

Committee: Special Political and Decolonization Committee

Issue: The Question of South Sudan

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Position: Chair

Introduction

South Sudan has been confronted with ongoing conflict from the day of its independence and it is of utmost importance to finally put an end to the fighting.

The South Sudanese crisis comprises an extremely relevant issue, that troubles the international community. Resembling the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, due to events of suspected ethnic cleansing, this issue has to be tackled immediately. To this point, the Civil Conflict in the region has caused the deaths of approximately 50,000 and the displacement of 4 million people.

Although this war does not pose an international threat, it remains utterly catastrophic for Sudanese people, who live under constant danger and political uncertainty.



Definition of Key-Terms

South Sudan:

South Sudan, officially Republic of South Sudan is located in East-Central Africa and is considered to be the newest country in the world. South Sudan was separated from Sudan in July 2011 after a referendum with the help of the UN and the international community took place, with the options of separation or unity, and 99% of the population voted for independence. This country is currently a Member of the United Nations, the East African community and the African Union.

Coup d'état:

Also known as a coup, coup d'état is the sudden, usually violent transition of power by overthrowing the government. The leading forces of the coup are in control of the military and the police. An example of one is the Coup of 1967 in Greece, when the military forces seized control of all governmental mechanisms.

Referendum:

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the widely accepted definition of a referendum is a direct vote in which the citizens of a country or a state are asked to give their opinion or decide on a topic that concerns an important political or social question on a national level. It is important to mention at this point that referendum need to be conducted in line with the democratic principles of fair vote, representation and free choice to be considered valid.

Sudan People 's Liberation movement (SPLM):

One of the most dominant political parties in South Sudan. It is the predecessor of Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a political wing founded in 1983, that was considered to be a catalyst in the Sudanese civil war. Its current chairman is called Salva Kiir.

SPLM-IO:

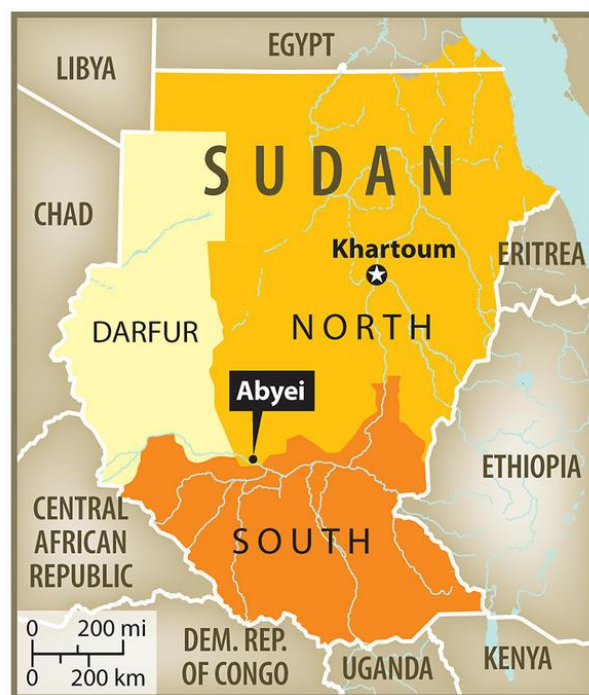
Sudan people's Liberation Movement in Opposition is a political party founded in 2013 that split from the SPLM after the accusations of the government's President of its members plotting to overthrow him with a coup d'état. Its leader is Riek Machar, former Vice President of Kiir's government. It also includes an armed wing called SPLA.

IGAP:

Intergovernmental Authority Control is a trade block of African countries that includes governments of the Nile Valley, the African Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa. These countries are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda. In the case of South Sudan, it played a key role in the peace negotiations of 2014 regulating the process.

Abyei:

Abyei state is a region on the borders of the war-torn countries of Sudan and South Sudan, which's status remains a "mystery" until today due to the fact that Sudan and South Sudan could not agree on borders in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. Fighting broke out in 2011 in this particularly oil-rich area and the two countries followed a neutral peacekeeping tactic until the political uncertainty would be addressed. Seven years later, the population of Abyei has to rely solely on the Ethiopian Peacekeeping forces to maintain the relative stability in the area.



Background Information

Due to the fact that this issue is of an extremely complex nature, one has to delve into the past to the point where it all began.

