

# Sudan and South Sudan's Merging Conflicts

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## *Executive Summary*

Neither the peace agreement that ended Sudan's second civil war (1983-2005) nor South Sudan's 2011 independence brought stability. A difficult divorce that included a border conflict, an oil shutdown, then brief cooperation, has been followed since December 2013 by a new phase of civil war in South Sudan in which the now two countries' wars are increasingly merged. The regional organisations that seek to mediate have been unsuccessful, in part because members have competing interests, while outside powers do not invest sufficiently in conflict resolution. With the rainy season's end, conflict containment is likely to be increasingly difficult. New strategies are needed in several directions: to de-escalate fighting by finding ways to limit foreign involvement and reduce armed groups' cross-border activity; to curtail arms supply to the parties; to identify how the conflict is financed and propose measures to stop use of oil revenues to fund the war; and to coordinate mediation efforts for the interconnected wars. More active engagement by the UN Security Council, and especially China and the U.S., given their regional influence, is critical.

The present combustible situation stems most immediately from the fighting that broke out in South Sudan at the end of 2013 between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those associated with former Vice President Riek Machar, due to the failure to resolve longstanding disputes within the ruling party and the army. Following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), Khartoum retained links with Southern armed groups and supported emergent anti-government elements. The rupture in South Sudan was preceded by continuous warfare in Darfur and renewed conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, a consequence of central government failure to put in place reforms demanded for decades by the country's peripheral regions.

Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) units drawn from areas north of the border before the 2005 peace remained armed and organised and, in 2011, restarted the fight in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, now the epicentre of Sudan's national conflict. These forces joined Darfur rebel groups that year to create a broader anti-Khartoum coalition, the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), which received aid from South Sudan, in particular via neighbouring Unity state, even before South Sudan's independence.

The new war in South Sudan, which has already cost at least 50,000 dead and displaced nearly two million, short-circuited a rapprochement between Khartoum and Juba that was only a few months old. Uganda sent troops to strengthen President Kiir's forces, but in the process angered Sudan, its regional rival. Some observers anticipated the rebels in both countries would cooperate against the two governments, given their similar grievances. Instead, those fighting against Khartoum joined with Kiir's forces against Machar's in order to preserve their sanctuaries in South Sudan and their claim on continued material assistance. While still keen to improve ties with Juba, Khartoum appears to play both sides by simultaneously giving support to the armed opposition in South Sudan, partly to counter Uganda and partly because Sudanese rebel groups are fighting alongside the South Sudanese government, and serving as a mediator at the peace talks.

Within days of the outbreak of fighting in South Sudan, the wars began to merge geographically in its Unity state. As rebels from Sudan joined the fight on Juba's side,

it rapidly became a main theatre, characterised by protracted conflict over major towns and oil installations, mass atrocities and the confluence of multiple armed groups operating with their own agendas. The dividing line in Unity is primarily between Nuer groups, but additional dimensions, including between Dinka and Nuer and Darfurians and Nuer, have created new divisions and calls for revenge. Bitter competition between Nuer politicians from Unity (including Machar) has caused intra-ethnic conflict in the state to reverberate to Juba and the deadlocked peace talks in Ethiopia.

Those negotiations, mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional security organisation, are narrowly focused on Kiir and Machar. This is despite the fragmentation and proliferation of armed groups, including those operating across the Sudan-South Sudan border, that are often independent of either's control and complicate efforts to end the fighting. At the same time, Kiir is mortgaging South Sudan's economic future by using oil revenue, including the sale of future production at deep discount, to finance his fight. Regional tensions resulting from Uganda's intervention have further hindered IGAD's diplomacy, while the African Union (AU) has largely ignored the regional rivalry in its equally unsuccessful efforts to end Sudan's wars.

If there is a chance for peace, it lies in taking advantage of the fact that as complex as the interconnected conflicts are, their cross-border aspects do not divide the UN Security Council. New strategies should begin with more engagement from that body, particularly the U.S. and China, which have close ties with the regional powers. Both pressure and more positive inducements are needed to change calculations in Kampala, Khartoum and Juba.

A UN-imposed arms embargo for South Sudan, supported by more effective cross-border monitoring of armed groups and weapons flows, would increase leverage in all directions. This should be done in conjunction with increased monitoring by the IGAD Verification and Monitoring Mechanism of cessation of hostilities violations, including by Uganda. It should be complemented by a mechanism to examine how the war is financed and identify measures to prevent South Sudanese leaders using oil revenues and bankrupting the state to fund their war and enable violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement. All this must support more effective mediation, including greater IGAD outreach to armed groups and hardliners across South Sudan, better coordination with AU mediation in Sudan and more strategic and concerted U.S. and Chinese help to break the regional deadlock. The alternative is further escalation, destabilisation, humanitarian crises and atrocities.

## *Recommendations*

*To de-escalate Sudan's and South Sudan's conflicts on the ground*

### **To China and the U.S.:**

1. Deepen their engagement in the region, including by:
  - a) increasing both pressure and positive inducements on Uganda, with a view to persuading it to use its military support as leverage with which to press the government of South Sudan to work toward a mediated agreement;
  - b) using both pressure and positive inducements on Juba with a view to persuading it to end support, including from local authorities, to the armed opposition in Sudan; and
  - c) increasing both pressure and positive inducements on Khartoum, with a view to persuading it to be neutral and constructively engaged in the IGAD mediation.

*To put pressure on the warring parties in South Sudan*

### **To the UN Security Council:**

2. Impose an arms embargo with respect to South Sudan and apply it to all parties with the goal of slowing regional arms flows, preventing further political deterioration and advancing IGAD's political dialogue.
3. Establish a panel of experts to examine how the war is funded and propose concrete measures within six months to stop South Sudanese leaders from using oil revenues to fund the war and enable cessation of hostilities violations.
4. Consider mandating the UN Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA) to monitor – independent of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism established by Sudanese and South Sudanese governments – the movement of armed groups and weapons along and across the Sudan-South Sudan border and identify sources of weapons and violations of the Sudan-South Sudan Cooperation Agreement and the South Sudan Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. If the mission is mandated accordingly, ensure it has sufficient resources to undertake this task.

### **To IGAD:**

5. Ensure timely and public monitoring by the Verification and Monitoring Mechanism of cessation of hostilities violations by all parties, including by Uganda.

*To better link the Sudan and South Sudan peace processes and ensure developments in one are not undermined by deterioration in the other*

### **To the African Union (AU), IGAD, and their international partners, in particular the U.S. and China:**

6. Increase coordination, via a senior forum, between the AU's High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan and South Sudan, the IGAD mediation process in South Sudan and international actors supporting them, to ensure the cross-border dimensions of the conflicts are properly addressed.

**To IGAD and the AUHIP:**

7. Consider how transitional justice and accountability processes can address the cross-border nature of the violence, in particular in South Sudan's Unity state; and coordinate with the results of the AU Commission of Inquiry's findings in South Sudan, which should be made public immediately, even if it is not possible to identify those named.

**Addis Ababa/Juba/Nairobi/Brussels, 29 January 2015**

# Sudan and South Sudan's Merging Conflicts

## I. Introduction

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South Sudan's independence from Sudan in 2011 did not resolve internal conflicts in either country. Sudan's war in Darfur never stopped, and in the months surrounding South Sudan's independence, war broke out in Sudan's disputed Abyei, as well as South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Since the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the international community has disregarded democratisation in both, settling for a peaceful split. After independence, the ruling parties in Khartoum and Juba were more reluctant than ever to make concessions to political foes or marginalised communities.

Armed groups on both sides of the border remained interconnected. At independence, South Sudan's army still had divisions in Sudan, and Khartoum retained links with southern armed groups. Many southern militias are now part of the armed opposition in South Sudan, while others made deals with Juba before the outbreak of war, and most Sudanese rebels are allied to the Juba government. A history of tangled relationships and competing individual and group interests explain how, within days, the conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan merged and suggest how dangerous it would be to leave them unaddressed.

While this report includes recommendations that relate to both the interconnected wars, its descriptive sections focus on the outbreak of the South Sudan conflict, in particular the fighting season from December 2013 to mid-June 2014, during which the major cross-border alliances were formed. It comes after a series that analysed Sudan's spreading conflicts, as well as a body of research examining other elements of South Sudan's civil war.<sup>1</sup> In less detail, all discussed the conflicts' cross-border dimensions and issued still relevant recommendations, notably with respect to the peace processes.

A full listing and identifying detail for the various groups and entities discussed is at Appendix D below.

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<sup>1</sup> Crisis Group Africa Reports N°198, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (I): War in South Kordofan*, 14 February 2013; N°204, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (II): War in Blue Nile*, 18 June 2013; N°211, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (III): The Limits of Darfur's Peace Process*, 27 January 2014; N°217, *South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name*, 10 April 2014; and N°221, *South Sudan's Jonglei State: "We Have Always Been at War"*, 22 December 2014; also Conflict Alert: "Halting South Sudan's Spreading Civil War", 7 July 2014; "South Sudan and IGAD: Seize the Day", In Pursuit of Peace (blog.crisisgroup.org) 13 January 2015.

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## II. South Kordofan – the Epicentre of Sudan's Conflicts

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### A. The Government's "Hot Dry Season" Campaign

In 2013, Sudan's wars in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan converged in the latter state, which also borders on South Sudan. Major attacks began the day after peace talks between the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) were suspended in April and shocked Khartoum.<sup>2</sup> Bases in the SPLM-N's Nuba Mountains stronghold enabled the group and its Darfur allies, united under the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) banner and fighting for the first time under a joint command, to raid toward the centre, reaching North Kordofan and the main roads to Khartoum and the Nile Valley.<sup>3</sup>

The mid-2013 rainy season saw little fighting and stalled peace talks, but the Sudan government was preparing for war and, on 12 November 2013, announced its *seif as-sakhan* (hot dry season) campaign to "end the rebellion" in South Kordofan, Darfur and Blue Nile.<sup>4</sup> Though it expressed its readiness to resume talks, officials saw a new chance to resolve the conflict militarily. Government forces contained rebel expansion and reconquered some territory around Kadugli but failed to penetrate further into the Nuba Mountains or cut the road to South Sudan.<sup>5</sup> These modest results came despite deployment of the recently-formed paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), whose first regiment, 5,000-6,000 strong, was mostly recruited in South Darfur from the local *abbala* (camel-herding) component of the Rizeigat Arab tribe, the bulk of the infamous "Janjawid" militias.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sudan accused South Sudan of supporting the SRF and providing arms prior to the raids. Crisis Group Report, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (II)*, op. cit.; Andrew McCutchen, "The Sudan Revolutionary Front: Its Formation and Development", Small Arms Survey Working Paper no. 33, 2014, pp. 19-23.

<sup>3</sup> The commander was Abdelaziz al-Hilu, the top SPLM/A-N leader in South Kordofan. Despite fighting together, the SRF components remained autonomous on the battlefield.

<sup>4</sup> "Sudan launches military operations against rebels in multiple states", *Sudan Tribune*, 12 November 2013; "Humanitarian and human rights situation of the IDPs and war affected civilians in the SPLM/A-North controlled area of South Kordofan and Blue Nile States", Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SPLM-N's humanitarian arm), June 2014, p. 3. The day it was announced, SPLM-N and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), a Sudanese rebel group of Darfur origin, attacked Dilling, between South Kordofan's capital, Kadugli, and North Kordofan's, al-Obeid. Days later, JEM hit Abu Zabad (North Kordofan), reportedly destroying major army facilities and capturing equipment, but Fidel Mohammed Rahoma, a Misseriya Arab from Kordofan, its most important non-Darfur military leader, was killed.

<sup>5</sup> Similar major attempts to retake the road failed in early 2012 and 2013. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-N leader, Juba, March 2014, international observers, Juba and Yida, April 2014

<sup>6</sup> The RSF is said to be under National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) command but army-administered. Crisis Group interview, ex-Sudan army officer, May 2014; "Janjaweed Reincarnate", Enough, June 2014, p. 5. Some officials sought to use the RSF to reassert control of the militias via better training and deployment outside Darfur. Crisis Group interview, ex-army officer, May 2014; "Sudan: Chaos theory", *Africa Confidential*, 30 May 2014, pp. 9-10. RSF leader Mohammed Hamdan Dagolo ("Hemmeti") is the nephew of a traditional leader of the Awlad Mansour section of the Mahariya Rizeigat. Originally from Chad, the government let them occupy historic Fur land, but in 2007, unhappy with waning support, Hemmeti launched a brief rebellion. To regain his support, he was made security adviser to South Darfur's governor. A rare loyalist among South Darfur *abbala* Rizeigat militias in 2013, he was made an army brigadier general. Crisis Group interview, ex-army officer. In September 2013, 500 RSF helped bloodily repress a Khartoum protest. In October,



In January 2014, some RSF withdrew to North Kordofan, where they wreaked havoc and reportedly received \$3 million from Governor Ahmed Haroun to leave. Returning to Darfur, they resumed attacks against non-Arabs accused of disloyalty and occasionally fought rebels. During a few days in February, their operations displaced more than 30,000. In April, they returned to South Kordofan, and in June the government announced creation of a second regiment, from South Kordofan. There are now reports a third regiment is being formed from outside the war areas.<sup>7</sup> In December 2014, RSF recruits in training created new chaos, reportedly causing several deaths in fighting with villagers north of Khartoum.<sup>8</sup>

RSF involvement in South Kordofan has also not been without controversy; abuses against Misseriya Arab civilians associated with its January 2014 operations led Major General Bandar Ibrahim Abu-al-Balul to defect to JEM in February 2014.<sup>9</sup> He says he can recruit from the Misseriya and other tribes in South and West Kordofan, including Khartoum-aligned Popular Defence Forces (PDF) militia and ex-soldiers; if true, the kaleidoscope of armed groups in South and West Kordofan may grow more complex.<sup>10</sup>

In January 2015, the second phase of the *seif as-sakhan* campaign was marked by a government attempt to reach the SPLM-N "capital", Kaoda. Khartoum's forces repeatedly advanced to within 20km of the town, though they have subsequently pulled back somewhat.<sup>11</sup>

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it fought more aggressively in South Kordofan than local militias, but reportedly suffered heavy casualties. Crisis Group interview, SPLM-N leader, Juba, March 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Jérôme Tubiana, "Out for Gold and Blood in Sudan", *Foreign Affairs* (online), 1 May 2014; "Janjaweed Reincarnate", op. cit., p. 11; "Sudan Talks in Addis Ababa: To Be or Not To Be 'Comprehensive'", Sudan Democracy First Group, 19 February 2014. Crisis Group interview, SRF leaders, March 2014. Haroun is under indictment by the International Criminal Court for his role in creating and supporting the Janjawid.

