional force to counter the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). However, Uganda also [has a relationship with the SPLM/A-IO](#) that was reinforced in a 2016 meeting between Machar and the President of Uganda. Therefore, [UPDF is a destabilizing force](#), with a history of atrocities against South Sudanese civilians and human rights abuses. In fact, until recently, the UPDF presence in South Sudan may have kept Machar and the SPLM/A-IO from the peace talks. After the adoption of UNSCR 2304, Uganda [announced that it would not contribute](#) any troops to the Regional Protection Force. Uganda is also the temporary home for almost [450,000 refugees](#).



- **International Organizations.**

African Union (AU). The AU [remains engaged](#) in promoting and facilitating security and political reconciliation in South Sudan. In early July 2016, the AU proposed a [regional protection force](#) to deploy to South Sudan with a more robust mandate than the UN peacekeeping mission currently there, similar to the 3,000 strong Force Intervention Brigade deployed within the UN's mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This concept was included in the UNMISS mandate revision of the same year.

European Union (EU). The EU remains engaged in the South Sudan in a variety of committees and programs. [EU humanitarian funding](#) for South Sudan was €192 million in 2017, which includes €70 million for neighboring countries.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The IGAD served as a peace facilitator in December 2013, establishing envoys to mediate talks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The members of IGAD are **Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya**. In early years of the current conflict, IGAD sent a Protection and Deterrence Force (PDF) as part of the ceasefire Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM), but the mandate was not clear. Some members wanted to secure the oil fields; others to enforce cease fire. IGAD struggled to operationalize the MVM, leaving many to question the feasibility of an IGAD force. In addition, Ugandan participation in the PDF (as a member of IGAD) undermined its neutrality.

In December 2017, the IGAD initiated the [High-Level Revitalization Forum \(HLRF\)](#) to re-energize the ARCSS agreed to by all key parties in 2015.

Troika. Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States form the “Troika” of nations that continued to support the peace process.

10. Economic. South Sudan is [rich in natural resources](#) such as oil, however, the ongoing conflict continues to stifle oil production and the drop in global oil prices has reduced government revenues. Years of conflict, poor infrastructure, and an unskilled workforce have kept the impoverished country as one of the poorest in the world. Electricity is powered largely through costly and inefficient diesel generators. Most of the country survives by sustenance farming; soil is exceptionally fertile. Oil makes up over 90% of the Governments budget revenues, but it is difficult to fully leverage these resources with limited infrastructure, unskilled labor, and the oil companies’ aversion to risk. The recent downturn of the global oil market contributes to marked economic depression. In addition, the government intermittently shuts down oil production due to bilateral disagreements with Sudan and management incompetency.

In 2017, the U.S. spent [\\$748,864,355](#) across all agencies in support of South Sudan.

11. Social. South Sudan is [very diverse](#), with major ethnicities of Dinka 35.8% and Nuer 15.6%. Other groups are Shilluk, Azande, Bari, Kakwa, Kuku, Murle, Mandari, Didinga, Ndogo, Bviri, Lndi, Anuak, Bongo, Lango, Dungotona, Acholi speaking many languages including English (official language), Arabic (including Juba and Sudanese variants) and regional languages which include Dinka, Nuer, Bari, Zande, and Shilluk. There are 11,562,695 people, and the main religions are Christian and animist. Some population segments are migrant and fleeing violence.

a. Rule of Law. South Sudan has ignored the rule of law in the past, and does not recognize the International Criminal Court (ICC). The African Union, as part of the peace process, proposed a special court to bring those suspected of war crimes to trial. [The Commission of Inquiry](#), formed in 2014 under the chairmanship of Nigeria's ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo, found evidence that both sides of the conflict in South Sudan had been involved in murder, torture, looting, and sexual violence. However, the

[hybrid court](#) envisioned in 2015's ARCISS was not approved by South Sudan's council of ministers until December 2017.

