

ZAMUN 2018 UN SC Study Guide on:

**The crisis in South Sudan**

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## Letter from the Chair

Dear delegates,

My name is Matej Drdák and I will be the president of the Security Council at ZAMUN 2018. Your satisfaction is and will be the primary goal and therefore, together with my co-chair we will try to create as professional and authentic committee as possible. I hope we will manage to do so by applying our experiences from many previous MUNs, where we participated in the positions of delegates and also chairs, and by making all the effort we can. I have no doubts that we will all enjoy the conference. However, do not forget that successful MUN is an achievement of both sides of the process – chairmen and delegates. Your contribution is essential to make all the discussions worth remembering.

The topic of South Soudanese crisis has been chosen for its seriousness as it is currently one of the heaviest military conflict in Africa, (if not the heaviest one). It is also up-to-date and not only complex, but also wide-ranged, affecting multiple areas of society. The task for Security Council will be not only to solve the conflict, but also to adopt solutions for problems which are directly connected to the war. The fighting must be definitely solved, although, during your preparations and position paper writing, do not be scared to look on other urgent issues which can be considered as causes or consequences of the war.

This study guide should serve you as the beginning of your research and give you the basic general information about the issue. Therefore, if you do not know where to start with your preparation, this is the right place to do so. It might seem to be long, though it contains very useful information, do not be worry of reading it. The last thing I can add is to wish you good luck and lot of determination. In case of any problem, feel free to contact me on my e-mail address (matejdrdak18@gmail.com).

I am looking forward to reading your position papers and seeing you at ZAMUN.

See you soon,

Matej Drdák, The president of SC

## Introduction

South Sudanese crisis is one of the most relevant and worrying current global issues. Even though it cannot be considered as a threat for countries around the world such as USA, China or European countries, it is so disastrous that right now, it is a serious concern for international community. Numbers of direct or indirect casualties grow higher and higher. Since the outbreak of the conflict, over 50,000 people have been killed, 4 million were displaced and 7 million are in need of humanitarian aid out of 12 million South Sudanese population.

Moreover, due to several specifications, it is more and more important to solve the issue. First of all, there are some similarities with the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, mainly due to ethnic cleansing being present. After the civil war in Rwanda, UNSC created an International Criminal Tribunal in order to punish all horrible atrocities. This body (together with one created for Yugoslavia) then highlighted the need of such a body as International Criminal Court. Nations worldwide decided not to allow something like Rwandan genocide happen again. It is therefore in everyone's best interest to stop the fighting.

In addition, the war is absolutely destructive for South Sudanese people. The problematic interferes in South Sudanese high politics and Eastern African international politics, contains human rights abuse, causes economy problems and implicates mass migration. All of this is caused by war and because of that, the war must be stopped as soon as possible.

## Definition of key terms

### **South Sudan**

It is the youngest country worldwide as it became independent in 2011, when almost 99% of South Sudanese population voted in favour of independent state. The country is located in Eastern Central Africa with the capital of Juba. The president of the South Sudan is Salva Kiir Mayardit who has played an important role in the gain of independence.

### **SPLM**

Sudanese People's Liberation Movement is the biggest political party which rules in South Sudan. The leader of the party is president Salva Kiir, ethnic Dinka (This ethnic group is the most numerous in South Sudan with 20% of the population, the second is Nuer ethnic group – 15%). The party disposes with armed forces under name of Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

### **SPLM-IO**

Sudanese People's Liberation Movement in Opposition is a name of rebel groups under command of Riek Machar, ethnic Nuer, who is political opponent of Salva Kiir. This movement was the one which started the clashes with SPLA – governmental forces. Other rebel factions joined the fight later on.

### **IGAD**

Intergovernmental Authority on Development is an international organization which consists of 8 Eastern African countries. Its primary goal is the support of trade between the countries, though it helps a lot in negotiation process in South Sudanese conflict; Ethiopian capital Addis Abeba serves as the place of peace talks.

## History of the issue

### Before the war

Many of Sudanese people do not know other life than the one during the war. In 1955, the first civil war began. The roots came from the origin of the state of Sudan, which was formed by colonial superpowers (Britain, France) in very unnatural way, regrouping under one administration Muslims, Christians and people with traditional religion and tens of diverse ethnic groups. The diversification resulted in 17 years long conflict and then into another one (1983-2005). The main reason of fighting was the independence of South Sudan. South Sudanese supposed that slow economic and social progress has been caused by northern government which has been oppressing and exploiting the south. Under the lead of John Garang, and later on Salva Kiir, a peace treaty has been signed in 2005 between the southern rebels and government, opening doors for subsequent separation. Even though the South Sudan is independent since 2011, the assumed progress, which should have come from self-governing, has not been achieved.

