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**RESOLUTION 2155 SOUTH SUDAN:
STOP BARBARISM AND ACHIEVE
PEACE**

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Abstract:

Last December 15th, the unfathomable rivalry between the two main leaders of South Sudan erupted into sectarian and tribal strife. The seriousness of the situation and the alarming number of victims have caused the UN to redirect its mission on the ground (UNMISS) and to approve an increase in deployed troops. Thus, Resolution 2155 prioritizes the protection of the population and reaffirms the urgency of reaching a final peace agreement, which remains uncertain. Against this barbarism, the International Community should act with greater determination. Otherwise, the viability of South Sudan would become an impossible challenge.

Resumen:

El pasado 15 de diciembre, la insondable rivalidad entre los dos principales dirigentes de Sudán del Sur estalló en una lucha sectaria y tribal. La gravedad de la situación y el alarmante número de víctimas han provocado que Naciones Unidas reoriente su misión en el terreno –UNMISS– y apruebe el incremento del contingente desplegado. Así, la Resolución 2155 prioriza la protección de la población, y reafirma la urgencia de alcanzar un acuerdo definitivo de paz, que todavía se prevé incierto. Frente a la barbarie, la comunidad internacional debe actuar con mayor determinación. De lo contrario, la viabilidad de Sudán del Sur se convertirá en un reto inalcanzable.

Keywords:

South Sudan, United Nations, UNMISS, Salva Kiir, Riek Machar, and conflict.

Palabras clave:

Sudán del Sur, Naciones Unidas, UNMISS, Salva Kiir, Riek Machar y conflicto.

ATTACHED DOCUMENT: United Nations Security Council Resolution 2155/2014

INTRODUCTION

The huge crisis ravaging South Sudan started due to an internal political dispute and resulted in a bloody sectarian war that threatens to drive the country and its population to a deadlock: the non-viability of the State. Last December 15th, President Salva Kiir accused its recently dismissed vice-president, Riek Machar, of trying to oust him by force of arms. Machar denied it, but he maintained his claims with regard to the dictatorial trends of President Kiir, whose immediate removal from power he demanded¹.

In just a few hours, violence broke out in capital Juba and combats within the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)—between supporters of both leaders—spread across barracks and residential areas. Some incidents that provoked the flight of thousands of civilians towards the camps of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

The arrest of 11 opponents to the regime of Salva Kiir, when Machar had already left Juba, was the final trigger for combats to aggravate and reach the oil States of Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity, in the northeast of the country. Since then, political leaders had instigated the fight against the majority tribes: the dinka and the nuer, to which Kiir and Machar belong respectively. Coinciding with this moment of tension, the internal scission also happened inside the SPLA, formed by different and not united militias: many military men deserted in order to join the anti-Governmental troops, renamed "SPLA in Opposition"; or to form other rebel factions, among them, the bloodthirsty "White Army." During the month of December, the cities of Bor (Jonglei), Malakal (Upper Nile) and Bentiu (Unity) became the main areas of conflict, and fell rapidly into the hands of the two opposing sides, which provoked their total devastation and obliged hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese to leave their homes.

¹ More information on the Independence of South Sudan, the political rivalry, as well as the stance of the main organizations and countries with regard to the conflict in Díez Alcalde, J. *Sudán del Sur, y llegó la guerra por el poder*, IEEE, 14/03/14. Available at http://www.ieeee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2014/DIEEEA17-2014_SudanSur_Guerra_al_Poder_JDA.pdf. Date of access: 28/04/14.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

TOTAL AREA	619,745 km ²
POPULATION	10.34 million (2013)
INDEPENDENCE	9 July 2011

KEY ASPECTS OF THE CONFLICT AND THE UNITED NATIONS

1. Since the beginning of the conflict, in December 2013, the fight between the dinka and nuer tribes has been instigated.
2. Resolution 1996/2011: It deploys UNMISS for consolidating peace in South Sudan and for promoting good governance.
3. Resolution 2155/2014: It redirects UNMISS for prioritizing the protection of civilians and it authorizes the increase in troops.
4. The second peace agreement, signed on May 9th, has neither meant the end of violence nor the beginning of a political process.
5. More than 10,000 deaths and 1.2 million of displaced persons and refugees is the tragic and provisional balance of this conflict.