South Sudan has never had a long period of “political calmness”. This means that the regime transactions were almost never peaceful and the state was not governed by well-suited leaders, ultimately creating the alarming situation in which violence, corruption and chaos thrive. However, this dates back to the period when Sudan was still one united state.

Decolonization of Sudan

Since before the colonial times of the area, a deep divide between the predominantly Muslim Arabic-speaking North and people from the South of this country, who are mostly Christian or follow other traditional religions, existed. Taking into consideration the exploitation of Sudanese people and the country's natural resources by the joint British-Egyptian rule, the citizens set their differences aside and launched campaigns to remove the colonialism from their country. At first, they were not considered to be successful, however in 1956 Sudan gained independence, allowing the “unattended” internal matters to rise into at the time insignificant turbulence.

Civil War

Attempting the composition of a government, positions of power were given mostly to Northerners, thus infuriating the population of the South leading ultimately to conflict in 1962, that would later be labeled as the first civil war of Sudan. On the 25th of May 1969 the power was seized by a separatists' group called Free Officers Movement led by Col Jaafar Muhammad Numeiri, a military officer who later on formed the political party Sudanese Socialist Union. The ruling forces then, outlined an autonomy policy for the South. Three years later a peace agreement was signed in Addis Ababa, that included a measure guaranteeing the autonomy of the southern region of Sudan. This agreement in 1972 signified the end of the first civil war.

Second Civil War

The years that followed could be described as relatively uneventful, however things took a twist for the worst, when President Numeiri abolished the Southern autonomy. Fights broke out triggering the second Sudanese civil war (1983-2005) and the forces of the government along with the Northerners clashed with the southern troops. South Sudanese armed forces were led by the Sudanese people's liberation movement (SPLM). The clashes continue with dramatic consequences for the next five years and in 1988 there were high hopes that the conflict would cease, however the drafted cease- fire agreement between the SPLM and the Democratic Unionist party (a party of the coalition government of Sudan) was not implemented signifying further strife in the area.

In June of 1989 the power is seized by the military. The coup d'état was organized by officers led by Hassan Omar al- Bashir from the National Islamic Front (NIF) forming the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation (RCC), a council comprised of 15 military officers. The council dissolved ultimately in 1993, allowing President Al-Bashir to accumulate the majority of power. The clashes continued causing heavy casualties and damage to the country.

In 2001 the Islamist leader of the Popular National Congress, Hassan al-Turabi, signed a memorandum of understanding with the armed wing of the Sudanese people's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the Sudanese people's Liberation army (SPLA). The military junta ruling the country did not approve of this action and arrested him the following day. At the moment, the government had suppressed a potential rebellion, however the desire of liberation of the population of the South led to a major agreement in 2002 after talks between the Sudanese government and the so-called "Southern rebel organizations" in Kenya. This agreement, named Machakos Protocol, dictated that after a period of six years the South had to right to declare self-determination.

Indeed, after three years, namely on January 2005, the North/South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) also known as Naivasha Agreement was signed by both the Sudanese government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) putting an end to the second civil war. This accord provided for autonomy of the South after permanent ceasefire has been ensured and the formation of a government involving the southern rebels in Khartoum. The important aspect of the CP-Agreement was that it dictated for a referendum to take place in six years so as for the southerners to vote for independence or unity. This major breakthrough was followed by the formation of an autonomous government of the South. The government's vice President was the leader of the SPLM. He played a significant role in the signing of the Constitution that provided the region with a much larger amount of freedom and autonomy. His term was unfortunately short-lived, him dying a month later in a helicopter crash. His successor would eventually be Salva Kiir Mayardit, also an important member of the SPLM. The governmental administration of the South was apparently dominated by this political party. The CP-Agreement between the North and the South did not manage to ensure ceasefire, a fact sadly confirmed within a year of the date of its signing, when in November of 2006 hundreds died in clashes between the Northern and Southern forces. As "turbulences" continued, the leaders of the country decided upon the terms of the deal of the upcoming referendum in 2011. Fast forward to the date of the actual event, January 9th 2011, the overwhelming majority of the population (99%) voted for the full independence of South Sudan. The referendum did not secure peace either and clashes between rebels and security forces were noted in February of the same month in the Jonglei state, resulting into further casualties. Finally, the clashes came to an end, when both governments (North and South) accept the terms of an accord to demilitarize the Abyei State and allow an Ethiopian peacekeeping force to patrol the region. Almost immediately after the signing of the accord a new state is born on the 9th of July 2011. Even after the independence of South Sudan, conflict did not cease.

