

South Sudan War: Tribal Discord or Imperialist Agenda?

Global Research News Hour Episode 52

By [Michael Welch](#), [Ann Garrison](#), and [Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya](#)

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“Bor is empty and Bentiu does not exist anymore; it has been wiped out. It has not been only looted, it has been burned. You can find citizens only in camps for displaced persons... What is appalling is that you have an ethnicised truth, how conflict began, who is targeting civilians.”

- UN Human Rights fact finder Ivan Simonovic on atrocities in South Sudan [1]

“George Clooney is nowhere to be found now! When there was talk about a possible genocide in South Sudan, it was when independence happened. What happened was when they became independent, the fighting began...When the fighting became serious in South Sudan between the militias of the people that formed the government, fighting each other for power and basically the spoils of war, the media stopped reporting about it...but before it they kept on talking about how a genocide and ethnic cleansing was taking place, how there was humanitarian crisis, they were talking about racial politics and they were doing everything to feed ethno-nationalism in that country...”

-Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, during [CKUW 95.9FM](#) interview.

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If observers in the West naively believed that severing South Sudan from its northern counterpart would resolve the human rights situation there, the events of the last several weeks will have decisively dashed those hopes.

The major fighting erupted on December 15 of last year when South Sudan President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy Riek Machar of launching a coup d'etat against him. Machar denied the charge.[2]

A faction of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA/M) had broken off and engaged in fighting against the main army under Kiir's control.[3]

The fighting has begun to align itself with different tribal factions – the Dinka, which Kiir represents, and the Nuer, which Machar represents.[4]

As this program is being aired, peace talks between the two warring factions continue in Addis Ababa in neighbouring Ethiopia.

The toll on the people of South Sudan has been devastating. UN Human Rights monitor Ivan Simonovic has disclosed that there are human rights atrocities being committed by both sides in the conflict, which include mass and extra-judicial killings, arbitrary detention, sexual violence and the use of child soldiers.[5]

As of January 14, one month into the conflict, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that 413,000 people have been internally displaced by the fighting with 74,000 having fled to neighbouring countries such as Uganda.[6]

The International Crisis Group estimated a death toll of close to 10,000. [7]

The Global Research News Hour takes a closer look at the conflict and its historical and geopolitical under-pinnings with two Africa watchers.

[Ann Garrison](#) is an independent journalist and broadcaster who has focused in recent years on war and resource extraction issues on the African Continent. A contributor to KPFA in Berkeley, California, she had a chance to interview **[Mobiari Garang de Mobiari](#)**, a negotiator for the opposition in the South Sudan peace talks in Addis Ababa. Garrison has also written for the San Francisco Bay View, the San Francisco Examiner, San Francisco Focus, Macworld, Macweek, the Op-Ed News, and Pambazuka News among other publications. She is also an occasional contributor to Global Research.

[Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya](#) is a geo-political analyst and the award-winning author of **[The Globalization of NATO \(Clarity Press\)](#)**. He is Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization.

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Notes:

1) BBC News Africa, January 17, 2014, "South Sudan conflict: UN says atrocities on both sides";
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-25771597>

2) BBC News Africa, January 2, 2014, "Analysis: South Sudan's bitter divide";
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-25578346>

3) ibid

4) ibid

5) UN IFEED, January 17, 2014 South Sudan/Ivan Simonvic Presser;
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2014/01/south-sudan-ivan-simonvic-presser/>

6) United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "South Sudan: 6 things you need to know about the humanitarian crisis";
<http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/south-sudan-6-things-you-need-know-about-humanitarian-crisis>

7) Nicholas Kulish, January 9, 2014, New York Times, "New Estimate Sharply Raises Death Toll in South Sudan";
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/world/africa/new-estimate-sharply-raises-death-toll-in-south-sudan.html?_r=1

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