### Outbreak

Although South Sudan is a young and unstable country, it is democratic (the next elections will be held in July 2018). In all democratic countries, it is normal that political parties and individuals announce they want to gain power in order to change something or simply rule. South Sudan was and is no exception. Before the outbreak of the war, in the first half year of 2013, there were multiple voices in the ruling party SPLM asking for new leadership – without Salva Kiir, as he was largely criticised. In July 2013, Riek Machar together with other politicians wishing to replace Kiir in upcoming elections in 2015, have been deprived of office. Official announcement of the government declared a fight against corruption as the cause. However, Machar still remained active in politics and later that year he accused Kiir of power abusing.

In the end of 2013, first fighting broke out. During a meeting of National Liberation Council in the capital Juba on 15<sup>th</sup> of December, a conflict within presidential guards known as Tiger Battalion started the conflict. Dinka soldiers tried to disarm Nuer ones allegedly to the order of president Kiir. This was absolutely out of the interest of Nuer soldiers, who slightly sympathised with Machar and they thought, this disarmament was an offensive move against Nuer ethnic group as a whole. After a fist fight whether they should or should not be disarmed, weapons came online too and atrocities between Nuer rebels and governmental troops have spread soon from the Juba to the other regions of the country.

Statements of officials are contradictory. President Kiir claimed that the fighting in Juba has been caused by Machar trying to overthrow the government. Kiir then pushed hard on rebels, killing many Nuer SPLA soldiers and their families. However, Machar, this time already in exile, denied the accusations and said that the fighting was Kiir's plan to consolidate power. This leaves the origins of the conflict unclear, although an element of power struggle is well visible. Nevertheless, the one clear thing is, that during the conflict, each side is fighting for its truth.

### Peace efforts and complications

The first peace agreement was mediated by IGAD in January 2014. However, it has been violated as the fighting began soon after. The same result has been "achieved" with other peace agreements (May 2014, November 2014, February 2015). All of them had more or less the same goal – to stop the battle and create a way for establishment of transitional government until next elections will be held.

The spark of hope has come on the scene in August 2015, when a Compromise Peace Agreement signed by SPLM and SPLM-IO did not result in the fighting again. Moreover, Riek Machar has returned from exile for the first time in April 2016 and has become vice-president again. Unfortunately, the violations erupted again in July 2016, leaving the peace building process frozen again.

It would be far easier (even though still hard) to solve the issue if SPLM and SPLM-IO were the only actors. In reality, there are many other ethnic groups and militias fighting for their interest, although SPLM and SPLM-IO are those with the most notable influence.

For instance, in February 2015, a largely Murle militant group called Cobra faction was divided. One part stayed loyal to the government as they were treaties relying them, the other part formed new group called Greater Pibor Forces, as they refused to support president Kiir. Ethnic division is visible also in the Nuer camp, as a subethnic Bul Nuer group joined president in the fight.

Big swing happened when Compromise Peace Agreement has been signed as SPLM-IO has been divided. Not everybody was familiar with Machar's will to accept the peace agreement. Three high-ranked generals left SPLM-IO and created their own South Sudan National Army (Gabriel Tang, Gathoth Gatkuoth, Peter Gadet).

In the end of 2015, Salva Kiir's government introduced a new division of land administration. This led to a new wave of dissatisfaction resulting for example into militant group of Shilluk ethnicity switching their position, not joining the SPLM, but the SPLM-IO and creating new militant group – Agwelek forces. However, SPLM-IO has tried to preserve the peace agreement and therefore, some Shilluk fighters felt dissatisfied and formed their own militias which did not respect the agreement.

Although the Compromise Peace Agreement of August 2015 has been in the force, since that date, new militias have been created amongst which where ones formed by Lotuko people, Shilluk, or Azande, fighting mainly against new administration system. New clashes have awakened some rebels across the country, continuing in atrocities.

In July 2016 during a meeting between Kiir and Machar in Juba, a clash between governmental forces and rebels occurred again resulting in Machar announcement that South Sudan is "back to war". Machar then left Juba and came back to exile to South Africa.

The fighting between different rebel groups and governmental forces continued and is still present. However, following a peace agreement from December 2017 new peace talks started in Addis Abeba in February 2018. Even though it is unclear how they will end, the next round is set to be in March 2018.