At the end of March, the United Nations denounced that more than 10,000 civilians could have been assassinated, almost a million had fled from the continuous atrocities of the Army and the rebel groups, and four million needed urgent humanitarian aid². “If the conflict continues—warned Ban Ki Moon during his stay in South Sudan, on May 12th ³—half of South Sudan’s twelve million people will either be displaced internally, refugees abroad, starving or dead by the year’s end.”

Nevertheless, despite the consecutive and unsuccessful cessation of hostilities signed by both parts, for the time being there is no indication that this spiral of violence can be stopped. Therefore, on April 15th, the population of Bentiu—the great oil center of the country—suffered the biggest massacre of this war: more than 200 people, according to the United Nations, were assassinated on the suspicion of supporting the government, in an attack encouraged by the local radio⁴, and this fact alerted the international community to a true risk of a large-scale genocide.

PEOPLE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE	PEOPLE REACHED WITH HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE	PEOPLE INTERNALLY DISPLACED BY VIOLENCE	PEOPLE WHO HAVE FLED TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES
4 MILLION	1,4 MILLION	1,04 MILLION	360 THOUSAND

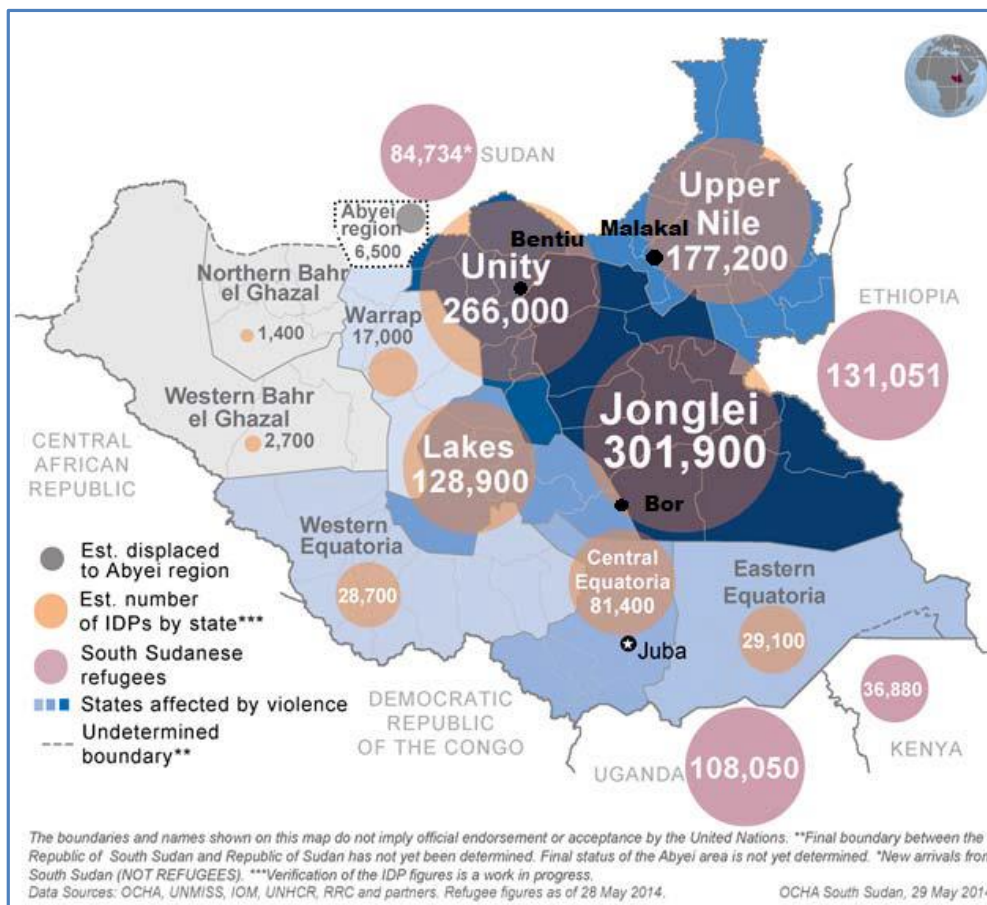
Balance sheet of the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan since December 2013

² *Más de un millón de desplazados por el conflicto en Sudán del Sur*. Europa Press, 30/03/14. Available at <http://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-ocah-cifra-mas-millon-numero-desplazados-enfrentamientos-sudan-sur-20140330075200.html>. Date of access: 05/04/14.