<sup>8</sup> "Clashes erupt in north Khartoum between villagers and RSF militia", *Sudan Tribune*, 26 December 2014.

<sup>9</sup> For more about JEM, see Appendix D below. Major General Bandar Abu-al-Balul, an important Misseriya army officer from the area, is a member of South Kordofan's state parliament (since 2011), president of its security and defence committee and, reportedly, general coordinator of the Misseriya Popular Defence Forces (PDF) – a major pro-Khartoum tribal militia in the Nuba Mountains and southern Sudan since the late 1980s. Crisis Group interviews, Abu-al-Balul, May 2014; SPLM-N leader, Juba, March 2014.

<sup>10</sup> A Misseriya motivation to join the rebels was the belief SPLM-N and JEM links to South Sudan would facilitate seasonal cattle migration. JEM has many new Misseriya recruits. SPLM-N also recruited Misseriya, though they are reportedly unhappy about Nuba domination of the movement in South Kordofan. Another source of friction is the status of Abyei, which Misseriya believe should stay in Sudan, while the SPLM-N is historically close to its Ngok Dinka, who advocate its joining South Sudan. In 2014, SLA-AW named Hassan Hamid, ex-leader of SPLA Misseriya "Dibab forces", as deputy chief of staff. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-N members, including Misseriya, Juba, March-April 2014; Misseriya nomads, Majok, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, April 2014; Major General Bandar Abu-al-Balul, May 2014.

<sup>11</sup> On 15 November, both parties endorsed an AUHIP-proposed draft framework agreement to resolve the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. However, fighting resumed during the negotiations and intensified after they stalled. Crisis Group telephone interviews, South Kordofan civilians, AUHIP officials and international observers, November 2013-January 2014; "Government forces push within 20 kilometers of rebel capital", *Nuba Reports*, 12 January 2015.

## B. *The Sudan Revolutionary Front*

The SRF is comprised of groups from across Sudan's "New South", including: the Sudan Liberation Army – Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW), Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM), JEM, the SPLM/A-N and other smaller, unarmed groups.<sup>12</sup> Though the SRF coordinates in the field and at the negotiating table, military and political divisions persist.<sup>13</sup> Between and within Darfur movements, there has always been a debate over the benefits of fighting in Darfur (protecting their communities, but possibly attracting government attacks) or taking the fight closer to the capital.

In line with its more national approach, JEM was the first to fight and recruit in South Kordofan and still follows this strategy; almost all its troops moved to South Kordofan in early 2013, then many continued into South Sudan. Chief of Staff Bakhit Abdelkarim ("Dabajo") left JEM in August 2012, feeling that its forces in South Kordofan were no longer under his authority, and joined Mohammed Bashar, who had been sacked in 2011 and was chosen as the political leader of the new splinter group.<sup>14</sup> There are also divisions within JEM about its role in South Sudan's war.<sup>15</sup>

Except for a few raids, SLA factions continue to concentrate in Darfur.<sup>16</sup> SPLM-N leaders are divided between those genuinely attached to a national agenda and those whose priority remains local politics.<sup>17</sup> Competition between SRF components, in-

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<sup>12</sup> These smaller groups include the Nasreldin al-Hadi al-Mahdi and Al Tom Hajo, as well as the Untied People's Front for Liberation and Justice (UPFLJ), a coalition of seventeen eastern Sudanese groups. McCutchen, "The Sudan Revolutionary Front", op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> SLA-AW leader Abdelwahid Mohammed Ahmed Nur demands better security before joining a peace process. Partly as a result, its most active political and military leaders, including ex-West Darfur governor Abulgasim Imam, have left. Abulgasim, still symbolically important in Darfur, announced a Sudan Liberation Movement-Second Revolution (SLM-SR). The SRF appears divided over how to retain him. Crisis Group interviews, Abulgasim Imam, other SLA-AW dissidents, April 2014. Darfur rebels did not welcome an agreement between the SPLM-N and a representative of Musa Hilal, a Darfur Arab militia leader, though they also had discreet links with him. "Memorandum of Understanding", SPLM-N and Awakening Revolutionary Council (ARC), 10 July 2014; Crisis Group interviews, Darfur rebel leaders, March 2014. The SRF groups also use different tactics. Darfur rebels are known for raids with "technicals", pick-up cars with mounted heavy weapons. SPLM-N relies on more conventional weapons and tactics. "SPLM-N fights on foot, from mountain to mountain", a JEM leader said. "We're a mobile force and need an open area. Speed is one of our weapons, together with dust and extensive shooting .... We're trying to change SPLM-N, but it's not progressing much". Crisis Group interview, March 2014. Reportedly Abdelaziz al-Hilu rejected initial raid plans in May 2013 as too risky. Crisis Group interviews, Darfur rebels, March 2014, Gramizzi, Tubiana, "New war, old enemies", op. cit., p. 51; McCutchen, "The Sudan Revolutionary Front", op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (III)*, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

<sup>15</sup> Crisis Group interviews, regional and Western diplomats, Addis Ababa, December 2014.

<sup>16</sup> Abdelwahid is said to have been reluctant to engage troops in the joint force in Kordofan. Crisis Group email, SLA-AW officer, October 2014.

<sup>17</sup> SPLM-N leaders who won government posts through piecemeal power-sharing deals, such as the SRF chairman and ex-Blue Nile Governor Malik Agar, are convinced the centre blocked their local reform efforts. Other leaders view the national agenda as a bargaining chip. Their uncertain commitment to national unity raises fears, particularly in the centre, about secession. Conversely, SPLM-N leaders such as Abdelaziz are criticised by their constituencies, including Nuba dissidents, for being too committed to a national agenda. Some Blue Nile leaders also questioned the 2011 return to war in their state, saying Malik Agar, Sudan's only elected SPLM-N governor, was wrong to join Abdelaziz. Crisis Group interviews, SRF leaders, March 2014.

cluding differences over the peace process agenda and articulation of local and national grievances, undermines their unity of purpose.<sup>18</sup>

Access to South Sudan has always been crucial for the SRF, but relations with the national and local governments, as well as army officials in states bordering Sudan's conflict areas, have created internal tensions for it. With strong ties from when the SPLM/A was a single movement in one Sudan, the SPLM-N has received cars, fuel and ammunition from Juba, reportedly to be shared with the Darfur rebels, though JEM claims the SPLM-N took "up to 70 per cent".<sup>19</sup> The Darfur rebels also reportedly received aid and have long had bases in the South's Unity, Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal states. Before South Sudan's independence and the formation of the SRF, Sudan accused Juba of giving critical support to its rebels.<sup>20</sup>

Some SPLA commanders acknowledge this support, particularly from Bentiu. Links with Juba often relied on government and army "friends" but were tolerated at the highest levels.<sup>21</sup> Because Nuba and Blue Nile troops were crucial to the SPLA during the civil war, some saw helping the SPLM-N as a "moral obligation", a continuation of John Garang's goal of a united "New Sudan", or a means by which to counter Sudanese support to South Sudanese insurgents. Others had more local or opportunistic motivations.<sup>22</sup> Dinka politicians from the disputed Abyei enclave, influential in Juba until mid-2013, wanted to use the SRF to pressure Khartoum. Governors and military commanders, especially from states contesting boundaries with Sudan, followed a similar policy – notably former Unity Governor Taban Deng

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<sup>18</sup> The differences in approach include the following: from the start of the Darfur war, JEM claimed to be a national movement; the SLA-MM became increasingly national after a failed experience in government under the Darfur Peace Agreement (2006-2010); the SLA-AW is still divided; Abdelaziz and other SPLM-N leaders face "tribalism" charges, including privileging Nuba and non-Arab Blue Nile tribes over members from Darfur or South Kordofan Arab tribes; young cadres dislike SPLM-N's "pyramidal" structure, and some key politicians feel sidelined by the military. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-N members including Misseriya, Juba, March-April 2014. JEM capitalised on this dissatisfaction to recruit in Arab and Nuba communities in South Kordofan, including ex-SPLM and SPLM-N members. SPLM-N accuses JEM of buying Nuba recruits, including children, in South Kordofan and Yida refugee camp, and abusing women. JEM blames SPLM-N for the abuses but the UN backs claims against JEM in Yida. Crisis Group interviews, Nuba refugees, international observers, Yida, April 2014, UNMISS officer, Juba, April 2014, SPLA officer, Juba, April 2014, email, international observer, September 2014. The differences seem to have led Abdelaziz to order JEM out of the Nuba Mountains to the southern lowlands, where it was key in protecting a corridor to South Sudan.

<sup>19</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO (former 4th Division) General Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; JEM member, May 2014.

<sup>20</sup> McCutchen, "The Sudan Revolutionary Front", op. cit., p. 41. Crisis Group interviews, international observer, Juba, April 2014; and Reports, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (I)*, pp. 44-45, and *(II)*, pp. 34-37, both op. cit.; Gramizzi, Tubiana, "New war, old enemies", op. cit., pp. 46-49; Gramizzi, "At an Impasse: The Conflict in Blue Nile", Small Arms Survey Working Paper no. 31, December 2013, pp. 61-66.

<sup>21</sup> In a 2011 meeting, U.S. President Barack Obama presented evidence to President Salva Kiir of South Sudan's support to Sudanese rebels, which Kiir denied. "U.S. was slow to lose patience as South Sudan unravelled", Reuters, 14 January 2014.

<sup>22</sup> According to an officer in Bentiu, fuel trucks used to drive to just north of the border. Reportedly, cars and ammunition were also provided, the latter flown to airstrips in Pariang and Yida refugee camp. Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014, other SPLA and ex-SPLA officers, May 2014. Garang led the SPLM and died in an air crash following the CPA's signing.

and, even more so, former Northern Bahr el Ghazal Governor Paul Malong (currently SPLA chief of the general staff).<sup>23</sup>

The September 2012 cooperation agreement that followed that year's oil shut-down by Juba and border war ushered in the beginning of a tentative process of repairing relations. In the agreement, the parties re-committed to a 20km-wide "safe demilitarised border zone" (SDBZ) to be monitored by a "joint border verification and monitoring mission" (JBVMM), which the UN's Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) is mandated to support.<sup>24</sup> Khartoum insisted SRF bases in South Sudan-controlled SDBZ areas had to be dismantled, while Juba accused Khartoum of hosting South Sudanese groups fighting it in SDBZ areas it controlled. Severing the Juba-SRF links became Khartoum's main demand in the AU-mediated North-South talks and was the primary reason the agreement was not implemented.<sup>25</sup> Even as relations began to improve, the parties continued to disagree on matters such as the SDBZ "centre line" and Juba's role in the April 2013 SRF offensive. The JBVMM was suspended in November 2013, when Juba withdrew. Though it restarted in May 2014, there has been little monitoring.<sup>26</sup>

In July 2013, President Kiir sacked Vice President Machar, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum and all national ministers, including many known to take a hard-line against Sudan. The new leadership, including former members of Sudan's ruling National Congress Party, was seen as more amenable to negotiating with Sudan. Khartoum welcomed the reshuffle, and after a Sudanese delegation returned from Juba in August convinced South Sudan would sever its SRF links, it dropped its threat to halt oil shipments.<sup>27</sup> Yet, support continued.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Joshua Craze, "Dividing lines: Grazing and conflict along the Sudan– South Sudan border", Small Arms Survey Working Paper no. 30, July 2013, pp. 43-71.

<sup>24</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2104, 29 May 2013.

<sup>25</sup> "The Cooperation Agreement between The Republic of the Sudan and The Republic of South Sudan", Addis Ababa, 27 September 2012.

