



## South Sudan Watch Update

10 – 16 August 2018



### **Kiir offers amnesty to Machar**

South Sudan President Salva Kiir announced on the national broadcaster that he was offering amnesty to Dr Riek Machar and all the opposition groups in South Sudan. He added that the army would observe ceasefire. He also ordered the army to give aid workers unlimited and unhindered access to all parts of the country. Some of the opposition members welcomed the amnesty deal such as General Nathaniel Oyet Pierino, head of the SPLM-IO's governance committee who said that on top of that, Kiir should free the political prisoners and the detained supporters of the SPLA-IO.

Some groups such as the National Salvation Front were not happy with the amnesty deal a senior member of the National Salvation Front (NAS), Yien Mathew said that the government does not have the authority to pardon NAS.<sup>1</sup>

### **No amnesty says Human Rights Watch**

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has warned President Kiir against offering amnesty to individuals that have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in South Sudan. HRW said that offering amnesty to such people would violate the international law and South Sudan's international obligations. The human rights watchdog group added that history has shown that offering blanket amnesty to opponents as part of peace deals has only led to more social and ethnic divisions. The group said that the United Nations would never endorse a peace deal if amnesty was offered to people that committed war crimes and crimes against humanity and have to face trials.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Kiir Gives Amnesty to Opposition Groups," 9 August 2018, VOA available at <https://www.voanews.com/a/kiir-gives-amnesty-to-opposition-groups/4522014.html>

<sup>2</sup> "There should be no amnesty for war crimes, HRW tells South Sudan," 10 August 2018, PUNCH, available at <https://punchng.com/there-should-be-no-amnesty-for-war-crimes-hrw-tells-south-sudan/>

## **USA wants a hybrid court**

The United States has called on the government of South Sudan to set up a hybrid court to bring those people responsible for committing crimes against humanity to justice. It is not the first time that this call has been made. When Salva Kiir offered amnesty to the opposing parties in South Sudan, the need for a hybrid court became stronger since there is a need for justice to be delivered for the crimes committed against the people of South Sudan. The international community insists that amnesty should not be used as a pardon for those guilty of war crimes. Thousands of South Sudanese have been killed and millions displaced by the war that started in 2013.<sup>3</sup>

## **EU slaps arms embargo on South Sudan**

The European Union governments have committed to implementing an arms embargo on South Sudan as in accordance with the decision of the UN security council to ban the sale of arms to South Sudan. On 13 July 2018 the UN security council imposed an arms embargo on South Sudan till 31 May 2019 in the UN Security Council resolution 2428 (2018). The resolution stated that all member states would prevent the sale or transfer of arms or related materials to South Sudan. The member states would also withhold training, technical and financial assistance to the military. The resolution also extended a travel ban and the freezing of the assets of Malek Ruben Riak and Gen. Paul Malong Awan who are accused of being responsible for the violence that affected South Sudan for years.

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## **232 civilians killed between April and May**

According to a report compiled by the UNMISS Human Rights Division (HRD) the army of South Sudan killed more than 200 people, raped several others and burnt down houses of civilians in several attacks carried out in Southern Unity State between 16 April and 24 May 2018. The reports documents that about 40 villages were attacked during that period, these attacks led to the death of 232 people as well as 50 women, 35 children and 25 others that were hanged. The report also

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<sup>3</sup> "Set up hybrid court, US urges Juba after Kiir's amnesty," 15 August 2018, Daily Monitor available at <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Set-up-hybrid-court-US-urges-Juba-after-Kiir-amnesty/688334-4713008-scn00kz/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> "EU countries commit themselves to implement arms embargo on South Sudan," 12 August 2018, Sudan Tribune, available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article66038>

mentions the rape of about 120 girls and women. It is reported these attacks happened after the cessation of hostilities agreement was signed and the motive behind these attacks was mainly to increase the area controlled by the government while in some areas it was to forcefully displace civilians. To the latter effect, the UNMISS reported that close to 2,000 people were forcefully displaced to the UN protection site in Leer and more than 3,400 were forced into the Bentiu Protection of Civilians site.<sup>5</sup>

### **South Sudan named the most dangerous place for aid workers again**

South Sudan has been ranked as the most dangerous place for aid workers for the third consecutive year by research done by Humanitarian Outcomes. The [report](#) that was released on Monday this week shows 158 major incidents of violence against 313 aid workers in 22 countries in 2017, South Sudan is responsible for one third of those incidents. The violence in South Sudan has made it difficult for communication, development of infrastructure, delivery of aid among so many others.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "South Sudanese army killed 232 civilians in April-May attacks: UN report," 12 August 2018, Sudan Tribune available at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article66042>

<sup>6</sup> "South Sudan again ranked most dangerous place for aid workers," 15 August 2018, Devex available at <https://www.devex.com/news/south-sudan-again-ranked-most-dangerous-place-for-aid-workers-93281>