³ *UN chief urges maximum restraint amid reported breaches of South Sudan ceasefire*. UN News Centre, 12/05/14. Available at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47774#.VJxeTmCCA>. Date of access: 15/05/14.

⁴ UNMISS denounced that Nuer rebels had taken over the radio station, from where they were incited to expel the Dinka and other rival groups of Bentiu, and even to commit sexual violence against women. Although some commanders of SPLA in Opposition demanded to check “tribalism”, nothing could stop the massacre, nor did the United Nations forces intervene. *Somerville, K. South Sudan: how hate radio was used to incite Bentiu massacres*. African Arguments, 24/04/14. Available at <http://africanarguments.org/2014/04/24/south-sudan-how-hate-radio-was-used-to-incite-bentiu-massacres-by-keith-somerville/>. Date of access: 28/04/14.

Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)⁵



Main hotspots of conflict, displaced persons and refugees, 29 May 2014

Source: OCHA

Since confrontations began, UNMISS assumed the security of those civilians that took shelter in their bases, which became the only stronghold where protection and humanitarian aid can be found. However, little could the blue helmets do to stop violence in the attacked populations through the whole country: the initial mandate of the United Nations Mission—contained in the Security Council Resolution 1997/2011⁶—did not expressly address the protection of civilians, nor the forces were sized for repelling a war of this magnitude. Furthermore, they were repeatedly accused, of being helping the rebel forces and even

⁵ South Sudan Crisis Situation report as of 30 May 2014. Report number 38. Available at <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/b1e64c00-e8dc-4913-b3fd-b8bec76bb7cf.pdf>. Date of access: 01/06/14.

⁶ UN Security Council Resolution 1996/2011, July 8th, 2011. Available at [http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/index.asp?symbol=S/RES/1996\(2011\)&referer=/spanish/&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/index.asp?symbol=S/RES/1996(2011)&referer=/spanish/&Lang=E). Date of access: 10/05/14.

supplying weapons to them⁷. Despite the continuous attempts to silence these defamations, the relation between UNMISS and Salva Kiir's Government became more and more tense, leading to attacks against the United Nations compounds and helicopters, in which civilians and also members of the Mission died.

Meanwhile, the defenseless population—of all ethnic groups—kept taking refuge in the eight compounds UNMISS deploys in the whole country. In March, these makeshift camps already sheltered more than 85,000 civilians: “The United Nations policy of opening our gates—pointed out Ban Ki Moon—as an emergency option to protect innocent civilians is correct, unprecedented and not without considerable risk to United Nations staff, to our relations with communities and to those we are trying to shelter.” An “unprecedented option” that has saved many lives but that has not prevented to stop the attacks against those looking for shelter in the Mission's compounds. The last and more brutal took place in Bor, last April 18th, where armed dinkas broke into the United Nations camp, assassinated 58 and wounded more than 70 civilians of the nuer tribe⁸. The UNMISS forces could not repel it.

More than 85,000 civilians are crowding into the UNMISS camps

UN Photo/Isaac Billy



⁷ In March, the South Sudanese government stopped twelve trucks in Rumbek, the capital of Lakes State, with containers that transported armament towards Bentiu, main focus of conflict. Despite the fact that the spokesperson of the United Nations stated that “some containers were wrongly labelled and the armament belonged to the Ghanaian detachment,” this incident has further diminished the UNMISS negative image among the population. *South Sudan protest against UN over arms cache*, BBC, 10/03/14. Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26520091>. Date of access: 26/03/14.