<sup>26</sup> In January 2012, reacting to Sudan seizing its oil amid a transit fees dispute, Juba stopped oil production for fifteen months, arguably harming its own economy more than Khartoum's; South Sudan experienced a huge budget deficit (98 per cent of government revenue is from oil) and 80 per cent inflation. "The Safe Demilitarized Border Zone", Small Arms Survey, 24 September 2014; "Juba refusing to implement buffer zone, says Sudan defence minister", *Sudan Tribune*, 5 November 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Sudanese officials including members of the negotiating team with South Sudan, Khartoum, August 2013. "South Sudan: The state cracks", *Africa Confidential*, 10 January 2014, pp. 7-8.

<sup>28</sup> During this period, there was no move to close SRF rear bases in South Sudan.

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### III. Internal Nuer Conflict in Unity State

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#### A. *Historic Disunity*

South Sudan's Unity state has long been a crossroads between the halves of historic Sudan, with populations that frequently sided with Khartoum against the SPLM/A. There is a Nuer majority and a Dinka minority (mostly in Pariang and Abiemnhom counties).<sup>29</sup> The SPLM/A, the Khartoum government and a shifting array of Nuer armed groups and militias that largely fought alongside the government contested Unity and its oil fields during the last decades of Sudan's second civil war.<sup>30</sup> Powerful Nuer leaders such as Riek Machar, Paulino Matiep, Taban Deng, Peter Gatdet, Joseph and Bapiny Monytuiel and Matthew Puljang established alliances and battled one another – politically and militarily – while also allying and fighting with the government and the SPLA in what were often called the “Nuer civil wars”.<sup>31</sup>

Taban and then Machar rejoined the SPLM/A in 2001-2002, while Matiep and most Bul Nuer leaders stayed with Khartoum.<sup>32</sup> Following the CPA, Matiep and Gatdet joined the SPLA after negotiating the Juba Declaration with Kiir, the former becoming its deputy commander in chief.<sup>33</sup> Bapiny Monytuiel remained a brigadier

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<sup>29</sup> Crisis Group Africa Report N°179, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, 17 October 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Sudan's first civil war lasted from 1955 to 1972 and ended with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement. The Second Sudanese Civil War began in 1983 and ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005.

<sup>31</sup> For a chart identifying leaders and their communities, see Appendix C below. During this period, Khartoum appointed Joseph Monytuiel Wejang (2003-2004) and Taban Deng Gai (1997-2000) governors of Unity state, while Riek Machar, Paulino Matiep, Peter Gatdet and Bapiny Monytuiel led armed groups that were sometimes allied, sometimes at war with one another. Machar, both a political and military figure, was president of the Southern States Coordinating Council and commander in chief of the South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF, a major Khartoum-allied grouping) after the 1997 Khartoum Peace Agreement. Matiep, the most prominent Bul Nuer commander during the last war, fought in the “Anyanya II”, a southern rebel movement, and later worked closely with Khartoum. In 1997 he joined Machar to form the SSDF and often fought the SPLA. When Machar backed Taban rather than Matiep's candidate for governor of Unity in 1997, he split with Machar. Following this Machar's commander, Tito Biel Chuol, attacked Matiep, and the population of Mayom was displaced to Bahr el Ghazal. In retaliation, Matiep attacked Leer, Machar's hometown, in 1998. Gatdet, originally a Matiep deputy, split from him in 1999. At different times Gatdet fought Matiep, the SPLA and Khartoum. Crisis Group interviews, politicians including Health Minister Riek Gai and Unity state Deputy Governor Mabek Lang, Juba, Bentiu, March-April 2014; Crisis Group Report, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, op. cit.; “Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights”, Human Rights Watch (2003), pp. 315-322.

<sup>32</sup> Taban rejoined the SPLA as a lieutenant general and the SPLM as a politburo member. Others, like Bapiny Monytuiel, joined the SPLA when Machar rejoined. Divisions among Bul Nuer leaders only partly correspond to sectional divisions. The Monytuiel family and Gatdet belong to different Kwech Bul sub-sections. Gatdet married the sister of Joseph and Bapiny Monytuiel, sons of ex-Bul Paramount Chief Monytuiel Wijam. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO officers, April-May 2014; Juba government official, Juba, April 2014; Bapiny Monytuiel, Juba, April 2014; Bul Nuer intellectual, Nairobi, June 2014; Richard Rands, “In Need of Review: SPLA Transformation in 2006–10 and Beyond”, Small Arms Survey Working Paper no. 23, 2010, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup> The 2006 Juba Declaration opened the door to incorporate other southern armed groups into the SPLA. The CPA had made these illegal, and the Declaration sought to reduce South-South conflict and stabilise the area prior to elections and the referendum. Matiep kept his SPLA position until his 2012 death. The deputy commander in chief post was created for him (extra-constitutionally) and no longer exists. The lack of succession plans for ex-SSDF components or the Bul Nuer left the fore-

general in Sudan's army, while most Bul Nuer forces integrated into the SPLA.<sup>34</sup> Taban broke with Machar, allied with Kiir and was appointed governor of Unity in 2005. As his popularity diminished, he lost the Unity state SPLM chairmanship in 2008 to Dr Joseph Monytuiel, a Machar ally.<sup>35</sup> Despite a practice that the state chairman should also be governor, Taban's alliances in Juba allowed him to become the SPLM's candidate for that office in 2010. Machar's wife, Angelina Teny, challenged him as an independent, but Taban was declared winner of an election marred by irregularities and intimidation.<sup>36</sup> However, he continued to have difficulties with influential Bul Nuer commanders, including Bapiny.

The current war has seen a new set of shifting alliances. Taban is a key member of the opposition, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – in Opposition (SPLM-IO), and heads its delegation to the peace talks, representing Machar, his recent enemy. Its military leadership is primarily Nuer, including Gatdet who leads it in Unity. The Bul Nuer are divided but at the top of both government and opposition structures in the state: Governor Monytuiel and brother Bapiny remained loyal to Juba; others joined Gatdet and the rebellion.

## B. *Bul Nuer Rising*

Despite the Juba Declaration, some Khartoum-aligned Nuer commanders in Unity did not join the national government.<sup>37</sup> A series of pre-independence efforts to bring in Bapiny and other Bul Nuer leaders failed amid allegations of sabotage.<sup>38</sup> In the wake of the 2010 elections and anti-Juba violence, much of the state's population was aggrieved; many, particularly among the Bul Nuer, believed force was the only language Taban and Juba would understand.

With Khartoum's support, Bul and other Nuer groups from Unity formed the umbrella South Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SSLM/A).<sup>39</sup> They included commanders such as Gatluak Gai, James Gai Yoach and Carlo Kuol.<sup>40</sup> Gatdet announced

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es and community in disarray and was an underlying factor in the outbreak of war in December 2013. Crisis Group Report, *South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name*, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Mabek Lang, Bentiu, April 2014; Bapiny Monytuiel, Juba, April 2014; Joseph Manyat, Bentiu, May 2014; Nuer civilians and intellectuals, Bentiu, Juba, Nairobi, April-June 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Taban also alienated others, such as the powerful Pariang county commissioner, Mabek Lang, whom he relieved in November 2012. Crisis Group interview, Mabek Lang, Bentiu, April 2014; Crisis Group Report, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, op. cit., pp. 4-7.

<sup>36</sup> For more on the controversial nomination process and SPLM divisions in Unity, see Crisis Group Report, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, op. cit., pp. 4-8.

<sup>37</sup> This includes groups under the command of Bapiny, Matthew Puljang, James Gai Yuach, Kol Chara Nyang and Gatluak Gai. "Armed Insurgencies in Greater Upper Nile", Small Arms Survey Issue Brief no. 18, 2011, pp. 4-5.

<sup>38</sup> Bul Nuer combatants believe Taban sabotaged peace with Juba lest it strengthen Joseph Monytuiel. Crisis Group interviews, Mabek Lang, Bentiu, April 2014; Bapiny Monytuiel, Juba, April 2014; SSLM/A Brigadier General Joseph Manyat, Bentiu, May 2014; "South Sudan: overshadowed conflict. Arms supplies fuel violations in Mayom county, Unity state", Amnesty International, June 2012; "Pendulum swings: The rise and fall of insurgent militias in South Sudan", Small Arms Survey Issue Brief no. 22, 2013, pp. 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, op. cit., p. 11-12.

<sup>40</sup> As well as the now-dead Kolchara Nyang (reportedly killed in Sudan by Puljang). Non-Bul Nuer like Carlo Kuol and Gatluak Gai also joined the SSLM/A. Crisis Group interviews, Bapiny Mony-

his defection from the SPLA and leadership of the SSLM/A in April 2011.<sup>41</sup> The movement conducted successful attacks, but by August, Gatdet accepted a government amnesty, angering commanders who stayed behind, many of whom are now fighting his SPLA-IO on the side of the government.<sup>42</sup> Some of these groups, including those operating in the Hejlij oilfields and neighbouring Nyama (South Kordofan), fought beside Sudan's army in 2012 when the SPLA and SRF briefly seized Hejlij. During this period, violence against civilians was common, particularly in Mayom, and turned many against Taban, the SPLA and the government in Juba.<sup>43</sup>

In August 2013, with improving Sudan-South Sudan relations, Bapiny, Puljang and other militia leaders accepted Juba's amnesty offer. In November 2013, Bapiny became a lieutenant general; Puljang and Carlo Kuol were appointed as major generals and five other SSLA officers as brigadier-generals.<sup>44</sup> When war broke out Bapiny, Puljang and Joseph stayed with the government, while Gatdet and others, including Kuol and Gai Yoach, defected. A key consequence of the 2013 thaw in bilateral ties and then the war is that Bul Nuer with long histories of alliance with Khartoum and little affinity for the SPLM/A now have senior positions in Unity in both the government and its armed opposition. The divisions within the Bul Nuer have also meant that Unity, a majority Nuer state that should have been an opposition stronghold, is divided between government and opposition, a major weakness for the SPLA-IO.

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tuiel, Juba, April 2014; Joseph Manyat, Bentiu, May 2014; Carlo Kuol, Guit county, June 2014; Nuer intellectuals, Juba and Nairobi, April-June 2014.

<sup>41</sup> He did this in a declaration that listed as reasons for the SSLA rebellion corruption, poor governance, SPLA mismanagement, bias in its promotions and exclusionary political practices, including reneging on 2010 South-South Dialogue agreements. "The Mayom Declaration", South Sudan Liberation Army, 4 April 2011 (copy on file). Gatdet's personal reasons had to do with a belief he and other ex-SSDF were denied deserved senior SPLA commands. His rivalry with Taban and failure of the then-unwell Matiep to support him were contributing factors.

<sup>42</sup> This includes Bapiny, Puljang and Tut Gatluak, now a Kiir adviser. Gatluak Gai, who briefly led the SSLM/A after Gatdet, was killed during talks with the SPLA by a subordinate; his followers blame Juba. The SPLA addressed Gatdet's personal grievances but not those of other disaffected commanders and their communities. Crisis Group Report, *Compounding Instability in Unity State*, op. cit., pp. 12-16. For Gatdet's failed integration in 2013, see Crisis Group Report, *South Sudan's Jonglei State*, op. cit.; "No Peace Talks Are Taking Place Between SSLM/A and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan", Military High Command of South Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SSLM/A), general headquarters, Mayom, 4 August 2011 (copy on file with Crisis Group); and "Field Dispatch: The Challenge of Tackling Terrorism in South Sudan", Enough, 22 August 2011.

<sup>43</sup> Most armed opposition groups in South Sudan recruit and operate among communities with grievances against their state and national governments. Crisis Group Report, *South Sudan's Jonglei State*, op. cit.; "South Sudan: overshadowed conflict", Amnesty International, op. cit.

<sup>44</sup> Their soldiers' integration has been slower and more controversial. Five months into the war, Puljang's men finally began to receive monthly "incentives" they say are less than regular SPLA salaries; Bapiny says the pay should be backdated to when they accepted amnesty in 2013. In December 2014, Puljang's men had a minor skirmish in Mayom with SPLA regulars over integration and salaries. They also complain that Dinka get heavy weapons, leaving them with small arms. In March, Puljang was made state operations commander, and in June Major General Tahib Gatluak was appointed 4th Division commander. The ex-SSLA remains relatively autonomous from the SPLA, and Puljang and others have little control over regular SPLA. Crisis Group interviews, SPLA officers, Bentiu, Juba, April-May 2014; government officials, Bentiu, April 2014; Bapiny Monytuiel, Juba, April, June 2014.