b. Human Rights. The government launched several judicial proceedings and investigations into events in the wake of December 2013 violence, but little was done to protect human rights and investigate abuses. On 21 January 2016, UNMISS and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a joint report on the state of human rights in South Sudan since the outbreak of hostilities in December 2013. According to the report, the scale, intensity and severity of human rights violations and abuses increased with the continuation of hostilities, particularly during spikes in fighting in the middle and latter part of 2015, including large scale extra-judicial killings, sexual violence, abductions and enforced disappearances, forced displacement, looting, livestock-raiding, forced recruitment (including of children), extensive destruction of civilian property, and indiscriminate attacks against civilians. Despite the severity of the human rights and humanitarian law violations perpetrated by both sides to the conflict, there are no tangible accountability mechanisms.

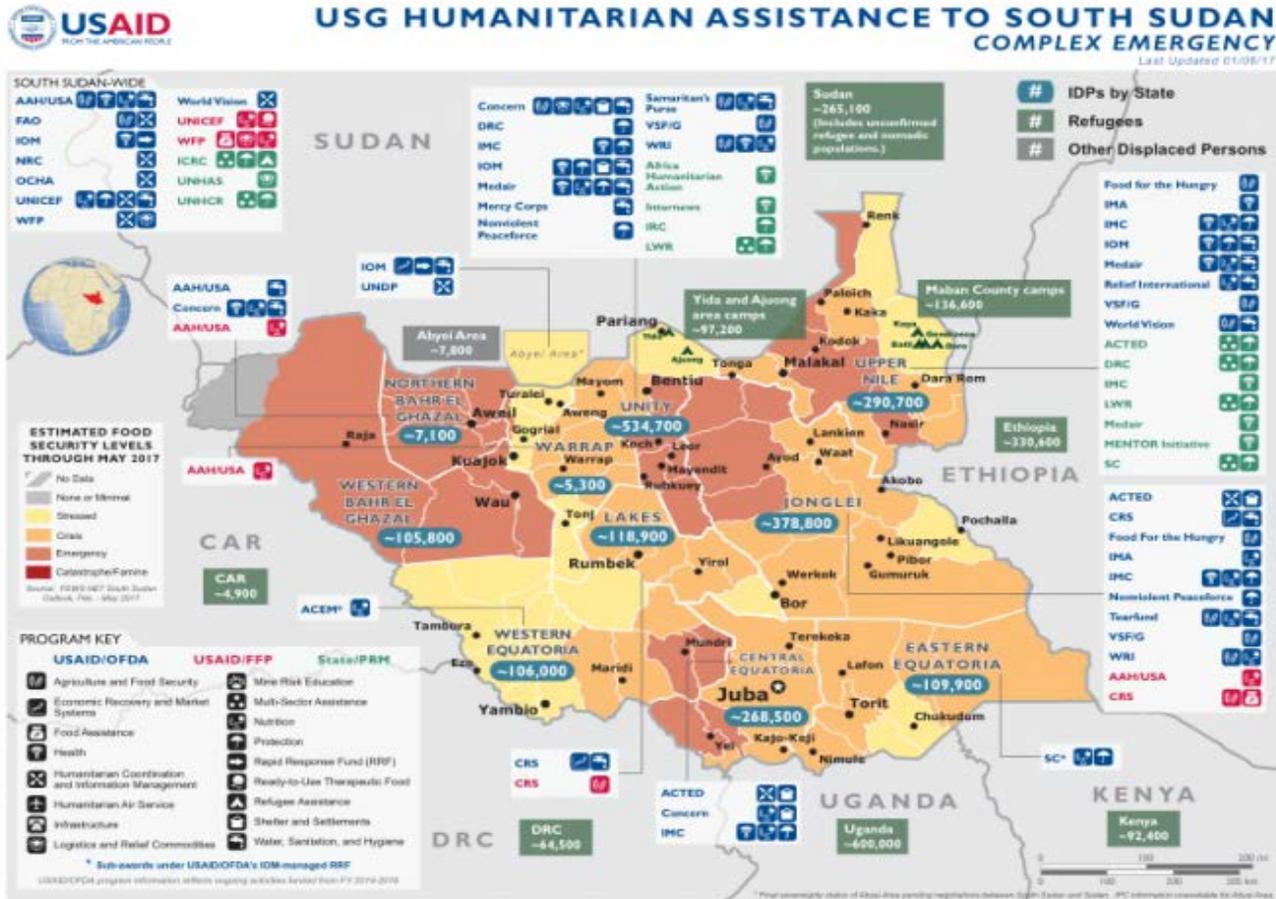
In accordance with more recent reports, nothing has changed; violence and human rights abuses abound from all parties to the conflicts. The UN Secretary-General's [recent report](#):