⁸ In the words of general secretary Ban Ki Moon, this attack is “unacceptable,” it means an escalation of the conflict and constitutes a “war crime” that must be investigated. *Al menos 58 muertos en un ataque contra un campamento de la ONU en Sudán del Sur*. EFE, 18/04/14. Available at http://noticias.lainformacion.com/mundo/al-menos-58-muertos-en-un-ataque-contra-un-campamento-de-la-onu-en-sudan-del-sur_uy86oWwVGpdtSA1proJeK7/. Date of access: 20/04/14.

In the light of the alarming situation South Sudan is going through, the youngest and poorest country of the world, the United Nations has strengthened its Mission, both in its number of personnel and in its tasks, for adapting it to the growing seriousness of the situation and for making it more effective in the protection of civilians. To that end, the Security Council has approved successive Resolutions, in which this document focuses on, with the aim of transforming the UNMISS in an international force—the only one it currently deploys in the field⁹—capable of halting the slaughter and quelling the violence that has sunk the country into an abyss. Nevertheless, UNMISS efforts would be meaningless if a definitive peace agreement is not reached between the warring factions, which today continues to be quite uncertain. An agreement that is, for the moment, the only feasible tool for the beginning of an integral reconstruction process of the country.

THE UNITED NATIONS' REACTION AFTER THE BREAKING OUT OF THE CONFLICT

On July 8th, 2011, a day before the independence and consequent creation of South Sudan, the aforementioned Security Council Resolution 1996 established UNMISS, which substituted the former military operation—the United Nations Mission in Sudan, UNMIS—deployed in 2005 after the signing of the General Peace Agreement signed between the Sudanese Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A)¹⁰. With the aim of adapting to the new circumstances on the ground, the UNMISS mandate was to consolidate the still precarious peace reached after five decades of conflict with Sudan and avoid new outbreaks of violence in the nascent country. This international force, with a maximum of 7,000 military men and 900 policemen, should encourage the formation of the State and its economic development; strengthen the judicial and security sectors through different national strategies, which would include disarmament programs, demobilization and reintegration of combatants; and to put an end to the recruitment of child soldiers.

Despite, during these years, the deployment efforts made by UNMISS have been very

⁹ Integrated in UNMISS and from the middle of April, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for the Horn of Africa (formed by Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda, Djibouti, Sudan and South Sudan) deploys a reduced monitoring teams—controlled from Juba—for guaranteeing the ceasefire signed in January, and as part of the regional effort to solve the crisis. For the moment, the teams have deployed in the oil states of Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile. Tekle, T. *IGAD ceasefire monitors commence operations in South Sudan*. Sudan Tribune, 12/04/14. Available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article50625>. Date of access: 18/04/14.

¹⁰ During six years, UNMISS provided its good offices and political support for the parties, supervised and checked its security conditions and provided assistance in several areas, including governance, recuperation and development. More information on UNMISS in <http://www.un.org/es/peacekeeping/missions/past/unmis/>. Date of access: 09/05/14.

significant, they have not been enough to alleviate the political, democratic and social deterioration of South Sudan, which has provoked the population's frustration and, since the middle of last December, the return to armed fighting. A few weeks later, and in the light of the widespread aggravation of the conflict, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2132/2013 unanimously¹¹. This new decision envisaged the first UNMISS effort to try to assist civilians trapped in combats and guaranteeing the security of thousands that took refuge in its bases through the whole country. In order to achieve it, it temporarily increased to 12,500 forces and 1,323 policemen the maximum contingent for the mission and, as a provisional measure, authorized the transfer to UNMISS of other United Nations missions' forces deployed in the African continent¹². The quickly adoption of this measure strengthened the Mission's capacity for saving lives and protecting the population, but the reinforcement remained far way of what was agreed: at the end of March 2014, the deployment did not reach 9,000 forces, between military men and policemen.