## Current situation

### Power redistribution

Current peace talks mediated by IGAD and held in Addis Abeba are attended fortunately by both sides – government and rebels. The second round of negotiations ended on 19<sup>th</sup> of February. A positive fact is that opposition groups are more or less united, having similar stances. The head of united opposition delegation is Henry Dilah Odwar as Riek Machar is still in exile. However, there are many disagreements which popped up during the discussion, making the deal still impossible.

For instance, opposition tried to address the roots of the conflict in military and administration area. They wanted the military to be less based on ethnic principals by training all soldiers in the same way and by creating a unified South Sudanese army where all ethnic groups would have partial representation in order to minimise the probability of existence of a national army where only 1 ethnic group has majority (what is the situation now). However, the government wished a bit different solution. Governmental delegation preferred simple inclusion of all current opposition militias into the national army.

In the topic of administration, the opposition's aim was to change the leadership of the country – dramatically. They proposed the exit of Salva Kiir, what governmental delegation could not accept. Government also refused to accept power share ratio of 50% for current government and 50% for opposition, preferring 51% for government.

After the conference, both sides accused the other of underlaying obstacles. Opposition found governmental position too radical while government described opposition proposals as impossible. Nevertheless, both sides could be considered as not flexible enough. Until next round of talks, the negotiators have agreed to try to solve all problematic points.

### Impact on economy

The ongoing war has had a negative impact on South Sudanese economy. Once the fighting broke out, oil wells in the north have become one of the targets of rebel attacks. As the war entered its 5<sup>th</sup> year and the front line has been changing through the time, constant oil production was not possible. Even though South Sudan is rich on oil, the country could not use its primary resource of income.

The economy decline was even visible as the second largest sector – agriculture had many stumbles and falls due to the fighting. It influenced the farming enormously as fighting not only did not allow farmers to do their job, but also forced them to flee their homes. In addition, last heavy rain in September 2017 or other natural disasters (dries, floods) have slowed or even stopped the farming, reducing the crops outcome for following year.

On the top of it, due to the war, national military expenditure grows more and more, leaving other sectors of economy short of money. Because of lack of money and the hyperinflation of 300%, the highest rate in the world, public institutions, such as administration, judicature, police or social system, fall apart. The country has not enough facilities to finance functioning of the state.

### Impact on society

Many of human rights and laws are abused because of the conflict. Right to free speech is limited by government in order to slow or even stop the spread of anti-governmental opinions. Soldiers of both sides commit violent crimes on civilians. Women are raped, thefts are a common daily phenomenon, children are kidnapped in order to become soldiers. It is estimated that almost 20,000 of children have already been recruited and since the outbreak, the number has been only growing higher and higher.

Children also do not attend the school as 70% of them are without the access to education (again, the highest rate in the world). People have a little to eat, almost half of the population is in the need of food. In the beginning of 2017, the famine was declared by

UN. Hundreds of thousands are on the brink of famine. Infrastructure is in terrible condition and small rain makes roads unpassable, which results in people not getting at least the small surplus of food from the Eastern Equatoria, breadbasket of the country. What is more, the storages of humanitarian aid are being rifled and convoys delivering the supplies are being burgled.

Difficulties in delivering the humanitarian aid result in bad health conditions not only in the country, but also in the humanitarian aid camps. Insufficiency of drinkable water forces people to drink dirty water. Diseases like cholera or malaria are more and more frequent. For instance, more than 13,000 cases of cholera have been reported in 2017.

South Sudan is considered as 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest refugee crisis, following Syria and Afghanistan. Since 2013, 4 million, one third of South Sudanese population, have been displaced – one half internally, the other half in neighbouring countries, fleeing mainly to Uganda and Sudan.

## Solutions

### Previous important UNSC attempts to solve the issue

- [Resolution 1996](#) (8<sup>th</sup> of July 2011) – Established United Nations Mission in the Republic of the South Sudan (UNMISS)
- [Resolution 2132](#) (24<sup>th</sup> of December 2013) – Briefly responded to the outbreak of the fighting
- [Resolution 2155](#) (27<sup>th</sup> of May 2014) – Expanded important points from the resolution 2132 and determined responsibilities of UNMISS in the conflict
- [Resolution 2206](#) (3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2015) – Determined sanctions
- [Resolution 2392](#) (14<sup>th</sup> of December 2017) – Reports of the Secretary-General on Sudan and South Sudan extending UNMISS until 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2018

### Issues which must be addressed

Obviously, the very first step towards solving the issue is the ceasefire. This includes not only stopping the violations but also prevention against that kind of activity. Therefore, the problematic of fractured and ethnic based army must be solved. Both the opposition and government have their plan to do so, although if at least one of them will be realised it will be the only one in total.