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## IV. Merging Conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan

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### A. *South Sudan's Civil War in Unity*

After fighting erupted in Juba in December 2013, Dinka troops systematically killed many Nuer residents of the capital. This triggered Dinka-Nuer animosity across the country; fighting erupted in Unity state between Nuer and Dinka oil workers and then spread throughout the state.<sup>45</sup>

On 18 December, Governor Monytuiel returned from Juba and briefed officials, telling them many Nuer were killed there, including his bodyguards, but urging them not to take revenge. The 4th Division commander, Major General James Koang, sent a similar message and allowed Dinka troops, including senior officers such as Brigadier General Michael Major Alier, to transit to Dinka areas or take refuge in the UN base (UNMISS).<sup>46</sup> That evening and for two days, Nuer soldiers and youths looted and burnt shops in Rubkona (Bentiu's twin town) and Dinka-Nuer fighting continued in the oilfields.<sup>47</sup> Fighting erupted in the Rubkona garrison on 19-20 December. The next day Koang defected with his mostly Nuer senior staff and named himself military governor.<sup>48</sup>

Conflict quickly spread northward. On the Sudan (South Kordofan) border, the Nuer commander in Jaw, Brigadier General Steven Bol, joined SPLM-IO; his Nuer deputy, Peter Badeng, and most of the unit's Dinka soldiers stayed with the government. Bol briefly overran government forces in Panyang, then joined Koang in Bentiu. At the same time, Dinka soldiers reportedly killed some 200 of their Nuer former comrades in Pariang and Jaw. The bloodshed spread to Yida and Ajuong

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<sup>45</sup> Much of Unity state's oil production – c. 100,000 barrels a day, 29 per cent of Juba's total before independence – has stopped. Violence in Unity began on 18 December, as Nuer oil workers killed Dinka colleagues in retaliation for the Juba massacre. Some Nuer reportedly tried to protect Dinka. Dinka SPLA sent to restore order reportedly killed some 30 Nuer local staff and police. Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; SPLM-IO members, May-June 2014; government official, Bentiu, April 2014; UNMISS officer, Bentiu, April 2014; email, oil expert, July 2014. "Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report", UNMISS, 8 May 2014, pp. 42-44; "South Sudan's New War: Abuses by Government and Opposition Forces", Human Rights Watch, August 2014, p. 58.

<sup>46</sup> On 18 December, about twenty Dinka officials asked Koang's help evacuating them, their soldiers and families. Afterward, they were reportedly stopped in Mayom, on 21 December, by Nuer defectors who killed some Dinka soldiers. The convoy went on to Abiemnhom, where Dinka troops killed Nuer drivers and assistants. In Leer, where most soldiers were Nuer and joined the opposition, Dinka and Shilluk fighters were allowed to flee to the government. Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; other SPLM-IO members, May-June 2014; government and SPLA officials including Mabek Lang; UNMISS officers, Juba, Bentiu, April-May 2014.

<sup>47</sup> There were many foreign traders in the market. Armed Nuer reportedly took their money, killed some Sudanese men and raped some foreign women. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO members, May-June 2014; Darfur witness, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Juba, Bentiu, May 2014; international observers, Juba, Bentiu, March-April 2014; Mabek Lang, Bentiu, April 2014; JEM leaders May-June 2014.

<sup>48</sup> The UN said that, 17-21 December, "incidents had taken place within eleven other SPLA barracks across the State". Killings of Dinka by Nuer to avenge the Juba massacre reportedly were first. "Conflict in South Sudan", op. cit., pp. 41-42; "South Sudan's New War", op. cit., p. 58. A commander said the decision to defect was taken so as "not to betray our community" after the Juba massacre. Crisis Group interview, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014. A Dinka government official acknowledged: "Without the killings of the Nuer in Juba, Riek Machar would not have got [support] here in Bentiu. It was a reaction to Juba". Crisis Group interview, Bentiu, April 2014; Crisis Group Report, *South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name*, op. cit., p. 24.



Thok refugee camps, where Dinka SPLA executed a dozen Nuer soldiers and civilians, including a humanitarian, leaving bodies outside the camp as a warning sign.<sup>49</sup>

Most SPLA forces in Pariang defected and briefly took control of Tor Abyod. As government forces, with SRF assistance, began to reassert control over the north of the state, fighting spread to the west. Opposition forces attacked government-allied Bul Nuer units led by Bapiny and Puljang east of Mayom, but the government recaptured that town and Panakuach in early January.<sup>50</sup> Then, with more SRF support, they retook Bentiu-Rubkona and pursued the SPLA-IO south, retaking Leer, Machar's hometown, on 1 February, in violation of the first cessation of hostilities agreement, signed the previous week in Addis Ababa.<sup>51</sup> The campaign was characterised by atrocities; according to a survivor, "those [civilians] who stayed were all killed".<sup>52</sup>

With the government holding Leer and smaller towns of southern Unity, many SPLA-IO soldiers scattered. Government and SRF forces shelled, burned houses and looted areas where civilians were gathered.<sup>53</sup> During some attacks SPLA-IO were together with civilians. Civilians were arrested and some beaten or tortured to reveal SPLM-IO locations; those deemed rebels were executed. Women were raped both in and outside government-controlled towns. They were systematically raped as they crossed frontlines seeking food, sometimes by fighters from their own community. A number died after these attacks; some committed suicide, while others reportedly chose to leave rather than face the shame.<sup>54</sup> According to witnesses, abuses were perpetrated by all armed groups: Dinka militias, regular SPLA soldiers, Bul Nuer troops led by Matthew Puljang and Sudanese rebels, in particular JEM.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; SPLM-IO member, May 2014; SPLA officers, Bentiu, Yida, April 2014; Nuba refugees, Yida, April 2014; JEM leaders, March, May 2014; UNMISS officer, Juba, May 2014; international observers, Juba, Yida, March-April 2014. "South Kordofan situation report", *Nuba Reports*, November-December 2013, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLA General Gabriel Jok Riak (first sector commander), Juba, May 2014; government officials, SPLA officers, including Rubkona Commissioner Steven Salam, Bentiu, April-May 2014; Carlo Kuol, Guit county, June 2014; Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014.

<sup>51</sup> Crisis Group interviews, government officials, Bentiu, April-May 2014. The SPLM-IO and Nuer civilians withdrew 8-10 January. Most went south, but some troops reportedly went toward the Sudan border, and others took refuge with UNMISS as further looting and destruction occurred. Crisis Group interviews, Nuer displaced, Bentiu, May 2014; Mabek Lang, Bentiu, April 2014; Gabriel Jok Riak, Juba, May 2014; UNMISS officer, Bentiu, April 2014. "Satellites Show Scorched Earth in South Sudan's Unity State", *Satellite Sentinel Project*, 24 January 2014.

<sup>52</sup> Government forces also burned many houses and looted livestock and food. According to assessments, a third of Leer's houses were destroyed. Crisis Group observations, interviews, Nuer, Dinka witnesses, Leer, Bentiu, May-June 2014; SPLM-IO humanitarian officer, Leer, June 2014; international observer, Juba, May 2014; "South Sudan: Satellites Show Homes Aflame in Opposition Leader's Hometown", *Satellite Sentinel Project*, 4 February 2014; "Timeline of Recent Intra-Southern Conflict", *Small Arms Survey*, updated 27 June 2014, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> Civilians often hid in the Nile or swamps for days and some children drowned.

<sup>54</sup> According to an opposition parliamentarian, violence against women was the particular task of a Dinka paramilitary group ("Lil John"). Leer's walls are covered with "Lil John" – shorthand, he said, for "Leave the women to the Dinka" – and "PK" (President Kiir's initials) graffiti. Crisis Group interviews, Leer, June 2014; Dinka woman, Leer, June 2014; SPLM-IO administrators, Leer, Koch, June 2014. Abuses also included pressure to become a "soldier's wife" in exchange for food. Dinka married to Nuer were pressured to divorce and remarry Dinka soldiers. Crisis Group interviews, Dinka woman married to a Nuer, Leer, June 2014; Nuer civilians, Leer, Bentiu, May-June 2014; SPLM-IO humanitarian officers, other authorities, Leer, Koch, May-June 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Crisis Group interviews, international observers, Juba, April 2014; Leer, Bentiu, May-June 2014.

An acute food crisis developed, and by May, Médecins Sans Frontières was treating 327 malnourished children a week in Leer, compared to 40 before the war.<sup>56</sup> A reduction in fighting, a substantial humanitarian operation and trade with neighbouring Lakes state have since improved food security, but a return to fighting and displacement this dry season means civilians remain at high risk.<sup>57</sup>

Abuses were said to provoke a clash between Bul Nuer and Dinka SPLA; others were reported when the SPLA tried to disarm suspected pro-SPLA-IO Bul Nuer civilians in Wangkai.<sup>58</sup> Mayom county remains contested by Bul Nuer factions, particularly Bapiny's and Puljang's Juba-allied militia (for a time the main government force in the state), and Gatdet's opposition troops. Beyond Leer, towns such as Wangkai, Mankien, Mirmir, Guit, Koch and Nyal saw heavy fighting, often lasting for days, that largely destroyed them and displaced civilians. As much combat was far from urban areas, the scale of destruction in rural Unity remains poorly understood.

On 15 April, the bulk of Koang's SPLA-IO forces, attacking from the Sudanese border region, quickly retook Rubkona and Bentiu. At the time, there were few SPLA regulars in Bentiu, whose defence was left to the partially-integrated Bul Nuer forces of Bapiny and Puljang.<sup>59</sup> The attackers may have obtained support from Misseriya Arabs who were possibly motivated by a looting opportunity, as opposed to acting on

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<sup>56</sup> "Child malnutrition rates skyrocket in South Sudan", Médecins Sans Frontières, 14 July 2014.

<sup>57</sup> An SPLA officer said of the trade between rebel-held southern Unity and government-held Lakes, it is "a local ceasefire agreement that we had to respect, so we decided not to attack the rebels in Mayendit and Panyijar". Crisis Group interview, Gabriel Jok Riak, Juba, May 2014; "Cross-border trade resumes between Lakes and Unity states", *Sudan Tribune*, 6 November 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Puljang complained about the JEM presence (the SSLA, when with Khartoum, fought JEM in South Kordofan in 2012). Crisis Group interviews, UNMISS officer, Bentiu, April 2014; SSLA officer, Juba, April 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Regular forces in Bentiu were not reinforced and lacked ammunition. A supply plane was delayed for three days by weather. When the attack took place, new vehicles for Puljang's forces were on the road to Bentiu. Crisis Group interviews, Mabek Lang, Bentiu, Juba, April 2014; Joseph Manyat, Bentiu, May 2014; Bapiny Monytuiel, Juba, April 2014; SPLA officers, Juba, April-May 2014; JEM leader, May 2014. There are rumours that SPLA Dinka commanders did not trust the Bul Nuer to fight other Nuer, but opposition Nuer commanders and civilians said the Bul Nuer fought hard and did not hesitate to kill Nuer civilians. Crisis Group interviews, Carlo Kuol, Guit county, June 2014; Peter Tap Gatdet (who took part in the April 2014 attack on Bentiu), Rier, June 2014; Mabek Lang, Juba, April 2014; Bul Nuer politician, Juba, May 2014.

behalf of Khartoum.<sup>60</sup> The SPLA's 3rd Division advanced from the west to retake Mayom and, assisted by Darfur rebels and Puljang's men, re-entered Bentiu on 4 May.<sup>61</sup>

The SPLM-IO restructured its command in the state, replacing its initial leaders – defecting officers from the 4th Division who were in Unity when war broke out – with genuinely local commanders. Gatdet was appointed military governor in April 2014. Opposition-held counties were put under the command of officers from their predominant Nuer section, including Carlo Kuol for Guit, Peter Tap Gatdet for Koch and James Tut for Leer.<sup>62</sup> A December 2014 consultative meeting in Pagak resolved that the movement should separate its political and military structures, meaning Unity should also have a civilian opposition governor.<sup>63</sup> Since May 2014, the government has kept control of Bentiu and Rubkona in spite of opposition offensives that reached the towns in August and October 2014.<sup>64</sup> Due to improved defences, power struggles within the opposition and limited capacity to take and hold key towns, Gatdet has only been able to harass the government forces and keep them on the defensive.<sup>65</sup>

## B. *Sudanese Rebels' Fighting in South Sudan's War*

### 1. Rebels against rebels

The SRF was unprepared for war in South Sudan, its troops concentrated north of the border to resist a Khartoum offensive, though some contingents, particularly SPLM-N and JEM, were in rear bases in South Sudan, including in Unity. These were mostly near SPLA bases, where they had close, generally friendly contact with South Sudanese soldiers from all communities. The shifting political alliances of 2013 meant

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<sup>60</sup> Witnesses estimate 200-300 men may have been riding motorbikes. Their leaders were reported to be *agid* (war chief) Hamdein Issa Ahmad Nur and Abderrahman Bakr. Hamdein and his troops are said to belong to the Awlad Umrans clan of the Ajyara section, with old links to the Bul and Lek Nuer. They are active cross-border traders, and during the second Sudanese civil war brought goods to the *suq al-salam* (clandestine peace market) of Jezira Baytong, near Bentiu, crucial for Nuer rebels, notably Paulino Matiep's faction. Several mosque massacre survivors described how an Arab military chief, who said he was Hamdein, asked Misseriya survivors to come out – some ten men did. Bul Nuer divisions weaken Awlad Umrans-SPLM-IO links. SRF Misseriya leaders asked Hamdein to cut ties with the SPLM-IO. Crisis Group interviews, SRF Misseriya officers, April-May 2014; SPLA officers, Bentiu, Juba, April-May 2014; Darfurians and Nuer witnesses, Bentiu, Juba, May-June 2014; Misseriya politician, May 2014; UNMISS official, Juba, April 2014; Conflict Armament Research, "Analysis of ammunition present at Bentiu mosque and associated military materiel in the Bentiu-Rubkhona area", confidential report, 30 June 2014, pp. 3, 6, 28; "Report of the [UN] Secretary-General on South Sudan", 25 July 2014, pp. 1, 4. "Rebels were aided by foreign mercenaries in Unity state capital, says South Sudan army", *op. cit.*

<sup>61</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLA officers, Juba, Bentiu, May 2014; Carlo Kuol, Guit county, June 2014. Fighting continued until 11 May, despite agreement in Addis Ababa for a "month of tranquillity", 7 May-7 June and a 9 May cessation of hostilities recommitment as the government attacked into northern Jonglei. "Report of the Secretary-General", 25 July 2014, *op. cit.*

<sup>62</sup> Gatdet replaced James Koang (Jikany from Upper Nile). Carlo Kuol became his deputy, replacing Brigadier General Wang Chok (Lou Nuer from Akobo). Michael Makal (Bul Nuer), former 4th Division operations commander, remains SPLA-IO head of operations in Unity. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO generals Carlo Kuol, Guit county, June 2014; Peter Tap Gatdet, Rier, June 2014; James Tut, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; government politicians, officers, Juba, Bentiu, April-May 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLA-IO officials, Addis Ababa, December 2014.