Urgent crisis planning for protecting civilians

In March, the periodic report¹³ of the general secretary Ban Ki Moon established the new parameters for UNMISS, whose additional contingent should at least deploy during a period of twelve months, and announced that an increase of force subject to the outcome of political negotiations would be possible to analyze. According to this approach, this period will coincide with the "probable return of the internal displaced persons, who would only return when a peace process had been agreed, thereby during the dry months of the second half of 2014 the stabilization of the areas of return would be carried out." Nonetheless, and contrary to expectations, the number of displaced persons and refugees has increased since then, and there is nothing to suggest that the cessation of hostilities will become a reality in the short term.

¹¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2132/2013, December 24, 2013. Available at <http://www.un.org/es/sc/documents/resolutions/2013.shtml>. Date of access: 28/04/14

¹² In particular, these forces should come from the deployed missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), in Sudan (UNAMID and UNISFA), in Ivory Coast (ONUCI) and in Liberia (UNMIL), "provided that the countries that contribute troops agree and without prejudice to the execution of the mandates of these United Nations missions." Resolution 2132/2013, *ibid*.

¹³ Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan S/2014/158, United Nations, 06/03/14. Available at <http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/?symbol=S/2014/158>. Date of access: 26/03/14.

In the light of the development of events since the beginning of the conflict, the report considers the Security Council should authorize UNMISS to temporally redirect its activities and replace its strategy regarding peacebuilding, the construction of a State and the extension of the State authority—as its initial mandate established—for another of strict impartiality in its relations with both parts. Besides, the main emphasis of the redefined Mission would be the protection of defenseless civilians and the intervention in order to guarantee humanitarian aid in the most devastated areas, as well as fostering the national reconciliation and dialogue. For this purpose, it is necessary to strengthen the response plan, organized in three levels, which UNMISS has already started to implement on the ground:

- On a first level, and for guaranteeing **protection through the political process**, the Mission will now intensify contacts with the confronted factions for avoiding a bigger escalation of violence, and will promote a peaceful solution of the crisis through negotiations brokered by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for the Horn of Africa.
- The second level focuses on the **protection against physical violence**, which started in November 2013 in the states where, by that time, there were bigger threatens for the civilian population. Nevertheless, and after the current conflict broke out, UNMISS forces had been redistributed in the areas where confrontations are more intense and also inside its own bases, for protecting those civilians that took refuge inside them.
- Regarding the third level of the plan, **the establishment of a protective environment**, UNMISS will reinforce its activities for guaranteeing the delivery of humanitarian aid to displaced persons, which more than 40 % are children (about 300,000 in March). In addition, the forcible recruitment of young people and children will try to be eradicated, as well as grave sexual violence crimes that—according to the United Nations reports—are committed by all the fighting factions.

Finally, and as base for substantiating the reorientation of UNMISS mandate, secretary general Ban Ki Moon highlights in his report two possible situations in South Sudan: “the most probable and the worst that could happen.” With regard to the first suggestion, he presents a scenario where neither the cessation of hostilities would be respected nor a peace agreement in which aspects related to governance, security and reconciliation would be reached. With regards to the more dangerous one, the report predicts an upsurge in fighting, as well as the increase of attacks against the bases of the United Nations where currently civilian victims of the conflict are being protected. At the present time, all these negative constraints are developing on the ground and, with the national leaders tightly fester in their claims and positions, a viable solution to the conflict from the internal political

arena will be more and more difficult to find.

THE NEW UNMISS MANDATE: TO PRIORITIZE PROTECTION

Aware of the alarming situation the country is going through and the difficulty of reaching peace in a medium-term, the Security Council unanimously agreed to give effect to secretary general Ban Ki Moon's recommendations. Therefore, on May 27th, Resolution 2155 was adopted¹⁴, which extends the deployment until November 30th of this year; authorize the increase in troops until a maximum of 12,500 soldiers and 1,323 policemen—as the provisional measure stated in Resolution 2132 envisages, and that is still very far away from reaching it¹⁵;— and significantly redirects the UNMISS mandate, with the priority objective



of increasing the population's protection and of stopping the ongoing human rights violations.

The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2155

UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

¹⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2155, May 27, 2014. Available at [http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/index.asp?symbol=S/RES/2155\(2014\)&referer=/spanish/&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/es/comun/docs/index.asp?symbol=S/RES/2155(2014)&referer=/spanish/&Lang=E). Date of access: 28/05/14.