The human rights environment in South Sudan continued to deteriorate. Ongoing military hostilities continue to impact civilians, who were subjected to indiscriminate and targeted killings, conflict-related sexual violence, looting and destruction of their properties...Limitations inherent to the operating environment, including denial of access by authorities, continued to adversely affect the Mission's ability to investigate alleged human rights violations and abuses. In September, human rights teams experienced 12 incidents of denied access by SPLA soldiers at various checkpoints...Both Government and opposition forces were responsible for reported violations and abuses...Conditions of detention in police and prison facilities do not meet minimum international human rights standards and therefore remain an issue of concern. The practice of prolonged and arbitrary detention continued...During the reporting period, the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting documented 99 incidents of grave violations affecting 1,682 children (1,007 boys, 653 girls and 22 individuals whose sex is unknown), of which 44 were verified. These included incidents of killing and maiming, the recruitment and use of children and attacks on and use of schools and hospital facilities for military purposes. A total of 16 schools remain occupied and are being used for military purposes, and four health facilities have been attacked and looted by armed groups.

b. Humanitarian Assistance. The scope of the humanitarian problem is growing and the outlook is grim. Humanitarian workers provided assistance for at least 4.7 million people in 2017 (against a targeted 6.7 million in need). The food insecurity has reached its highest level since the conflict began. About 3.9 million people, or 34 per cent of the population, are severely food insecure— an 80 per cent increase from 2014. For the first time, catastrophic-level food insecurity at the household level was reported for 40,000 people in the areas worst affected by fighting. The UN Secretary-General [reported](#):

The humanitarian crisis continued to deepen due to the impact of armed conflict, rapidly deteriorating economic conditions, flooding in some parts of the country, disease, intercommunal violence and displacement. Some 4 million South Sudanese have been forced to flee their homes...The South Sudan refugee crisis remains among the fastest-growing refugee situations in the world...the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for the period from September 2017 to March 2018...(suggest)...6 million people (56 per cent of the total population) estimated to be severely food insecure, out of which 40,000 were classified as being in "Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe" at the household level (IPC Phase 5) and 2 million facing "Humanitarian Emergency" (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity...An estimated 1.1 million children are acutely malnourished, including close to 280,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The ongoing conflict and the rainy season have increased susceptibility to disease, with more than 1.57 million malaria cases and nearly 2,500 related deaths reported since January 2017.

Both factions recognize the scope of the humanitarian problems and normally allow access to aid organizations (except during the July 2016 violence in Juba, where humanitarian access was severely limited if not prohibited). However, if humanitarian actors are too closely associated with UNMISS and forced to deliver aid under its operational parameters, it jeopardizes their ability to provide food and other essential services.



12. Information. Radio is an effective news outlet for spreading information as people in the countryside still have access to radio. UNMISS-sponsored [Radio Maraya](#) is the most accessible and popular station. However, various armed factions continue to intimidate and detain journalists.