<sup>64</sup> "IGAD mediators condemn violence in South Sudan's Unity State; call on opposition forces to immediately cease hostilities", IGAD press statement, 29 October 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO members, civilians, November, December 2014.

SRF friends and enemies, old and new, ended up on both sides of the war. The July cabinet changes in Juba replaced a number of politicians from Abyei and other SPLM leaders (some of whom became the “SPLM Detainees”)<sup>66</sup> known for close ties and common interests with SRF leaders with figures historically close to Khartoum. At the same time, other SRF allies, like current SPLA Chief of General Staff Paul Malong, have become increasingly powerful. Some in the SPLM-IO, such as Taban Deng, were also supporters of the SRF.

Because the SPLM Detainees have no military strength, the SRF prioritised its relationship with Juba to ensure it kept rear bases and other support. It also worried Machar would seek help from Khartoum, as he did in the 1990s. An officer said, “in order to get Juba’s support, [SRF] had no way to avoid getting involved in this conflict”.<sup>67</sup> There are reports that between January and March 2014, arms and ammunition for both SPLA and SRF were airlifted to Yida, and SRF soldiers wounded in South Kordofan were flown to Juba. JEM’s critical role in the war in Unity strengthened its direct ties with Juba; instead of going through the SPLM-N, some of its elements now demanded “direct support”.<sup>68</sup> SRF involvement (alongside Uganda) has been a major stumbling block in the IGAD negotiations, and the government’s and SPLM/A-IO’s first cessation of hostilities agreement called, unsuccessfully, for its redeployment or progressive withdrawal.<sup>69</sup>

That the SRF and SPLM-IO fight each other instead of allying against both governments surprised many, who underestimated the historic need of opposition groups in both countries for outside help to maintain troops.<sup>70</sup> Small incidents, in which the victims were largely civilians (Nuer communities presumed to support the SPLM-IO and Sudanese refugees and diaspora considered pro-SRF), erupted in December 2013. In Jaw, the SRF feared equipment from the fractured SPLA brigade would reach South Sudanese rebels who might coordinate with Sudan’s army in South Kordofan. Suspicions were aggravated on both sides when Jaw brigade defectors killed SPLM-N soldiers, perhaps inadvertently, in an attack on Panyang, and SPLA forces killed Nuer in Yida refugee camp, where SPLM-N is influential.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The SPLM Detainees, so called because of their confinement as the war exploded, included the suspended SPLM secretary general, Pagan Amum Okech, and several former ministers, Oyay Deng Ajak (investment and regional cooperation as well as former SPLA chief of general staff); Gier Choung Aloung (internal affairs); Majak D’Agoot (deputy defence); John Luk Jok (justice); Cirino Hiteng (culture); Deng Alor Koul (foreign affairs); Madut Biar (telecommunications); and Kosti Manibe (finance); as well as the former ambassador to the U.S., Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, and Lakes state Governor Chol Tong Mayay. For more about the SPLM Detainees see Annex D below.

<sup>67</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO official, May 2014; SPLM-N officer, May 2014.

<sup>68</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JEM member, June 2014; SPLM-N officer, May 2014; international observers, Juba, April 2014. JEM says it only received fuel directly from the SPLA.

<sup>69</sup> “Redploy and/or progressively withdraw forces, armed groups and allied forces invited by either side from the theatre of operations in the Republic of South Sudan”. “South Sudanese parties sign Agreements on Cessation of Hostilities and Question of Detainees”, Section 1, 1.2 (e), IGAD, 23 January 2014.

<sup>70</sup> Gérard Prunier, “Le problème du Soudan du Sud n’est pas ethnique mais politique!”, *Le Monde*, 29 December 2013; “South Sudan: The state cracks”, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-8; Magdi El Gizouli, “The crisis in South Sudan: swapping partners”, *StillSudan*, 7 January 2014.

<sup>71</sup> There is no evidence Sudanese rebels took part in Yida, but a Sudanese SPLA (not SPLM-N) officer reportedly was central in the killings. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO officer, May 2014; SPLM-N member, Juba, May 2014; JEM leaders, March, June 2014; international observer, Juba, March 2014.

The first direct clash between the SPLA-IO and SRF was in late December 2013. JEM had sent cars to Pariang for fuel, when the SPLA-IO tried to take the area. A JEM leader said the SPLA-IO “was not planning to attack us, only Pariang, but we were at the wrong place at the wrong time”. JEM helped the SPLA repulse the attack. A few days later, SPLA-IO hit a strategic site near Unity oilfield. In January 2014, JEM transported Puljang’s troops, who lacked their own vehicles. Following that, JEM again joined SPLA 3rd Division Forces coming from Bahr el Ghazal that recaptured Bentiu in a coordinated operation.<sup>72</sup> Reports that JEM entered the city first are denied by JEM and SPLA officers, who say government infantry far outnumbered JEM in both the Bentiu campaigns and the Leer operations.

According to a JEM leader, its role was limited to “covering” advances.<sup>73</sup> It was also critical in clearing the north-south route from Pariang to Bentiu and limiting the SPLA-IO’s access to the West Kordofan border. Witnesses and government officials agree that even if the numbers were small, Darfurian vehicles and mobile tactics were important aspects of government victories in Unity. JEM’s “cavalry” tactics caused an SPLM-IO officer to say, “we are more frightened by JEM than by the SPLA”.<sup>74</sup> Reportedly, SPLM-N also played a small role in the Leer campaign, while a few SLA-AW cars drove to Thar Jath but returned north without fighting.<sup>75</sup>

Following the government recapture of Bentiu, Puljang’s troops and JEM provided the town’s defence, allowing the 3rd Division to return to Bahr el Ghazal. The SPLM-IO was able to recapture Bentiu in April in part because JEM had mostly withdrawn.<sup>76</sup> Though SRF elements subsequently aided the government in the general area to demonstrate their support to Juba, there is no evidence they fought to recapture the town. In June, SPLM-IO leaders said JEM remained in Unity, so they did not feel compelled to respect the cessation of hostilities agreement. There are also reports of SRF’s involvement in hostilities in the state in October and November and

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<sup>72</sup> Witnesses told UNMISS that government forces and JEM killed some civilians. Some 150 SPLA and a few JEM were wounded in Manga near Unity oilfield. According to an SPLM-IO source, SPLM-N troops or Nuba combatants (who could have been from JEM) were also in the battle. Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; Peter Tap Gatdet, Rier, June 2014; pro-SPLM-IO politician, Leer, June 2014; SPLM-N Darfurian officer, Juba, May 2014; JEM leaders, March, May 2014; South Sudan government official, Juba, May 2014.

<sup>73</sup> SPLM-N, SLA-MM and SLA-AW from South Kordofan were reportedly in Bentiu shortly after the government regained it in January, but there is no evidence they fought. An SPLM-N column was seen in Yida, heading toward Bentiu, on 8 January. Some SPLM-IO officials say SPLM-N fought in Bentiu and Koch on 10 January; others disagree. Crisis Group interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; SPLM-IO officials, Leer, Koch, Guit county, May-June 2014; Bapiny Monyuiel, Juba, April 2014; Darfur SPLM-N officer, Juba, May 2014; JEM leader, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Bentiu, April 2014; defence and security adviser, Nairobi, January 2015.

<sup>74</sup> “We used them to transport our troops, day and night, to southern Unity”. Crisis Group interviews, SSLM/A officer, Juba, April 2014; SPLM-IO officials, Leer, Rier, Koch, Guit county, May-June 2014.

<sup>75</sup> SLA-MM reportedly had eight cars in Bentiu but did not move south. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO officials, May 2014; displaced Nuer, Bentiu, May 2014; JEM leaders, May-June 2014.

<sup>76</sup> Crisis Group observations, Yida; interviews, Wang Chok, Leer, May 2014; Mabek Lang, Juba, April 2014; SPLA officers, Bentiu, Yida, April 2014; SPLM-N members, Juba, Yida, April-May 2014; JEM leaders, April-June 2014. There are unconfirmed reports some SPLM-N troops were involved in brief attempts to defend Bentiu.

JEM redeployments into Unity oilfield and Bentiu in January 2015.<sup>77</sup> In November, after a new agreement, SPLM-IO again demanded the “withdrawal of foreign forces”, as per the original agreement from January 2014, and accused SPLM-N and JEM of violating the agreement by attacking it in Tor Abyod and Hofra.<sup>78</sup>

SPLM-N and JEM also fought beside government forces at Tonja, a strategic road point between Upper Nile and Unity states near Pariang and the Ajuong Thok refugee camp, which the SRF wanted to protect.<sup>79</sup> Likewise, the SPLM-IO said, Blue Nile SPLM-N fought alongside the government further east in Upper Nile, in January, February and April 2014. In May, the SPLM-IO and SPLM-N reportedly clashed at the disputed Upper Nile-South Kordofan border.<sup>80</sup>

## 2. Cycles of revenge and the killings in Bentiu

South Sudan markets have long depended on traders from Sudan, including Darfurians.<sup>81</sup> Many were more sympathetic to Darfur rebels than to the Sudanese government; some have likely given money and other aid and have family links. As the SPLA divided in December 2013, Nuer soldiers and armed civilians looted Rubkona market; two Darfurians were reportedly killed, though, unlike Dinka, not specifically targeted. Many Sudanese then took refuge with UNMISS.<sup>82</sup>

SRF leaders say one reason JEM, SLA-MM and SLA-AW went to Bentiu in January 2014 was to “rescue” Darfur civilians.<sup>83</sup> But their presence and involvement in atrocities against South Sudanese civilians, alongside the SPLA, triggered increasing Nuer and SPLM-IO violence against those civilians. Nuer traditional chiefs and local politicians say they tried to convince their community not to kill the Darfurians,<sup>84</sup> but between 19 and 21 January, when government forces and Darfur rebels were moving toward Leer, Nuer youth looted Darfurian shops and killed one businessman. Some Darfurian traders guided SRF and government forces toward SPLA-IO bases and Nuer civilians’ refuges, which increased Nuer resentment.<sup>85</sup> Darfur rebels

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<sup>77</sup> Crisis Group interview, SPLM-IO officials, May-June 2014. The UN cited an “SLA” vehicle in Bentiu 13 May. JEM reportedly was in Pariang in late May. “Report of the Secretary-General”, 25 July 2014, op. cit., p. 6. Crisis Group interview, UN official, November 2014.

<sup>78</sup> “South Sudan rebels accuse government of fresh violations”, *Sudan Tribune*, 8 November 2014.

<sup>79</sup> Crisis Group observations; interviews, UNMISS officers, Bentiu, Juba, April-May 2014; international observers, April 2014; James Tut, Leer, May 2014; Lul Ruai Kong, Nairobi, June 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Crisis Group interviews, James Tut, Leer, May 2014; SPLM-IO officer, May 2014; Lul Ruai Kong, Nairobi, June 2014; SPLA officer, Juba, May 2014.

<sup>81</sup> These included some who migrated during the 1970s and 1980s droughts and famines. More traders came after the war started in Darfur in 2003; others were gradually pushed out of Khartoum’s *Suq Libya* (once dominated by Zaghawa traders smuggling goods from Libya). Alex de Waal, *Famine that Kills* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 91-104; Abdullahi Osman El-Tom, *The Zaghawa Aptitude for Commerce* (Trenton, 2014), pp. 10-17. There are also many traders from Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

<sup>82</sup> Crisis Group interviews, UNMISS officer, Bentiu, May 2014; Darfur traders, May 2014; SPLM-IO officials, June 2014; SRF Darfur members, May 2014; JEM leader, March 2014. Some Nuer opposed the looting.

<sup>83</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Darfur rebel leaders, March, May 2014.

<sup>84</sup> According to Leer’s paramount chief, there were some 200 Darfur traders in town pre-crisis. Others were in Adok Bahr, Mirmir and Koch. Crisis Group interviews, Leer, June 2014; Darfur traders, May-June 2014; Darfur community representatives in South Sudan, Juba, May 2014.