South Sudan's internal issues after its independence

During the first three years of this new country ethnic clashes were reported in regions such as the Jonglei State leaving hundreds dead and thousands displaced. Moreover, ethnic differences were not the only cause of conflict in this case, since oil fields were discovered in the region and both, Sudan and South Sudan, claimed rights on them. In 2013, although the dispute over oil had been settled, South Sudan faced internal issues. President Kiir unseated in June of the same year the government's Finance Minister and the Cabinet Affairs Minister, after a multi-million scandal came to light, and lifted their immunity, so as for them to get prosecuted. A month later, the entire cabinet and the Vice President, Riek Machar, were dismissed from their positions by the President. Upheaval started to rise and in December 2013 after Salva Kiir (the President of South Sudan) accused his former partner and deputy Riek Machar along with ten other officials of planning a coup d'état. The situation quickly escalated after the former Vice President fled to lead the SPLM-IO, in opposition to the SPLM. The country of South Sudan experienced the start of its first civil war. While the rebels managed to seize several towns, Ugandan forces intervened siding with the government. The first ceasefire Agreement was drafted in January 2014, however did not seemingly have any significant effect on the conflict, as the clashes continued. Several other ceasefire accords followed and negotiations took place in August of the same year regulated by Intergovernmental Authority of Development "IGAD +", which's members include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda. To the regulators belonged the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, China, the United Kingdom, the United States and Norway. A Compromise Peace Agreement is reached in August 2015 and unity government was formed with Machar as its Vice-President. However, he fled soon after, since deadly fights broke out in Juba. Towards the end of 2016 and begin of 2017 the United Nations hinted that the Civil War of South Sudan showcases signs of ethnic cleansing and that famine, due to the conflict and economic collapse, plagues the area. In May 2017 the President, Salva Kiir Mayardit, after having denied the accusation of ethnic cleansing, declares ceasefire and attempts to initiate international dialogue. On the 27th of June 2018 with the help of the United Nations, a peace agreement is signed between the two rival leaders, signifying the first step towards "inclusive and implementable peace" as the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres mentioned.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Sudan

Sudan was the first country to recognize the independence of South Sudan. According to the Sudanese President's (Omar al Bashir) statement on the new state, it would be beneficial and prosperous for these two countries to co-operate on a political level and to develop trade and economic relations. Despite Sudan's membership in IGAD, the country did not seem to be extremely invested in resolving the internal crisis of South Sudan since it is considered to be one of the main weapon suppliers to the fighters.

United Nations

The United Nations played and continues to play a significant role in the issue of South Sudan. Apart from employing a Peacekeeping Operation in the area, called UNMISS, that ensured stability and peace in the region, UN has helped the country on several occasions. From being a regulator in the negotiations of 2014 and the Peace Agreements to securing a Peace Deal in July 2018 between the rival leaders of SPLM and SPLM-IO.

United Kingdom

The UK, despite it being a former colonist of the area, has shown quite an interest in the particular case. It was included in the regulators of the peace talk in 2014 and has since then condemned the conflict in South Sudan and promoted education and peace and the country.

United States of America

Although the United States did not recognize South Sudan as an independent and sovereign state until months after its secession, they have played a major role in resolving the conflict. USA has assisted by the drafting of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and took part in the 2014 negotiations as well as supported the IGAD in its work on the Peace Agreement in 2015. Lifesaving humanitarian aid, such as health care, and basic services such as education are provided by the US, which's primary goal is to achieve peace in this case.

European Union

The European Union, EU, shares the same ambition as every other country in the international community, namely the restoration of long-lived peace. It endorses all peace Agreements signed until the present day and supports South Sudan financially, promoting conflict prevention and peacebuilding by funding the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation, UNMISS, since its establishment in 2005.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia has assisted all of the attempts for stabilization in the region of, initially Sudan and later, South Sudan. Being a member of IGAD it hosted talks in its capitol and has promoted peacebuilding by providing the Abyei region and the UNMIS with peacekeeping forces.