13. Infrastructure. Most of the country does not have electricity. One railway, repaired with UN funding, is 200+ km long. The few roads in the country are in [disrepair](#), although USAID has contributed funding to infrastructure and road repair in the south. According to USAID, South Sudan lacks all aspects of physical infrastructure needed to support an efficient, productive economy. This dearth of infrastructure prevents many areas from becoming economically viable, leaving communities vulnerable to resource conflicts and food insecurity. UNMISS forces [repaired airports and runways](#) to facilitate use for mission tasks and humanitarian aid. During the rainy season many can only be reached by food air drops. Poor roads make sustainment difficult and airlift is expensive and occasionally dangerous, as evidenced with the downing of some UN helicopters. In 2015, the United Kingdom donated a C-130 to UNMISS, doubling UNMISS air sustainment capability.

Peace Operations Functions

14. Command and Control. UMMISS is composed of military, police, international civilians, local staff, and UN volunteers, supervised by:

- **Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for South Sudan and Head of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS):** Mr. David Shearer (New Zealand)
- **Deputy Special Representative (Political):** Moustapha Soumaré (Mali)
- **Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UN Resident Coordinator, and Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP:** Alain Noudéhou (Benin)
- **Force Commander:** Lieutenant General Frank Mushyo Kamanzi (Rwanda)
- **Police Commissioner:** Bruce Munyambo (Rwanda)

15. Intelligence. Lack of adequate intelligence adversely affects UNMISS ability to protect civilians. One previous UNMISS Force Commander called his intelligence capability a “limitation” hampering UNMISS ability to respond when civilians are threatened. UNMISS had no understanding the events of December 2013 or July 2016 would unfold as violently, having no early warning system or information gathering capability. [Recent mandates](#) call for establishing these capabilities.

16. Operations. In July 2015, UN leadership indicated that protection of civilians required "logistical, financial and human resources, resources that fit the mandate, expectations and realities on the ground" and that limitations in these capabilities (particularly the absence of critical enablers such as close-air support, adequate logistics, intelligence, reconnaissance, and responsive CASEVAC/MEDEVAC capabilities) affect UNMISS' ability to respond operationally. In the two years since that report, not much has changed.

Due to lack of governance, UNMISS planned to operationally expand to a County Support Base concept, but lack of roads and [unanticipated civilian needs](#) hampered the CSB concept.

In addition to protection and facilitation tasks, UNMISS regularly conducts search operations in protection of civilians sites and improves the conditions of main supply roads.

17. Protection.

a. Mission Protection. While UNMISS casualties are less than those experienced in other UN Missions, it is an increasingly hostile and insecure environment for UN personnel and other aid, humanitarian, and development agency personnel. A significant, if not a majority, of the UNMISS uniformed personnel are dedicated to mission protection. Given that UNMISS has a large presence in the management of IDP camps, Mission Protection and Protection of Civilians has morphed into essentially the same mission as UNMISS bases are occasionally subject to mortar or artillery fire and other direct attacks.

The UN and independent media [allege GoSS troops specifically targeted](#) UN staff and foreign aid workers amid the horrific July 2016 violence. In that event, American citizens were subjected to rapes and beatings seemingly perpetrated by members of the Presidential Guard. The apparent deliberate and officially sanctioned [targeting of Americans](#) is significant because the US played a key role in the establishment of South Sudan as an independent nation. Therefore, until the July 2016 atrocities, American citizens appeared to be unsusceptible to violence by the government personnel and security forces.

b. Protection of Civilians. As of December 2017, the UNMISS had 209,011 civilians seeking safety at its [six Protection of Civilians \(PoC\) sites](#).

Providing protection and relief to civilians as a result of conflict was unanticipated in the original UN mission set. When UNMIS (precursor to UNMISS) opened its camps to let in the civilians fleeing conflict, some parties and actors viewed the UN personnel as pro-government.

UNMISS had intended for its PoC sites to be a [short-term solution to a temporary crisis](#), however, the sites have become settlements of sorts for IDPs. Yet, the living spaces were not proportionately expanded and sanitation and water services were not sufficiently improved, posing major health and protection risks, including the potential for outbreaks of communicable diseases like cholera, and both internal (to camps) and external security threats.