<sup>85</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Darfur community representatives in South Sudan, Juba, May-June 2014; Darfur traders, May 2014; international observers, Bentiu, Rumbek, May-June 2014; SRF officers, March-June 2014.

evacuated many traders (and some Nuer), but there were still hundreds of Sudanese and foreigners in Bentiu when the opposition retook the town on 15 April.<sup>86</sup>

Prior to that attack, as reports circulated that opposition forces were closing in, government troops turned back hundreds of civilians seeking shelter with UNMISS, reportedly sometimes raping, beating and robbing them.<sup>87</sup> UNMISS did not react, and opposition forces and armed Nuer civilians killed hundreds, targeting Dinka, government officials (including Nuer) and foreigners considered pro-government, including in particular Darfurians. One group surrounded a mosque where hundreds of foreigners were sheltering and killed people outside it. Shouting “you’re not civilians, you’re Tora Bora [a nickname for Darfur rebels], you’re rebels, you killed our people”, a second group shot through doors and windows.<sup>88</sup> At least twenty survivors were executed outside the mosque.<sup>89</sup> A Nuer SPLA-IO soldier called his leaders, who assigned guards for those still alive until the next afternoon, when UNMISS finally took the survivors to its base.<sup>90</sup> Killings, including of Darfurians, also took place elsewhere, in particular the hospital, where some 30 were murdered, before the SPLA-IO officers stopped them.<sup>91</sup>

The SPLM-IO was surprised the killings generated international outrage, including from Sudan, its strongest ally. Some denied them or called the victims combatants.<sup>92</sup> Others, including Machar, acknowledged a massacre, and some expressed

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<sup>86</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Nuer civilian evacuated by Darfur rebels, Bentiu, May 2014; JEM leaders, March, May-June 2014; SPLA officer, Juba, April 2014.

<sup>87</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Nuer, Darfurian witnesses, Bentiu, Juba, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Bentiu, May 2014. Darfur traders said they worried about an attack, as Nuer civilians in town threatened them. Nuer civilians who tried to leave were also blocked. Even after shooting began and they themselves were fleeing the town, officials told civilians to stay. Crisis Group interviews, witnesses, May 2014.

<sup>88</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Darfurian survivors, May 2014; UNMISS officer, Bentiu, May 2014.

<sup>89</sup> UNMISS said, “over 250 bodies” were loaded into trucks following the mosque massacre and taken 30km away from Bentiu, where they were dumped into a water drainage trench. Civilians report the hospital was a particular target because government officials were hiding there, UNMISS confirmed this account. Crisis Group interviews, civilians, Bentiu, April 2014; Darfurian survivors, May 2014; Abdallah Hammat Osman, chief of the Darfur community in South Sudan, Juba, May 2014; SLA-MM officer, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Bentiu, May 2014; “Conflict in South Sudan”, op. cit., p. 48; “Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor April 2014”, op. cit., paras. 40, 67-69.

<sup>90</sup> According to UNMISS, when the SPLA-IO officers arrived, they “asked their bodyguards to guard the two gates and to bring water and something to eat to the survivors. The officers expressed dissatisfaction with the killings”. “Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor April 2014”, op. cit., para. 62. At UNMISS, they were harassed and some beaten and belongings stolen by Nuer civilians. By May 2014, most were evacuated to Bahr el Ghazal and Sudan, including by JEM. Crisis Group interviews, Sudanese survivors, Bentiu, Juba, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Bentiu, May 2014; Abdallah Hammat Osman, Juba, May 2014. “Conflict in South Sudan”, op. cit., p. 48; “South Sudan’s New War”, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>91</sup> There was also considerable destruction and looting at the hospital. SPLA officers admit their troops also looted when they retook the town. During the attack, General Carlo Kuol, a Jikany Nuer allied with Bapiny Monyuiel who had been imprisoned for fear he was about to join the opposition, escaped. Crisis Group interviews, Carlo Kuol, Guit, June 2014; SPLA officer, Juba, April 2014; Darfurian, Misseriya representatives, Juba, April-May 2014; SPLA officer, Bentiu, May 2014; Nuer and Darfurian witnesses and survivors, May 2014; UNMISS officers, Bentiu, May 2014; international observers, Bentiu, Juba, April-May 2014; “Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor April 2014”, op. cit., para. 46.

<sup>92</sup> According to Sudanese officials, this is also the version SPLM-IO gave Khartoum, which publicly rejected it and condemned the massacre. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO officials, southern Uni-

regret, including some of the SPLA-IO officers who arrived after the massacre and prevented further killings.<sup>93</sup> A SPLA-IO leader said his troops had been mobilised “using very negative information about JEM”.<sup>94</sup> Armed Nuer civilians not under full SPLA-IO control also participated.<sup>95</sup> The attack took place at a time when command in Unity was shifting from Koang to Gatdet; the U.S. imposed sanctions on Koang for the Bentiu attack, the EU on Peter Gatdet, though Gatdet was not present during the affair.<sup>96</sup>

Though there was no further mass violence between Nuer and Darfurians, enmity between them is likely to last. A Nuer civilian from Leer said, “now we allow only Ethiopians and Kenyans to trade here, those who never got involved, never sent troops. No Darfurians, no Ugandans – they are the enemies in South Sudan”.<sup>97</sup> Continuation of SRF interventions and of the civil war as a whole may generate more abuses against Nuer and Sudanese civilians in South Sudan by the SRF (particularly JEM) and SPLA-IO, notably the 200,000 Sudanese refugees in Unity and Upper Nile.<sup>98</sup> The AU Commission of Inquiry into atrocities in South Sudan and accountability and reconciliation mechanisms should carefully consider the cross-border nature of these crimes.

### 3. UNMISS – protecting civilians under fire and water

Fighting in Unity has displaced nearly 350,000, about half its population. Of these, nearly 60,000 took refuge in the Rubkona UNMISS base. UNMISS has come under fire, with its perimeter breached and civilians killed at nearby checkpoints. Unlike

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ty, June 2014; Sudanese officials, June 2014; “Conflict in South Sudan”, op. cit., p. 49; “South Sudan’s New War”, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>93</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO officials, southern Unity, June 2014; “South Sudan’s people are forced to fight this war – Riek Machar”, *The Africa Report*, 11 August 2014; “Report of the [UN] Secretary-General on South Sudan”, 30 September 2014, p. 16; “Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor April 2014”, op. cit., para. 62.

<sup>94</sup> UNMISS reported that: “By the end of February, Human Rights Officers noted a significant presence of Darfuri traders in the Kalibalek area. These traders increasingly interacted with soldiers from the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), an armed group from the Darfur region of the Sudan fighting in support of South Sudanese Government forces. This relationship, based on commercial, family, and security ties, led SPLA/IO soldiers to associate Darfuris with JEM elements. It should also be noted that JEM elements, alongside Government troops, were alleged to have perpetrated serious abuses of human rights against Nuer victims, including conflict-related sexual violence, in the southern counties of Unity State between January and April 2014”. “Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor April 2014”, UNMISS, 9 January 2015, para. 26. UNMISS staff listening to local, rebel-controlled radio, reported that a self-proclaimed SPLM-IO secretary general for Unity declared: “Dinka and Darfurians raped Nuer women and now our wives are pregnant with Dinka and Darfurian babies”. Other SPLM-IO statements were less aggressive. Crisis Group interviews, SPLM-IO official, May 2014; UNMISS officer, Bentiu, May 2014; UNMISS notes seen by Crisis Group; “Conflict in South Sudan”, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>95</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Nuer, Darfur witnesses, May 2014; UNMISS officer, Bentiu, May 2014.

<sup>96</sup> Crisis Group interview, General James Koang, Nairobi, May 2014. “Treasury Targets Individuals Responsible for Attacks on Civilians and Ceasefire Violations in South Sudan”, U.S. Treasury, 18 September 2014. EU Council regulation no. 748/2014, Official Journal of the European Union, 10 July 2014.

<sup>97</sup> Crisis Group interview, Bentiu, May 2014.

<sup>98</sup> “Press release on the critical situation of the refugees in upper Nile and Unity states in the republic of South Sudan”, Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA), 29 March 2014; “Sudanese Refugees in Upper Nile: Facing Perils – With Nowhere to Run”, Sudan Democracy First Group, March 2014.



some bases with civilians, it is in a still-active theatre. Following months of threats from both the government and SPLA-IO, an UNMISS helicopter was shot down on 26 August, killing three.<sup>99</sup> Although the results of its investigation have not been released, initial reports suggest this was done from territory controlled by the government and by a weapons system known to be in the hands of the government.<sup>100</sup> Most civilians seeking UNMISS protection cannot live safely outside the base or move without grave risk to more secure locations. Some women reported “rape checkpoints” as they tried to reach the base’s relative safety. Security of the base and the civilians inside is a constant concern.<sup>101</sup>

The rainy season, when the base flooded and civilians lived in appalling conditions, knee deep in water, with illness rife, made the situation even more difficult. Improvements were complicated by lack of preparedness for civilians; disputes, as UNMISS sought to pass on responsibility for bettering infrastructure on their bases to humanitarians;<sup>102</sup> ongoing conflict and rain; and lack of strategic vision among UNMISS and humanitarian leaders in Juba. Most civilians wish for safe off-base options, and some may risk crossing to Sudan during the dry season, but many will remain and must be protected until it is safe for them to leave.

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<sup>99</sup> “South Sudan: Preliminary UN probe shows helicopter was shot down”, UN News Center, 9 September 2014.

<sup>100</sup> Crisis Group interviews, UN officials, Nairobi, November 2014; defence and security adviser, Nairobi, December 2014.

<sup>101</sup> By January 2015, 345,300 were estimated displaced; about half the 100,000 South Sudanese who went to Sudan are from Unity. “South Sudan Crisis Situation Report”, UN-OCHA, January 2015; “South Sudanese refugees in Sudan exceeds 100,000”, *Sudan Tribune*, 15 October 2014. SPLA officers and government officials called the base a legitimate target that harbours “rebels”. Crisis Group interviews, international observers, November 2014.

<sup>102</sup> Humanitarians accepted the challenge to work on bases hosting hundreds of UN troops while still preserving their neutrality and distinction from armed actors, including the UN. UNMISS, feeling constrained by UN peacekeeping budgetary rules, refused to take responsibility for making basic infrastructure improvements on its bases and gave humanitarians no choice but to do the job or leave civilians in appalling conditions.

## V. Regional Dynamics

### A. *Black Gold in the Borderlands*

The July 2013 government reshuffle in South Sudan led to a rapprochement between Juba and Khartoum, who reiterated their commitment to the September 2012 cooperation agreement, and oil production continued. At the outset of war in South Sudan, a primary Sudanese objective was to preserve the oil flow and, following violence and shutdowns at some installations, it suggested a joint force to protect the oilfields.<sup>103</sup> Yet, Khartoum also tried to benefit from Juba's weakness. The crisis has frozen some of the most vexing bilateral issues, notably the status of Abyei and other disputed border areas.<sup>104</sup> In May 2014, an SPLM-IO leader said, "now both [sides] are working hard to get Khartoum's support. Khartoum will ask for Abyei from Salva [Kiir], and oil from us. We need such support ...."<sup>105</sup> Sudanese and South Sudanese officials say Machar offered to share oil revenues equally with Khartoum, in effect a return to the transition period, and to fight the SRF.<sup>106</sup> The SPLM-IO denies such an offer.<sup>107</sup>

Juba has used oil revenue, its primary hard currency source, and oil-backed loans to rearm massively, provide armaments to allied forces and support Uganda's troop deployments, while spending relatively little on its war-affected population.<sup>108</sup> Economists say it has mortgaged South Sudan's future to finance the war and will lack the resources to pay for core state functions, even SPLA salaries, and to ensure peace and stability after a peace agreement if this continues.<sup>109</sup> The UN Security Council should establish a panel of experts to examine how all parties to the conflict are funding their military campaigns and recommend within six months measures in response, in particular to prevent oil money from fuelling the war and enabling cessation of hostilities violations.

An arms embargo for the moment appears some way off, given Russia's and China's preferences for the request to come from the region and reluctance from parts of

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<sup>103</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Sudan's Spreading Conflict (III)*, op. cit., p. 22; interviews, Sudanese officials, June 2014. The inspiration was the Chad-Sudan border force after a bilateral rapprochement and replicated by the Central African Republic and Libya. Juba declined.

<sup>104</sup> Juba says Khartoum is quietly trying to reinforce its positions in disputed areas, eg, in January 2014, it reportedly refused to hand over fuel bought by South Sudan at the usual customs post in the disputed area of Joda (Jordah) between Upper Nile and White Nile state, saying it would only do so if South Sudan customs moved 7km. Crisis Group interview, South Sudan government official, Juba, May 2014; Craze, "Dividing lines", op. cit., pp. 149-157; Douglas H. Johnson, "When Boundaries Become Borders: The Impact of Boundary-making in Southern Sudan's Frontier Zones", Rift Valley Institute, 2010, pp. 68-73; Jérôme Tubiana, "Sudan and South Sudan Inch Toward War", *Foreign Affairs* (online), 8 October 2013.

<sup>105</sup> Crisis Group interview, SPLM-IO officer, Leer, May 2014.

<sup>106</sup> Crisis Group interviews, South Sudan government officials, Juba, March-May 2014; Sudanese officials, July 2014.

<sup>107</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SPLM/A-IO officials, Nairobi, May 2014. There were also rumours that Machar proposed concessions on disputed areas.

<sup>108</sup> "South Sudan Borrows \$200 Million from Oil Companies as War Hits Output", Bloomberg, 28 May 2014; "China Sells South Sudan Arms as its Government Talks Peace", Bloomberg, 9 July 2014; "Three Years in, is South Sudan's Oil Driving its Crisis?", Global Witness, 9 July 2014; "South Sudan's Debt Rises as Oil Ebbs", *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 August 2014. Crisis Group interviews, South Sudanese, Ugandan officials, January-September, Juba, Addis Ababa, Kampala, 2014.