The weapon support is a huge problem, because it fuels the conflict. The main weapon suppliers are Sudan and Uganda. USA was in the front against weapon trade with South Sudan, however, the neighbouring countries of South Sudan did not show any will to stop the trade. These nations are backed by Russia and China and therefore, if the regional countries in the region do not achieve common stance, UNSC resolution, which would prohibit aforementioned trade, probably won't pass.

The next question is who will lead the country once the peace is set. Kiir does not show will to leave the politics, so does Machar. However, both sides would not like to see the opposite leader in the leadership. IGAD proposed a possibility of establishing 4 vice

presidents until next elections will be held, though this proposition did not pass during the last peace talks in Addis Abeba.

Not only has the South Sudan political problems, it also has economic and social problems which are the causes or consequences of the instability and insurgency. It is clear, that many people suffer because of the war and their rights are violated. In all areas, their situation must be solved quickly in order to save as many lives as possible by providing and securing humanitarian aid and by rebuilding economical infrastructure.

Last but not least, the refugee crisis represents a huge threat not only to the economic growth in South Sudan, but also to the security in whole region of Eastern Africa. Conflicts between South Sudanese refugees and Sudanese ones close to the border between two states have been documented. Another problem is the situation in Uganda, which hosts 2 million people, whilst 1 million of them came in the last year.

## Conclusion

The crisis in South Sudan is very complex issue. It has complicated roots and far reaching consequences. It could seem that such a horrible situation cannot happened again, taking into consideration that the humanity has passed through Second World War, Yugoslavian conflict or the one in Rwanda. However, nothing was solved for more than 5 years now. The problem could be that there is a lack of political will to do so.

Moreover, this issue has another face. It seems that Salva Kiir's rule is almost unstoppable. The elections which should have been held in 2015, were postponed due to the war. Kiir's government shows only a small will to change something in the country. Violations of human rights and freedoms, sometimes with no reasons and not respecting international treaties (for example those which prohibit children recruitment) have been reported. The need of solution correlates with a need of saving the democracy and independence in the South Sudan, the project on which Western democracies, such as USA or UK have been working for so long.

Finally, the international community is strong enough to reach wishing peace and stability. However, one may ask, whether it is united enough to do so.

Once again, I would like to remark, that your preparation should not end here. There is still plenty of useful information you can find and use for your position papers and during discussion at ZAMUN. I am sure you will do wonderful job.

## Further reading recommendations

*Humanitarian situation:*

<https://www.mercycorps.org/articles/south-sudan/quick-facts-what-you-need-know-about-south-sudan-crisis>

*Quick facts:*

[https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/south\\_sudan\\_cr\\_fs04\\_02-09-2018.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/south_sudan_cr_fs04_02-09-2018.pdf)

*Cause and Consequences:*

<http://www.academicresearchjournals.org/IJPSD/PDF/2017/January/Geleta.pdf>

*Brief conflict summary in a video:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkWldwFdTPo>

*Outbreak in detail (Chapter 6: The case of South Sudan):*

[https://books.google.sk/books?id=5WmEDAAAQBAJ&pg=PT220&lpg=PT220&dq=kii+r+tiger+battalion&source=bl&ots=XGp55DaHRX&sig=4Od65m\\_D16CPug-U3CdQgl-U138&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwin9IGd7bbZAhXBCOwKHZr9CTEQ6AEIQDAG#v=onepage&q=kiir%20tiger%20battalion&f=false](https://books.google.sk/books?id=5WmEDAAAQBAJ&pg=PT220&lpg=PT220&dq=kii+r+tiger+battalion&source=bl&ots=XGp55DaHRX&sig=4Od65m_D16CPug-U3CdQgl-U138&hl=sk&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwin9IGd7bbZAhXBCOwKHZr9CTEQ6AEIQDAG#v=onepage&q=kiir%20tiger%20battalion&f=false)

*Another look from other perspective:*

<http://www.academicresearchjournals.org/IJPSD/PDF/2017/January/Geleta.pdf>

*Involvement of key countries:*

<http://horninstitute.digilab.co.ke/revisiting-the-role-of-international-and-regional-actors-in-the-south-sudan-conflict/>

*And, of course, your own research in order to get more information about the issue and write the position of your country.*

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