Honorouable Mentions

Following Sudan, Uganda is also a major arms supplier benefiting from the conflict, although it is seemingly trying to resolve it by being a member of the IGAD and present in the talks regarding peace. The weapon trade however, is also corroborated by the Russian Federation and China, two members of the UN Security Council that would apparently veto any resolutions hindering arms trade in the region.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1956	Independence of Sudan from colonialism.
1962 (First Civil War)	Civil war between the North and the South is declared.
1969	Successful coup d'état led by Col Numeiri, Outlining of an autonomy policy for the South.
1972	Peace Agreement signed in Addis Ababa.
1989 (Second Civil War)	Clashes between SPLM and forces of the government break out, after the autonomy of the South is abolished.
1989	Power is seized by the military in Sudan.
2002	Machakos Protocol (peace Agreement) is signed in Kenya.
2005, January	CP-Agreement is signed, end of civil war.
2005, October	Formation of the autonomous South Sudanese government with Salva Kiir Mayarditt as President.
2006	Tension results into deadly clashes between the South and the North.
2009, December	Terms of the referendum are decided by the leaders of both regions.

2011, January 9th -15th	Referendum takes place, vote in favour of separation from Sudan is the overwhelming majority.
2011, February	Clashes in Jonglei State.
2011, June	Demilitarization of Abyei region and the intervention of an Ethiopian peacekeeping force.
2011, July 9th	New state of South Sudan is “born”.
2011, August	Ethnic clashes reported by the UN in Jonglei state.
2013, June	Dismissal of Finance Minister and Cabinet affairs Minister due to financial scandal.
2013, July	Dismissal of the entire cabinet, as well as the Vice-President, Riek Machar.
2013, December (Civil War)	Civil war breaks out between the fractions of SPLM led by President Kiir and SPLM-IO led by the former Vice-President, Riek Machar. Ugandan troops supporting the government intervene.
2014, January	Ceasefire agreement is signed, but unfortunately fails to maintain peace and is impinged on several times.
2014, August	Peace talks in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)
2016, April	Riek Machar returns from “exile” and is sworn Vice-President of the new unity government.
2016, July	After fights break out, Vice President Machar is forced to leave his position again.
2016, November	Kenya withdraws peacekeeping troops and Japan provides its own troops to reinforce peacekeeping for the first time in 70 years.
2016, December	UN Commission on Human Rights reports sign of ethnic cleansing.
2017, May	Declaration of unilateral peace by President Kiir.
2018, July	President Kiir and Riek Machar (former Vice-President) sign Peace Agreement with the help of the international community and the United Nations.

Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions, and Events

In chronological order:

- Resolution 1996, (8/7/2011) Resolution of the UN Security Council on the Employment of a Peacekeeping Operation in the region (UNMISS)
- Resolution 2123, (24/12/2013) Response to clashes
- Resolution 2155, (27/5/2014) Expansion of resolution 2123 and evaluation of UNMISS
- Resolution 2206, (3/3/2015) Imposition of sanctions
- Resolution 2392, (14/12/2017) Reports of the Secretary General and extension of the term of UNMISS until the 15th of March 2018.

Previous attempts to solve the Issue

As mentioned previously, the UN has made various substantial attempts to solve the South Sudan issue. With the help of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the International community, South Sudan has taken big steps in resolving the ongoing conflict-crisis. Apart from the failed negotiations in 2014 and the “neglected” previous agreements, both sides (rebels and government) drafted an Agreement on Peace in July 2018 and are heading towards a permanent solution that will hopefully bring prosperity in the country. In any case, progress is yet to be made as the situation is now adjusting given the recent nature of these events.

Possible Solutions

There are several aspects of the issue that need to be addressed, focusing on the political one. When drafting resolutions, one has to draw his/her attention to the issue of ceasefire. Although an Agreement has already been signed, that does not necessarily mean that it cannot be breached. Therefore, it is essential to cover the issue of conflict prevention. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to address the political situation of the country, seeing as a unity government would be a “weak” safety

measure, thus one should consider suggesting the formation of a body that would inspect the situation and evaluate the government's actions, should there be a unity government. Furthermore, the status of the Abyei region should be declared in the resolution created in the committee, always bearing someone's delegation policy in mind. In addition, the last aspect you should definitely tackle would be the weapon support, since it is a significant factor that fuels the conflict.

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