<sup>109</sup> Crisis Group interview, international financial expert, Washington, November 2014.

the U.S. government.<sup>110</sup> Ideally, the AU or IGAD would demand an embargo, particularly if the forthcoming IGAD summit in Addis Ababa does not bring tangible progress. Regional support would help overcome resistance from key UN Security Council members, and without the backing of South Sudan's neighbours, an embargo would be difficult to enforce. But even in the absence of regional support, the Council should consider an embargo as a means of monitoring support to South Sudan's warring parties by both governments and private actors, including those who publicly support the peace process while privately providing armaments. Opposition to an embargo based on the belief that a government has the right to defend itself against rebels ignores the South Sudanese government's multiple commitments to a cessation of hostilities agreement that prohibits ammunition resupply.<sup>111</sup>

### B. *Kampala and Khartoum at Odds*

Following the Ugandan and SRF interventions, Khartoum began to provide limited support to the opposition. Some suggest it plays a double game, joining the mediation while giving or selling war material to both sides.<sup>112</sup> Its increasing preference for the SPLM-IO is driven primarily by Ugandan involvement, but also by the fact that Sudanese rebels are fighting alongside the South Sudanese government. Supporting the SPLM-IO balances Kampala's and the SRF's help for Juba and pressures Kiir not to aid the Sudanese rebels. A Sudanese official called Uganda "the main reason why Sudan could be involved alongside SPLM-IO".<sup>113</sup> Sudanese officials and others suggest Kampala forced the SRF to fight for Juba. SRF leaders deny this, but a Ugandan official said, "in times of need, all are called upon to act".<sup>114</sup>

Khartoum insists Juba continues to support the SRF and allows Uganda to arm it via the Yida airstrip.<sup>115</sup> Juba disputes this, says Ugandan troops are only positioned

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<sup>110</sup> Crisis Group interviews, New York, 19-26 January 2014. Also see Colum Lynch, "Inside the White House Fight Over the Slaughter in South Sudan", *Foreign Policy* (online), 26 January 2014.

<sup>111</sup> Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (in Opposition) (SPLM/A in Opposition), 23 January 2014, 1.1.2 b (hard copy on file with Crisis Group).

<sup>112</sup> Sudan's General Mohammed Ahmed Mustafa al-Dhabi joined Ethiopia's Seyoum Mesfin and Kenya's General Lazaro Sumbeiywo as mediators. Reportedly close to President Bashir, he headed military intelligence and was ambassador to Qatar before leading security arrangements for Darfur, where he was the focal point for the UN Security Council sanctions committee. "South Sudan: The state cracks", op. cit., p. 7; "Chief of Arab League's mission in Syria is lightning rod for criticism", *The New York Times*, 2 January 2012. Sudan denied providing support to the SPLM-IO. "The only place Riek Machar can get support is Khartoum. This is one of the reasons I went to Khartoum. I advised the government of Sudan not to welcome the rebels. [My counterpart] Abderrahim Mohammed Husein denied supporting Machar", said Defence Minister Kuol Manyang Juuk. Crisis Group interviews, Juba, April 2014; SPLA officer, Juba, April 2014; SPLM-IO official, Addis Ababa, December 2014.

<sup>113</sup> "Khartoum agrees we're not supporting the SRF but [believes] Uganda does through South Sudan, so they want to punish us, by supporting Machar to pressure us". Crisis Group interviews, South Sudanese officials, Juba, April-May 2014; Sudanese officials, March, July 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Crisis Group interviews, SRF leaders, March 2014; Sudanese officials, July 2014; Ugandan official, September 2014.

<sup>115</sup> "Sudan says it has documentary evidence of South's support for rebels", *Sudan Tribune*, 15 December 2014; "Sudan warns South Sudan about 'hostile moves' by rebels in its territory", Reuters, 17 December 2014. There are reports of more recent resupply via the Mabaan airstrip (Upper Nile). Military use of airstrips designed to serve refugee camps endangers the camps. Sudan has bombed in and around Yida since 2011. The lack of other airstrips leaves the SRF with few alternatives; the

to defend Juba and Bor and denies or downplays the SRF role.<sup>116</sup> Tensions further increased in December 2014, when National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) director Mohammed Atta reiterated charges of South Sudanese support for the SRF, threatening to “pursue rebels anywhere”.<sup>117</sup>

Drift toward a Uganda-Sudan proxy war risks regional peace and stability. IGAD, struggling with internal divisions, initially sought to contain the conflict via a cessation of hostilities agreement and deployment of a regional Protection and Deterrence Force (PDF) to secure key installations and allow Uganda to withdraw. There were concerns a PDF might carve South Sudan into areas controlled by different neighbours and give Kiir crucial military help, and the UN declined to support the idea either politically or financially.<sup>118</sup> The regional forces in UNMISS are not mandated to protect towns or key installations, and Uganda refuses to leave without a guarantee for the Kiir government.

Ongoing support from Uganda and the SRF to the government and the much more limited support from Sudan to the opposition embolden hardliners in both camps, and the regional impasse shapes the national-level peace talks. That will remain so unless key outside powers such as the U.S. and China can change calculations in Kampala and Khartoum. The U.S. has influence in particular with Uganda, one of its main security partners in Africa, while China has considerable influence in Sudan – its foreign minister visited Khartoum earlier this month – and through its investments, including in the oil sector, is gaining similar standing with regard to Uganda. A regional diplomat said, “we are getting nowhere. America needs to use the hammer to bring the region together or this war could get much worse”.<sup>119</sup> But Uganda and the SRF are unlikely to withdraw unless Washington and Beijing apply positive incentives, not only pressure. Both methods should be tied to solid peace-process steps, notably security arrangements.

### C. *Border Bases, Cross-border Militias and Arms Flows*

There are consistent reports of SPLA-IO rear bases, training and receipt of weapons in Sudan along the Unity, Upper Nile and Northern Bahr el Ghazal state borders.<sup>120</sup> Along the Unity border, some fighters who abandoned Bentiu and other locations in January 2014 went north, then attacked Bentiu in April from that direction.<sup>121</sup> Juba said some SPLA-IO who attacked the city in August and October came from Sudan.<sup>122</sup>

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international community has been unable to convince it to obtain resupply away from the camps. Crisis Group interviews, South Sudanese officials, Juba, December 2013.

<sup>116</sup> Crisis Group interviews, South Sudanese officials, Bentiu, Juba, April 2013; “Juba reiterates commitment to cooperate with Khartoum”, *Sudan Tribune*, 15 December 2014.

<sup>117</sup> “Khartoum threatens to pursue rebels inside South Sudan territory”, *Sudan Tribune*, 12 December 2014.

<sup>118</sup> The cessation of hostilities agreement was renewed in November. “S. Sudan’s warring parties sign renewed ceasefire deal amid calls for foreign troops to withdraw”, *Sudan Tribune*, 9 November 2014. Crisis Group interview, UN official, Juba, April 2014; and Report, *South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name*, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

<sup>119</sup> Crisis Group interview, Addis Ababa, December 2014.

<sup>120</sup> This section focuses on those along the Unity-South Kordofan border.

<sup>121</sup> During this period, SPLA-IO troops were reportedly in Sudanese bases in South Kordofan, near SPLM-N areas. Smaller numbers fled north when the government retook Bentiu in May.

<sup>122</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Kuol Manyang, Juba, April-May 2014; Michael Makuei, Juba, May 2014; military intelligence chief Mac Paul, Juba, April 2014; Philip Aguer, Juba, March 2014; SPLA

Others, including South Sudanese officials, argue the SPLA-IO stayed near the border and that Khartoum, to preserve relations with Juba, did not allow them deep inside Sudan. Yet, others say they use rear bases occupied by Sudan-supported Nuer militias in the past in Hejlj and Kharasana areas, as well as Jebel Liri and Tolodi.<sup>123</sup> While the SPLA-IO has free transit in some Sudanese border areas, cross-border weapons delivery is of far greater concern.

Witnesses reported that SPLA-IO troops coming from the north in April had new guns. Analysis of cartridges found after that month's mosque massacre indicated more than half had manufacturer codes previously documented on ammunition used by Khartoum's army and supported militias.<sup>124</sup> Officials in Juba and Misseriya in West Kordofan said SPLA-IO forces obtained vehicles, weapons and ammunition in West Kordofan, though local officers and Arab militias in West Kordofan may have independently sold these.<sup>125</sup> In any event, Presidents Bashir and Kiir continue to meet and seek to preserve relations. Khartoum is similarly intent, however, on defending its security interests by limiting the SRF's Juba ties and Kampala's regional ambitions.<sup>126</sup>

#### D. *Stepping Up Border Monitoring*

As already described, both parties continue to violate the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ), and the Joint Border Monitoring and Verification Mission (JBVMM) they agreed on before South Sudan's independence has been ineffective.<sup>127</sup> Despite

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officers, Bentiu, Juba and Yida, April-June 2014; "The Conflict in Unity State", 2 October 2014, op. cit.; "Rebels were aided by foreign mercenaries in Unity state capital, says South Sudan army", *Sudan Tribune*, 17 April 2014; "S. Sudan army claims rebels entered Unity state from Sudan", *Sudan Tribune*, 24 August 2014; "S. Sudanese army says in 'full' control of Bentiu town", *Sudan Tribune*, 31 October 2014.

<sup>123</sup> This is very close to SPLM-N areas of control and operations. Jebel Liri and Tolodi are of lesser importance than Hejlj and Kharasana. Crisis Group interviews, Kuol Manyang, Juba, April-May 2014; Michael Makuei, Juba, May 2014; military intelligence chief Mac Paul, Juba, April 2014; Philip Aguer, Juba, March 2014; SPLA officers, Bentiu, Juba and Yida, April-June 2014; SPLM-N officer, including Misseriya, Juba, March-April 2014; witnesses of the Bentiu attack, Juba, June 2014; Conflict Armament Research confidential report, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>124</sup> Two cartridges appeared to be manufactured in Sudan in 2014, after the beginning of the war in South Sudan. Experts cautioned "manufacture in Sudan does not in itself prove supply to SPLA-IO forces by the Sudanese government". "Small arms ammunition documented at Bentiu mosque, May 2014", Small Arms Survey, July 2014, p. 1; Conflict Armament Research confidential report, op. cit., p. 18. However, an SPLA-IO officer confirmed the group's receipt of Sudanese ammunition. Crisis Group interviews, SPLA-IO officer, Nairobi, May 2014.

<sup>125</sup> Conflict Armament Research confidential report, op. cit., p. 28. According to a Misseriya leader, in January 2014, SPLM-IO troops led by Michael Makal crossed into West Kordofan, but were not unanimously welcomed. Other Misseriya clans are closer to the Northern Bahr el Ghazal Dinka and worry that Awlad Umran sympathy for the SPLM-IO might endanger access they need to Northern Bahr el Ghazal pastures because the Abyei deadlock and Mayom county fighting have closed other routes. Most Misseriya thus seem to side with Juba, be keen for good ties with Northern Bahr el Ghazal politicians like Paul Malong and are happy to see Abyei politicians sidelined. Crisis Group interviews, Misseriya traditional chiefs, Majok (Northern Bahr el Ghazal), April 2014; James Kolang, Aweil, April 2014; Juba officials, Juba, Bentiu, April-May 2014; SRF Misseriya officers, Juba, April-May 2014; Misseriya politician, May 2014.

<sup>126</sup> Some SRF and SPLM-IO know a proxy war would harm their desired images as genuine opposition movements. Crisis Group interviews, JEM and SPLM-IO leaders, May-June 2014.

<sup>127</sup> Section II.B above.

UN and AU willingness to support the JBVMM, neither it nor – except in Abyei – the several peacekeeping missions in Sudan and South Sudan do much monitoring.<sup>128</sup> Militarisation of the border and cross-border activity of armed groups are the most serious they have been since the 2012 fighting.

As regional tensions escalate, and in the absence of effective monitoring through the JVBMM, a new strategy is needed. There are few good options, but one possibility is for the UN Security Council to mandate UNISFA to monitor the border independently from the parties, including monitoring violations of the Sudan-South Sudan Cooperation Agreement and the South Sudan Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.<sup>129</sup> To exercise this mandate, UNISFA's resources and budgetary support would need to be significantly increased. This should be paired with timely and public monitoring by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism of cessations of hostilities violations by all parties in South Sudan, including Uganda.

These steps in turn must be connected to a new approach to conflict resolution, including stronger backing from the wider international community. Specifically, rather than trying to mediate the Sudan and South Sudan wars in isolation, the AUHIP and IGAD should recognise their merging nature and coordinate their efforts to resolve both, beginning by creating a senior forum that includes the U.S. and China, among others, to support this approach.

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<sup>128</sup> The Sudan-South Sudan border hosts three peacekeeping missions: the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), operational only in Sudan; the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), operational in Abyei and surrounding border areas of both countries; and UNMISS, operational throughout South Sudan.

<sup>129</sup> Also see Section II.B. above. Crisis Group interviews, New York, 21-26 January 2015.