From the middle of 2015 onward (post-peace agreement) the government (or government-allied) forces have engaged in a deliberate strategy to deprive civilians of any source of livelihood and force their displacement by burning of villages and destruction of food crops and livestock. Many recent reports indicate a [population at imminent risk](#) of genocide.

18. Sustainment. Poor infrastructure, desert environment, and violence all contribute to UNMISS sustainment challenges.

[USAID-funded Promoting Resiliency through Ongoing Participatory Engagement and Learning \(PROPEL\)](#) implements a program that brings together communities and strengthening their capacity to drive their own development, leveraging other donor-funded programs, and advocating for additional support to implement projects that address priority needs. PROPEL promotes social cohesion and resilience within South Sudanese communities while providing tangible improvements in the lives of their residents and laying the groundwork for cooperation between them and the government.

Financially, the UN sustains UNMISS at the [appropriated amount of \\$1,071,000,000](#) from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, as authorized by the General Assembly. In addition, as of 10 November 2017, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNMISS Special Account amounted to \$120.5 million.

Issues and Considerations

19. Issues. The major issues confronting UNMISS in South Sudan remain unchanged and are summarized as follows:

- Multiple threats and actors involved in the conflict hampers effective protection strategies; priority threats are not easily understood and UNMISS' ability to collect and process intelligence is still limited.
- The roots of this conflict are embedded in the social and political fabric of many communities, from the 1990s. Historical tensions are easily inflamed.
- Leaders have demonstrated little interest in anything other than preserving power, making a political solution difficult.
- While all armed actors have formally committed to allowing humanitarian assistance to civilians in need, challenges remain with increasing limits placed on access, bureaucratic impediments, looting of supplies and equipment, violence against aid workers, concerns about the [association of humanitarians with UNMISS](#), and the rainy season.
- The situation for 100,000+ civilians sheltering inside UNMISS bases presents a challenge to humanitarians, who typically do not provide services inside military bases but have responded

due to the unprecedented situation and level of need. Creating safe conditions inside the bases presents very specific challenges for UNMISS.

20. Considerations for the Future.

a. U.S. In early 2017, all parties in the South Sudanese conflicts appear to welcome the ["opportunity for a clean slate"](#) with the Trump Administration. In particular, South Sudanese opposition leader Riek Machar suggested that he shares with President Trump the "anti-establishment attitude" of "a fellow political outsider" while his wife suggested that former U.S. officials ["failed the people of South Sudan"](#) because of its insistence to recognize a government of unity that is not united. Other observers agreed that many South Sudan leaders were ["clinging to the hope that...the Trump administration will allow them to continue to escape acting responsibly"](#) and the U.S. Congress should "send a powerful signal that atrocities must end and that justice will prevail in South Sudan," or ["zero-tolerance policy"](#) for atrocities committed by any side. U.S. military expertise may be helpful in ensuring that the limited assets, such as helicopters, are more effectively utilized in support of the UNMISS priorities.

Meanwhile, there appears to be [little accountability regarding the use of the billions of dollars](#) in aid and assistance to the country.

b. UN and Other International Partners. Given the pre-2013 mandated emphasis on state-building and developing the military and security capacities of the GoSS, the UN and other international partners are perceived by many of the population within the country (and some in the international community) as "pro-government" and, therefore, not neutral or impartial. Ironically, it is seen as anti-Government by the GoSS. Despite—or because of—these varying perceptions, it is imperative for the UN's long-term credibility—in country and elsewhere—to meet the challenges of the mandate while demonstrating its traditional neutrality. The authorized RPF, while obviously necessary to protect civilians and enforce the mandate, will further test the UN's [credibility as an impartial party](#) to the peace process:

The non-consent of a host government to the deployment of a peacekeeping operation makes the success of that operation virtually impossible. Peacekeepers are not war fighters. Even contingents with a robust and aggressive mandate like the proposed Regional Response [*sic*] Force cannot mount an invasion of a sovereign country. Rather, they need the consent and cooperation of the government to move in troops and equipment; this includes things like authorizing visa requests, freedom of movement, and a general status of forces agreement. Without consent, a peacekeeping mission can hardly get off the ground. The logistics are impossible...This means that the real success of this new resolution will be in the diplomatic space. That is, the success or failure of this new mission is contingent on the ability of the international community to compel South Sudan's compliance with the resolution. This can include threatening sanctions or other punitive measures if it does not comply. Or, it can entail behind-the-scenes diplomatic maneuvering by governments that wield some influence with Salva Kiir. Whatever the case, this new resolution will be only a fig leaf of a solution unless diplomatic pressure is brought to bear on the government of South Sudan sufficient to convince it to cooperate with this new force.

In 2017, a [radical new idea](#) emerged regarding the near-future of South Sudan: trusteeship. There is [precedent](#) for successful implementation of the concept—East Timor, Kosovo, and Bosnia. There are also "cautionary tales"—Somalia, Iraq. A Ugandan scholar suggested that the African Union could [take the lead](#) in a South Sudan transitional government with "none of the current South Sudanese politicians who have helped drag their nation into civil war...able to participate."

Another observer suggests ["new thinking and approaches are needed"](#) to resolve the South Sudan conflict. Instead of using the traditional "big tent" approach—a process where all stakeholders meet to compromise on power-sharing arrangements—this observer suggests a number of separate but related measures that can be immediately implemented. Examples include ensuring violent acts have

consequences on the actors (such as sanctions) and lobby for an informal arms embargo (since a formal embargo has proven problematic).

c. South Sudan. Several other observers reinforce the recommendations and priorities of the Security Council resolutions. However, there are a few additional recommendations to consider:

- The role of various TCCs in the greater region influences the perception of the UNMISS by the population and the warring factions. South Sudan persons may be distrustful of closer relationships with the [security forces of neighboring states](#) that may be part of UNMISS or other regional peace-facilitating initiatives. Lessons from Somalia could be useful to ensure that from the start, there are robust mechanisms in place to ensure accountability of all personnel operating under the UNMISS banner and a clear communication strategy of purpose and intentions.
- Utilize [all aspects of civil society](#) to leverage “peacemaking and reconciliation”—especially the churches—as “they are the only institutions with a reach in all corners of the country” and “they also have the patience and stamina to stay engaged when national and international actors have long left.”

Resources

21. Key Documents and On-line References.

- [African Union \(AU\) Statement of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union on the Revitalisation Process of the South Sudan Peace Agreement \(December 2017\)](#)
- [Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Revising the UN Peacekeeping Mandate for South Sudan](#)
- [Center for Civilians in Conflict, A Refuge in Flames: The February 17-18 Violence in Malakal](#)
- [CIA, The World Fact Book--South Sudan](#)
- [Department of State, US Embassy South Sudan](#) and [USAID, South Sudan](#)
- [Eurasia Review, The Long and Dark Road to Peace](#)
- [Human Rights Watch, World Report 2017](#)
- [International Crisis Group, Keeping Faith with the IGAD Peace Process](#)
- [Institute for Security Studies, Beyond ARCISS New Fault Lines \(January 2017\)](#)
- [IRIN News, Struggle Survive South Sudan in Hunger Season \(January 2018\)](#)
- [Kurtz, South Sudan Peace Process Needs New Thinking \(December 2017\)](#)
- [Norwegian Refugee Council, 4th Anniversary of South Sudan Conflict \(December 2017\)](#)
- [Relief Web South Sudan 2016](#)
- [Stimson Center Report, Challenges Faced by the UN Peacekeeping Mission in South Sudan](#)
- [UN Multimedia \(October 2017\)](#)
- [UN Presidential Statement Endorses Intergovernmental Authority's High-Level Revitalization Forum on Peace Accord \(December 2017\)](#)
- [UN, OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2017](#)
- [UN Peacekeeping Missions--UNMISS](#)
- [UN Reports, South Sudan](#) and [UNSCR2252/UNSCR2304](#)
- [UN Security Council 2392\(2017\)](#)