South Sudan

Form of Government: Established in 2011, South Sudan is the youngest nation in the world. It is a Federal Presidential Republic and the current President is Salva Kiir Mayardit.

Population: 12 million, 60% women

Ethnicities: comprised of over 60 different ethnic groups, among the largest are Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk.

Women’s Participation: Women’s groups successfully lobbied to include provisions for gender equality in the interim constitution, including the provision for a 25% quota for women in decision-making bodies. Secretariats for women, child welfare and gender were established in five states, but maternal mortality rates remain extremely high (16 deaths per day), and over 90% of women are illiterate.

Context and Background to the Conflict

Under British colonial rule, Sudan, then Africa’s largest nation, was divided into northern (predominantly Muslim) and southern (predominantly Christian) administrative zones. After independence (1955), the Arab Sudanese government from the North took control over the South, leading to tensions and the emergence of the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM). The First Sudanese civil war (1955-1972) between the SSLM and the government ended with a peace agreement that gave the South political autonomy and relative control over land and resources, including some oilfields. In 1980, the government redrew the north-south administrative borders, including the oilfields in the north. In September 1983, the government implemented sharia law throughout Sudan. This provoked the emergence of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), under southerner Col. John Garang, and led to the second civil war (1983-2005). The motivation for this war was secular reform and to preserve the unity of Sudan, but it was also likely due in part to the discovery of oil resources in 1978. It resulted in numerous deaths (estimated 1.5-2 million) and produced approximately 4.9 million internally displaced persons and refugees. The war ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, which included a clause about self-determination of the south. Per the CPA, a referendum on the independence of the south was conducted in 2011. 99.8% of the vote was for independence, resulting in the secession of the South Sudan.

The relations between South Sudan and Sudan remained strained, despite the Addis Ababa Cooperation Agreement signed in 2012 (no women were present at the negotiations). Shortly thereafter, internal problems started to threaten the peace and stability of the new nation. State institutions remained unable to deliver effective services or produce inclusive solutions to resolve conflicts. In addition, many issues remained unresolved: power sharing arrangements within the ruling SPLA, upcoming elections, a new constitution, marginalization of citizens in key decision-making processes, and challenges building a new national identity. The violence, which erupted in December 2013 between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar, was in essence the result of competition over leadership, power and wealth within the SPLM. It has claimed thousands of lives and displaced millions of people, with projections for widespread famine putting over 3 million more lives at risk. Peace talks between delegations representing Kiir and Machar began in January in Ethiopia under the auspices of IGAD (the Intergovernmental Authority on Development). A ceasefire signed on 23 January 2014 has not held. The underlying political dispute is not ethnically motivated, but leadership has exploited these tensions, causing the fighting to take on an increasingly ethnic dimension.

Inclusion of Women

Despite the involvement of women’s groups, such as New Sudan Women’s Federation, in peace activism, women were not included in the negotiations of the CPA, which were completely controlled by military forces. Consequently, the agreement does not contemplate gender concerns and, instead, specifically protects customary law, which is often detrimental to women’s rights. Although the CPA has failed to adequately address gender...
equality, it has been more inclusive of women than previous peace negotiations. Three out of ten members of the rebels’ negotiating team are women and, as a result of national and international pressure, there are now three women on the government side - though it remains to be seen whether this representation will translate into real influence. In addition, South Sudan has made steps towards the adoption of a 1325 National Action Plan (NAP) and ratification of CEDAW. Women remain active in peacebuilding processes and implementation of the accord.

**Key Players**

**The Government of South Sudan - led by Salva Kiir Mayardit**, Chairperson of the ruling SPLM; the government delegation is led in the IGAD talks by South Sudan Information Minister Mr Michael Makuei; **Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA)** is the army of the South Sudanese government

**Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) - led by the former Vice President Riek Machar**, draws a great deal of support from the Nuer community but is comprised of multiple groups and is not necessarily a fully monolithic force; includes the Nuer White Army, a militant organization belonging to the Nuer ethnic group

**SPLM11** - former detainees comprised of senior political figures from within the SPLM who became the face of the political opposition, and reflected widespread dissatisfaction with the status quo within the movement; detained in December 2013, some were charged with treason, but all were eventually released; their shared opposition to Kiir does not mean there is universal support for Machar or political consensus within the group; they were to form a separate bloc in the negotiations, but were later excluded

### Timeline of 2014 Peace Negotiations

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 19-22</td>
<td>Consultative meeting of South Sudanese women leaders in Kampala calls for immediate cessation of violence and inclusion of at least 25 percent of women in mediation and ceasefire monitoring teams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>Ceasefire signed between fighting groups and the government; women are said to constitute 30 percent of the rebels’ negotiating team but are initially absent from the government’s team</td>
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<td>Jan 21-31</td>
<td>African Union summit in Addis Ababa; South Sudanese women gather to lobby for greater inclusion of women and women’s issues in the peace talks, releasing a statement for the mediators to be inclusive</td>
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<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>UK envoy calls on negotiating parties for greater inclusion of women in the peace process</td>
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<td>March 15-17</td>
<td>The Civil Society Conference held in Addis Ababa called for the inclusion of a wider range of national stakeholders in the process</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Parties sign agreement reaffirming commitment to the Cessation of Hostilities</td>
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<td>June 7-8</td>
<td>IGAD Symposium for Inclusive Peace Process in South Sudan, held in Addis Ababa, called for inclusion but was delayed in starting due to disputes over nominations of delegates</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>Parties agree to the formation of a transitional government of national unity within 60 days</td>
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### Select Relevant Documents

- Communiqué of the 26th extraordinary Summit of the IGAD HoS and Gov’t, 10 June 2014, [www.igad.int](http://www.igad.int) (on the agreement to conclude talks and form an interim government within 60 days)
- Agreement to Resolve the Crisis in South Sudan, Addis Abab, 9 May 2014, [www.igad.int](http://www.igad.int) (most recent CoH)
- Recommitment on Humanitarian Matters in the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition SPLM/SPLA, 5 May 2014, [www.igad.int](http://www.igad.int) (agreement to resolve the crisis in South Sudan)
- Statement from South Sudanese Women to the African Union (AU) and Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), 24 January 2014, [www.gnwp.org](http://www.gnwp.org) (calling for immediate cessation of violence)