

SOUTH SUDAN

Party Portrait

South Sudan's regional perspective differs from Sudan's due to its non-Muslim political regime. South Sudan has a very weak economic, social and strategic position in the region. South Sudan declared independence from Sudan in 2011. Thus far, South Sudanese statehood has been characterized by instability, violence, and humanitarian need. The civil war between the government of Salva Kiir and opposition forces has displaced 3.6 million citizens as IDPs and refugees. The violence has also resulted in a humanitarian crisis, as 4.8 million are threatened with extreme hunger, and famine has begun to affect certain areas. Due to the severity of the violence, farmers in the agricultural-based society are largely unable to plant crops. Widespread attacks on aid workers and convoys make it difficult to reach vulnerable populations. The conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives, but the presence of a UN intervention of 15,000 troops has frequently drawn the ire of the president, who desires to avoid Western influence in the country.

For the past two years, the UN has fallen below its funding goals for South Sudan. In 2015, the UN only met 62% of its \$1.6 billion goal for the 4.6 million people affected. For 2016, only 88% of the more modest goal of \$1.29 billion was funded. The resulting gap in resources leaves vulnerable populations in South Sudan more susceptible to starvation and disease.

Key Interests

- Strengthen the economy by making strong ties with major regional countries that are financially sound, such as Israel, which supports South Sudan with ammunition and financial aid.
- Resolve internal political problems with minimal assistance from outside actors like the UN, whom the South Sudanese government views with suspicion.

Sources of Leverage

Energy – South Sudan is oil rich
Natural resources – South Sudan shares many of the same resources as Sudan, such as mineral resources

Regional Strategy

Since independence, South Sudan has been plagued by severe political strife resulting in civil war, widespread drought and hunger. The government has failed to control the various insurgent groups, and has a contentious relationship with neighboring Sudan. South Sudan also faces the threat of infiltration by terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qaeda. Therefore, South Sudan's regional strategy is to counter terrorism by securing its borders and collaborating with its neighbors on military and intelligence strategy. South Sudan also desires to fix its internal fractures, bring home refugees from surrounding areas, and develop its natural resource extraction to bring profit to the failing economy.

Powerful Individuals

Salva Kiir (chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation movement, SPLM, and commander in chief of the armed forces), Pagan Amum Okech (senior leader in the military and active political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, SPLA), Dr Riek Machar Teny (senior member of the SPLA and leader of SPLM/A rival faction), James Wani Igga (National Assembly Speaker and current SPLM vice chairman), Dr Lam Akol (senior member of SPLA)

Potential Negotiation Moves

Convince China to mediate internal disputes - With India and Malaysia, China is one of South Sudan's three major oil investors; however, conflict threatens China's investments in both South Sudan and Sudan. China has the necessary leverage, resources, and interest to attract parties to the table.
Appeal to neighboring states for assistance in ending the conflict - Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda have an interest in ending the conflict as their borders have been besieged with South Sudanese refugees.

Internal Conflicts

After gaining independence from Sudan, South Sudan has fallen into a civil war between the government of Kiir and its opposition. In addition, internal conflict by internally displaced people has been a cause for concern for the government and public alike.

Memberships

AU, UN

Allies

EGYPT Government, INDIA

Partners

CHINA, EUROPEAN UNION, HUMANITARIAN ACTORS, INDIA, ISRAEL, PALESTINE Fatah, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES

Rivals

HUMANITARIAN ACTORS, IRAN, LIBYA Government of National Accord, SAUDI ARABIA, SUDAN

Adversaries

SUDAN

Active Armed Opponents

N/A

Proxy

N/A

External Sponsor

N/A

Aid Recipient

N/A

Aid Donor

AU, EUROPEAN UNION, ISRAEL, UNITED STATES, UNITED NATIONS