¹⁵ Ban Ki Moon highlighted the importance of this new UNMISS mandate for the peace and security in South Sudan, whose efficiency is subjected to the reinforcement of the contingent. For this reason, he called the potential contributing countries to make all efforts for a rapid incorporation of forces. *Sudán del Sur: Ban subraya la importancia del nuevo mandato de la UNMISS*, Centro de Noticias ONU, 28/05/14. Available at <http://www.un.org/spanish/News/story.asp?NewsID=29560#.U4ndciiuola>. Date of access: 29/05/14.

This Resolution, which condemns all the attacks against United Nations personnel and facilities perpetrated by all fighting factions, highlights that decisions on the use of UNMISS available capacity and resources will be always subjected to the protection of civilians, regardless of the source of the attacks. For this purpose, it will increase its deployment and the number of active patrols, with particular attention to displaced persons and humanitarian personnel, both within and outside United Nations bases. Besides, and provided the necessary conditions are met, it entrusts to the UNMISS forces the guarantee of the safe return of the population to their places of origin.

With regards to the vigilance, denounce and investigation of human rights, UNMISS should periodically inform of these offences, in particular when they could be considered war crimes or crimes against humanity; and particular attention will be paid to abuses against children and women, including all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. On the other hand, the new mandate also emphasizes the necessity of creating the conditions for providing humanitarian assistance, much more so when the arrival of the rainy season threatens with aggravating famine and the propagation of infectious diseases.

Lastly, the Resolution explicitly states that UNMISS will support, with “all available means”, the implementation of the cessation of hostilities signed by the parties last January 23rd, which has never been respected; as well as the Agreement to Resolve the Crisis in South Sudan, ratified by Salva Kiir and Riek Machar on May 9th, and whose implementation has been stopped until June 4th. Without doubt, ensuring that the agreements are effective requires the tight commitment of both parties and, as the Resolution itself demands, “their engagement in an open and fully inclusive national dialogue seeking to establish lasting peace, reconciliation and good governance”. Some conditions that are still far away from being true, and some peace agreements that will hardly be the final solution that will make South Sudan to emerge from the deep abyss it finds itself in.

Towards a difficult and uncertain peace agreement

While in Addis Abeba the last peace agreement was being signed, last May 9th, UNMISS made its assessment on the massive trampling of the civilian’s fundamental rights public: “The report—pointed out the spokesperson of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rupert Colville—includes detailed stories on mass murders due to ethnic reasons and revenges, willful killing of civilians, and atrocities such as summary executions, sexual

violence and slavery.”¹⁶ Supported again by IGAD, the accepted commitment by both parties—represented, for the first time, by Salva Kiir and Riek Machar—included, apart from the final end to the clashes, the establishment of a provisional government of national unity.



Salva Kiir (left) and Riek Machar (right) during the signing of the second peace agreement

Until the signing of this agreement, the attempts for reaching the end of hostilities and consolidating a political process that could put an end to the conflict have failed. On January 23rd, thanks to the international mediation, the government and the insurgent forces agreed an immediate cessation of hostilities, the opening of humanitarian corridors and the protection of the civilian population. Nevertheless, the different armed factions never respected what was agreed and, far from diminishing, revenge and tribal massacres increased in the following months.

Despite it, IGAD continued calling for a political dialogue for the national reconciliation and the formation of a transition government, which would be chaired by an independent authority and would not count on Salva Kiir and Riek Machar. Moreover, the organization of the countries of the Horn of Africa also envisaged another proposal: to place South Sudan under the United Nations tutelage until a solution to the conflict is found. At the beginning

¹⁶ Pillay: urge poner fin al conflicto de Sudán del Sur tras las atrocidades cometidas. Un News Centre, 09/05/14. In <http://www.un.org/spanish/News/story.asp?NewsID=29411#.U4nd9iiuolA>. Date of access: 14/05/14.

of March, the vice-president of South Sudan, James Wani Igga, showed his rejection to any of these recommendations that come from abroad and threatened to take up arms “if they seek to colonize us through the United Nations.”¹⁷ Some days after, the president Salva Kiir himself submitted his special counterproposal, considered offensive by the opposition groups: the formation of a provisional government integrated by all political forces, which would lead the country until 2018, though without the presence of the rebel band led by Machar¹⁸.