## **VI. Conclusion**

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The conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan are increasingly interconnected and threaten to bring yet more violence and instability to the region. Both Khartoum and its armed opposition continue involvement in South Sudan's civil war. Even if their actions are designed to send messages to South Sudanese and Ugandan parties and not to impose their own solutions, their interventions exacerbate the conflicts in the Sudan and undermine peace efforts. Uganda's troop deployment ensures the continued involvement of Sudan and is yet another obstacle to the stalled IGAD mediation.

The challenges of addressing these interconnected conflicts in a coordinated manner are not new. The 2005 peace agreement was comprehensive in name only. The conflict zones in the north and south-south conflicts were largely ignored and, a decade on, are dragging the two countries back into protracted war. As Crisis Group has advised in prior reports, the processes needed to bring sustainable peace are similar in both: national political dialogue, a new constitution, credible elections, addressing the wars' root causes and redefining relations between the state and its citizens.<sup>130</sup> Getting there requires tough decisions by the conflicting parties, of course, but in support also a fresh approach from regional bodies, some strong measures by the UN Security Council and more explicit and supportive engagement by the wider international community, notably the U.S. and China, to persuade Uganda and Sudan it is in their interests to de-escalate the conflicts and pressure their South Sudanese allies to work toward mediated agreements that enable such processes.

**Addis Ababa/Juba/Nairobi/Brussels, 29 January 2015**

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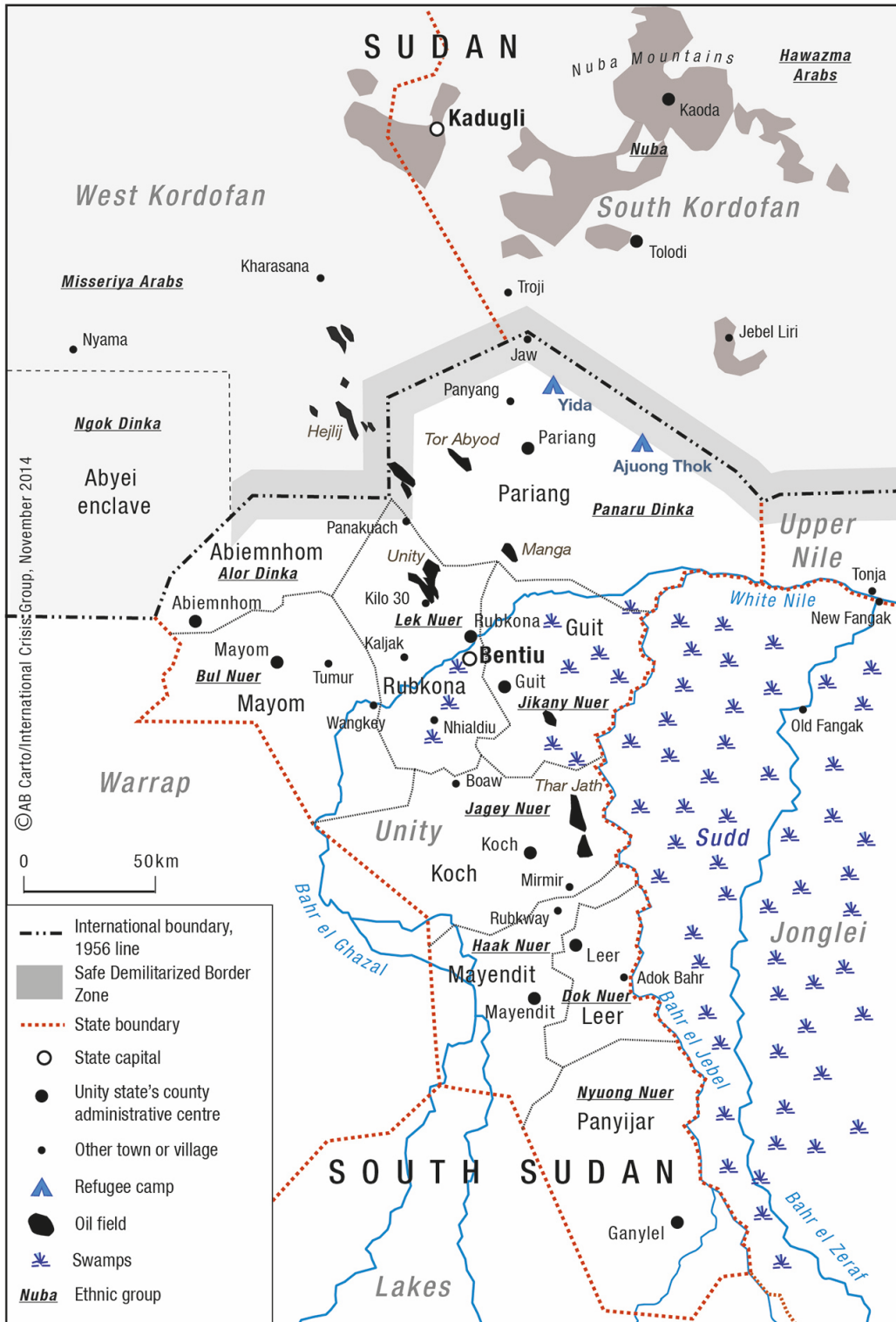
<sup>130</sup> See fn. 1 above.







Appendix C: Map of Unity State, South Sudan



The locations of boundaries and ethnic groups are for illustrative purposes only and do not denote official political borders nor the rights of various ethnic groups to different territories.

## Appendix D: Glossary of Terms and Groups

**AUHIP** – (African Union High-Level Implementation Panel), led by former South Africa President Thabo Mbeki, it was created after the final (2009) report of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur highlighted the national dimension of that crisis. It focuses on 1) resolution of outstanding issues related to the separation of Sudan and South Sudan; 2) mediation between Khartoum and the SPLM-N and Khartoum and Darfur groups in “parallel processes”; and 3) democratisation in Sudan and South Sudan.

**CPA** – (Comprehensive Peace Agreement), signed in January 2005, it ended Sudan's second civil war and created a transitional government that promulgated a new constitution, held national elections in 2010 and oversaw the South's 2011 self-determination referendum. It also had provisions, not carried through, for resolving the Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile conflicts.

**IGAD** – (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), the regional organisation in the Horn of Africa's member states include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. It mediated the CPA and is currently mediating South Sudan's war. Ethiopian Prime Minister is its current chair.

**JBVMM** – (Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mission), prior to South Sudan's secession from Sudan, the two established it to monitor the common border. Mandated to monitor the “safe demilitarised border zone” (SDBZ), a temporary buffer extending beyond disputed border areas, it is meant to prevent attempts to alter the border by force, guard against cross-border military action and stop cross-border rebel group movements.

**JEM** – (Justice and Equality Movement), a Darfur rebel group founded by Dr Khalil Ibrahim Mohammed in 2003 with other politically experienced Darfurians, many ex-members of the Popular Congress Party (PCP) of Hassan al-Turabi, an architect of the 1989 coup that brought the Muslim Brotherhood to power in Khartoum but who was dismissed by the regime in 1999. Following Khalil Ibrahim's 2011 death, his brother Jibril has chaired it. JEM is a key SRF component.

**NCP** – (National Congress Party), founded in 1998 and chaired since then by President Omar al-Bashir, it is Sudan's ruling party. It is the successor to the National Islamic Front (NIF) that took power in a 1989 coup.

**PDF** – (Popular Defence Forces), established in 1989 as a “semi-military” force, it was expanded in 1991 to help Khartoum fight the civil war. It was supposed to be dismantled under the CPA but was expanded and remains important in the Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile conflicts.

**RSF** – (Rapid Support Forces), Sudan government paramilitary formations used with mixed results in the recent campaigns against Sudanese rebels; Khartoum recruited initial elements substantially from the same Arab tribal sources as the infamous “Janjawid” militias that have terrorised communities in Darfur.

**SDBZ** – (Safe Demilitarised Border Zone), created by Sudan and South Sudan in 2012, it runs 10km along either side of a centre line. JBVMM monitoring has been ineffective due to disputes between Sudan and South Sudan.

**SLA** – (Sudan Liberation Army), formed in 2001 by Darfurians from non-Arab communities, power struggles caused it to splinter. The main factions are the SLA-MM, led by Minni Arku Minawi (Zaghawa), and the SLA-AW, led by Abdelwahid Mohammed Ahmed Nur (Fur).

**SSLM/A** – (South Sudan Liberation Movement/Army), a South Sudanese armed opposition group founded in 2011 and based in Unity state, General Peter Gatdet was its first leader, followed after his return to the South Sudanese government, by Bapiny Montuyiel. It accepted a presidential amnesty in 2013 and fights on the government's side in the civil war.

**SPLM/A** – (Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army), a Southern Sudanese rebel movement created in 1983 and led by Dr John Garang, it fought for a united, secular “New Sudan”. In 2005, it signed the CPA and became the South's ruling party and army. Following Garang's death in 2005, Salva Kiir Mayardit became SPLM Chairman, SPLA Commander in Chief, president of the regional government, and since 2011, South Sudan's president.

**SPLM-FD** – (SPLM-Former Detainees), on the outbreak of the South Sudan civil war, the Juba government detained eleven senior SPLM officials on allegations of involvement in an attempted coup. Ethnically diverse, they share a long association with the SPLM/A. Upon release, they presented themselves to the IGAD-led peace process as a third entity.

**SPLM/A-IO** – (South Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army – In Opposition), the military and political opposition movement formed in 2014 in the wake of the fighting that broke out in December 2013 across South Sudan, it is chaired by former Vice President Riek Machar and seeks removal of President Kiir, establish-

ment of a federal system and reform of both the SPLM and government.

**SPLM/A-N** – (Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-North), formerly the SPLM/A's northern branch, it became a separate movement after Southern independence, fighting in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. With JEM and other rebel groups, it founded the SRF in 2011. Its chairman is Malik Agar.

**SRF** – (Sudan Revolutionary Front), founded in 2011 by the SPLM-N, JEM, SLA-MM and SLA-AW and subsequently joined by small unarmed groups, this umbrella opposition to Sudan's government coordinates politically and militarily, but its "joint force" has fought only once, in the Kordofans in 2013. It is chaired by SPLM-N's Malik Agar.

**SSDF** – (South Sudan Defence Forces), an umbrella organisation of anti-SPLA southern armed groups allied with Khartoum, most elements were integrated into the SPLA by the 2006 Juba Declaration. Many SSDF commanders and soldiers are now part of the SPLM/A-IO.

**UNAMID** – (UN-African Union Mission in Darfur), established as a hybrid operation in 2007, its mandate is to protect civilians and humanitarian operations, monitor implementation of peace agreements, assist an inclusive political process and promote human rights and rule of law.

**UNISFA** – (United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei), formed just prior to South Sudan's independence due to Juba's and Khartoum's agreement to demilitarise the disputed area and allow Ethiopian troops to monitor it, UNISFA is mandated to monitor and verify redeployment of any Sudan or South Sudan troops there; facilitate humanitarian aid; and use force to protect civilians and humanitarian workers.

**UNMISS** – (United Nations Mission in South Sudan), set up in 2011 to succeed the UN Mission in Sudan that supported the CPA, its original task was to consolidate peace and security and help establish conditions for development in the South by strengthening Juba's capacity to govern effectively and democratically. In 2013, its mandate changed to emphasise civilian protection, humanitarian service delivery, human rights monitoring and support for IGAD's Verification and Monitoring Mission for the South Sudanese cessation of hostilities agreement.

**UPDF** – (Uganda People's Defence Force), it is Uganda's national army.

**Appendix E: Leaders and Their Communities in Unity State**

<b>County</b>	<b>Predominant community</b>	<b>Main leaders*</b>
Pariang	Ruweng Dinka, Panaru section	Mabek Lang
Abiemnhom	Ruweng Dinka, Alor section	
Mayom	Bul Nuer	
Eastern Mayom	Kwech section, Nyang sub-section	Joseph and Bapiny Monytuiel, Matthew Puljang
Eastern Mayom	Kwech, Ciengbuol sub-section	<i>Peter Gatdet, Michael Makal</i>
Western Mayom	Gok section	James Gatduel Gatluak, (Paulino Matip, deceased)
Rubkona	Lek (Leek) Nuer	John Gai
Guit	Jikany Nuer	<i>Taban Deng Gai, Angelina Teny, Carlo Kuol</i>
Koch	Jagey Nuer	<i>Peter Tap Gatdet</i>
Mayendit	Haak Nuer	
Leer	Dok Nuer	<i>Riek Machar Teny, James Tut</i>
Panyijar	Nyuong Nuer	

\* January 2015: government, *opposition*.

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## Appendix F: About the International Crisis Group

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The International Crisis Group (Crisis Group) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 125 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, it produces analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers. Crisis Group also publishes *CrisisWatch*, a twelve-page monthly bulletin, providing a succinct regular update on the state of play in all the most significant situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world.

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The Crisis Group Board of Trustees – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring the reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. Crisis Group is co-chaired by former UN Deputy Secretary-General and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, and Dean of Paris School of International Affairs (Sciences Po), Ghassan Salamé.

Crisis Group's President & CEO, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, assumed his role on 1 September 2014. Mr. Guéhenno served as the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations from 2000-2008, and in 2012, as Deputy Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on Syria. He left his post as Deputy Joint Special Envoy to chair the commission that prepared the white paper on French defence and national security in 2013.

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**January 2015**

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