At the end of April, the decision of Juba’s government of reprieving the eleven political dissidents¹⁹, accused of instigating the alleged coup d’état of December, opened a new opportunity for reestablishing negotiations in Addis Abeba. Nevertheless, the direct intermediation of the United States secretary of state, John Kerry, during his trip to South Sudan, was necessary for president Kiir and former vice-president Machar to seat face to face in Addis Abeba and to look for a negotiated solution to the conflict²⁰. As the South Sudanese analyst James Ukuk pointed out, “this meeting is consequence of international pressures, because both parts fear possible American sanctions.” In fact, the United States government, main defender of South Sudan’s independence, already announced, on May 6th, sanctions against two high-ranking military personnel of the confronted parties in South Sudan, after holding them responsible for violating the ceasefire and for using an “unimaginable violence” against civilians²¹.

Regarding the content of this new compromise, the most prominent is that both signers should accept up to twelve key points for advancing in the conflict resolution, among others, “the recognition that a military solution to the crisis does not exist in South Sudan, and that a lasting peace can only be achieved through an inclusive political dialogue.” For this purpose, they agreed the establishment of a provisional government of national unity—in which both should be part of—as “the best chance for the people of South Sudan, which

¹⁷ *El Gobierno sursudanés rechaza las propuestas de mediadores africanos*. EFE, 10/03/14. Available at <http://www.efe.com/efe/noticias/espana/mundo/gobierno-sursudanés-rechaza-las-propuestas-mediadores-africanos/1/4/2260925>. Date of access: 18/04/14.

¹⁸ *El presidente sursudanés acepta un "Gobierno interino", pero sin los rebeldes*. Abc, 13/03/14. Available at <http://www.abc.es/agencias/noticia.asp?noticia=1590911>. Date of access: 18/03/14.

¹⁹ *Sudán del Sur indulta a la mayoría de los supuestos golpistas*. lavanguardia.com, 24/04/14. Available at <http://www.lavanguardia.com/internacional/20140424/54406310938/sudan-del-sur-indulta-a-la-mayoria-de-los-supuestos-golpistas.html>. Date of access: 26/04/14.

²⁰ *El presidente sursudanés acepta negociar directamente con el jefe rebelde, según Kerry*. AFP, 02/05/14. Available at <http://horacero.com.pa/internacionales/108592-el-presidente-sursudanés-acepta-negociar-directamente-con-el-jefe-rebelde-segun-kerry>. Date of access: 06/05/14.

²¹ *EE.UU. sanciona a líderes militares en Sudán del Sur por violar alto el fuego*. EFE, 07/05/14. Available at http://www.eldiario.es/politica/EEUU-sanciona-militares-Sudan-Sur_0_257574245.html. Date of access: 13/05/14.

should implement critical reforms envisaged in the peace agreements, supervise the process of constitutional reform and guide the country to new elections.”²²

Despite the alleged “national unity” is still an utopia, and there is no indication that Salva Kiir and Riek Machar are the most appropriate leaders for heading this difficult political process, this agreement is today seemed as the only possibility to stop the conflict. For the moment, IGAD continues boosting these difficult negotiations that are expected to materialize in more concrete measures in the next talks, planned for the next June 4th²³.

On the ground, and despite having agreed “an immediate cessation of hostilities within 24 hours,” once again the fighting factions accused each other of violating the ceasefire in the states of Unity and Upper Nile. According to the last UNMISS reports, the situation has improved in the main conflict hot-spots, where currently a tense calm prevails. Nevertheless, the agreements reached of Addis Abeba have not achieved to stop the mass flight of the population (more than 70,000 new refugees in May²⁴), which still mistrust the capacity of South Sudan’s leaders, and much more of the intentions of all the fighting factions and rebel groups.

KEY ASPECTS FOR THE FUTURE OF SOUTH SUDAN

The Security Council Resolution 2155 has meant the confirmation of the international commitment to put an end to the conflict, but there are still many pending issues in order to make efforts palpable on the ground and, what is more difficult, to make the population regain confidence in the UNMISS forces as peacekeepers. As an internal factor, the increase in contingent—until reaching almost 14,000 military personnel and policemen—depends on the contribution of the United Nations member countries, and there is no indication that this will happen in the short-term. However, it is even more uncertain that the circumstances are met for achieving the effective protection of the population, as it will always be subjected to

²² *President Salva Kiir and Dr. Riek Machar sign a landmark agreement to end the conflict in South Sudan*. Press release from IGAD, 09/05/14. Available at [http://cewarn.org/attachments/article/254/Press%20Release%20\(%2009%20-%2005%20-%202014\),%20Pres.%20Kiir%20and%20Dr.%20Machar%20sign%20agreement%20to%20end%20the%20crisis%20in%20S%20Sudan%20\(2\).pdf](http://cewarn.org/attachments/article/254/Press%20Release%20(%2009%20-%2005%20-%202014),%20Pres.%20Kiir%20and%20Dr.%20Machar%20sign%20agreement%20to%20end%20the%20crisis%20in%20S%20Sudan%20(2).pdf). Date of access: 11/05/14.

²³ *Suspenden las negociaciones de paz de Sudán del Sur hasta el 4 de junio*. EFE, 19/05/14. Available at http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Suspenden-negociaciones-Sudan-Sur-junio_0_261774681.html. Date of access: 24/05/14.

²⁴ *Tens of thousands more South Sudanese flee fighting following truce, says UNHCR*. Centro de Comunicación UNMISS, 27/05/14. Available at <http://unmiss.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3481&ctl=Details&mid=6047&ItemID=3951856&language=en-US>. Date of access: 29/05/14.

the cessation of hostilities, to the advances in the peace agreements and the establishment of an inclusive government that could ease the difficult national reconciliation process.

Today, the main obstacle to achieve it is the intransigence of the two principal leaders, president Salva Kiir and the current rebel leader Riek Machar, that are entrenched in remaining in power, despite the huge suffering they are causing to the population. Paradoxically, the two main responsible of throwing the country into a bottomless pit are currently the sole possible subterfuge to build peace: an extremely difficult task that, for the moment, is unlikely to become a reality. For this reason, the international community should press for both politicians—in the past, rebels for the cause of independence—to resign to be part of a national government and to give way to independent authorities able to restore confidence of the population in the viability of South Sudan.

Without a doubt, both IGAD and the African Union should remain as main agents in this difficult peace process, but it is necessary that countries such as the United States and China get more involved to resolve the conflict. The former should reinforce its position as a fundamental actor for achieving the necessary reform of the State, and for permanently leaving behind the armed power struggle that has been developing in the country for decades. If during the independence process the United States positioned itself as the main supporter of South Sudan, the Obama administration must now show a bigger leadership—that cannot be limited to the adoption of economic sanctions—and urge the leaders to face the viability of the State, without letting their particular interests prevail, nor those of the tribes they belong to. With regard to China, the world's biggest importer of oil produced in the main conflict areas, it is essential it prioritizes security, good governance and the development of the population as bases for its trade relations with South Sudan.

On July 9th, 2011, South Sudan entered, in its own right, the international community and it became the State number 193 of the United Nations. The confidence of the population in its new leaders was the main guarantee for achieving a peaceful coexistence; and its huge oil wealth was expected to be a resource more than enough to palliate poverty and to boost the development of the whole country. Nevertheless, only two years and a half later, a conflict broke out that, behind an instigated tribal rivalry, hides an internal struggle for power and for the illicit control of the country's natural resources.

More than 10,000 deaths and a million of displaced persons and refugees are today the tragic balance of these first years of independence; besides, a “catastrophic” famine threatens to aggravate the situation further and to provoke more deaths among the

defenseless civilians. The United Nations have taken a step forward to counter barbarism, but it is essential the whole international community acts with more determination. Otherwise, the spread of the tribal ear and bad governance will end up undermining the nascent and troubled history of South Sudan.

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