

Committee: UN WOMEN (ONU-CRISIS CONTINUA)

Chair:

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Topic: Creating Measures to Protect Women from Sexual Abuse
in Conflict Zones The Case Of South Sudan



1. INTRODUCTION

UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. It focuses on priority areas that are fundamental to women's equality and can unlock progress across the board. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda. The entity works to position gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a more inclusive world.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to address such challenges. In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The creation of UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda, seeking to address the fragmented and often uncoordinated efforts within the UN system regarding gender equality by bringing together resources for greater impact. To merge and build on the important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system; the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); which focuses exclusively on gender equality and women's empowerment

Working for the empowerment and rights of women and girls globally, UN Women's main roles are:

- ❖ —To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms

- ❖ —To help Member States implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society
- ❖ —To lead and coordinate the UN's system work on gender equality, as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress

The committee plays a key role in protecting women in conflict zones by ensuring their rights are upheld and promoting accountability for violence against them. It monitors violations, supports the implementation of international laws like UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and urges governments and armed groups to protect women from sexual violence and exploitation.

Sexual violence encompasses any sexual act or the attempt to obtain a sexual act. It can go from unwanted sexual comments or advances, acts of trafficking and more. It can be by any person regardless of the relationship with the victim. Sexual violence has multiple forms which includes rape, sexual abuse, forced pregnancy, force sterilization, forced abortion, forced prostitution, trafficking, sexual enslavement, force nudity and more. It is considered sexual violence when the victim is doing something against its will.

On the other hand gender-based violence is considered to be a harmful act considered to be against an individual or a specific group of individuals, in this case women, because of the basis of its gender. The difference between each is that sexual violence is towards any sexual act, and gender violence is any harmful act towards the gender.

In the short term, women often face imminent dangers such as sexual violence, loss of family members, forced displacement, and lack of access to healthcare, education, and income. This causes trauma, insecurity, and dependence. The long-term effects, it could be said, are even more damaging: persistent poverty, chronic health problems (including mental health), exclusion from political and social life, and very limited economic opportunities. Furthermore, these prolonged consequences also impact entire communities by slowing down recovery and reinforcing cycles of inequality and violence.

Between 2020 and 2022 incidents of political violence targeting women have increased by 50% in conflict-affected countries between

UN Women has collaborated with local organizations in South Sudan, like Amnesty International, UNMISS and to promote gender equality and women empowerment. They mapped and partnered with women led organizations in all ten states to strengthen humanitarian response and leadership.

Through the UN Peacebuilding Fund, they supported three local NGOs: EVE Organization for Women, National Press Club, and LCAD to boost women's political participation. They also launched Women Economic Empowerment Centers, offering training, grants and support for gender based violence survivors. Additionally, UN WOMEN worked with local partners during campaigns like the 16 Days of Activism to raise awareness and promote community involvement in ending violence against women.

These partnerships have registered tangible results despite the prevailing challenges. For instance, UN Women support to women-led organizations has been immeasurable in providing protection and essential commodities to women and girls, who are largely survivors of violence and internally displaced. The far-reaching advocacy and public awareness campaigns, such as the 16 Days of Activism campaign launched in December 2024, were successful in bringing together government leaders and women's organizations in reaffirming South Sudan's commitment to ending Gender-Based Violence. In economic empowerment, efforts to expand women's access to resources, such as land for farming, are aimed at directly improving livelihoods and control over assets. While specific South Sudan figures for recent land allocation were not found in general reports, other similar regional projects have seen large numbers of women transition from laborers to independent farmers. Furthermore, UN Women's partnerships work to create conditions for increased women's political engagement by enabling the review and enactment of key bills like the National Elections Act and advocating the Women Empowerment Bill, thereby creating a conducive environment for women to engage more effectively in democratic processes.

Before the 2023 Sudan war, the broader region had just seen conflict and displacement. There is a distinction to be made between the South Sudan and Sudan cases. South Sudan remained under Sudan until 2011. While the Darfur crisis of Sudan began in 2003, South Sudan's primary issue, a civil war, even pushed forward until late December of 2013, only three years after being an independent country. Historically, the current Sudan war (pre-2011 and current) has left Sudan with second-most refugees in Africa over 1 million refugees, the majority of which are South Sudanese (since it was previously Sudanese territory) and Ethiopian.

The topic is relevant to the International community because the protection and empowerment of women in conflict zones is a requirement for global peace, security and human rights. Women and

girls are typically targeted by conflicts through violence and discrimination, and ensuring their protection is not only a moral obligation but also a legal one under international law.

The UN, through its bodies such as UN Women and the CEDAW Committee, has taken concrete steps towards addressing the impact of conflict on women. It has lobbied and imposed international legislation and resolutions, including UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for the protection of women and their inclusion in peacebuilding processes. The UN also supports programs that offer relief, trauma support, and legal aid to women ravaged by conflicts. It also works with local governments and organizations, peacekeeping training units, monitoring human rights violations, and ensuring that justice is served to the survivors. Through policies, investment, and on-the-ground programs, the UN and its committees aim to reduce gender-based violence, promote women's leadership, and rebuild communities with gender equality in mind.

In the past, the global community would react to war against women with little consideration, generally providing routine humanitarian responses without specific gender issues. Nevertheless, increasingly, there came to be a consciousness of the importance, particularly following the ratification of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, an historic juncture declaring women victims and agents of peace. Reactions became more specific since then. Now the international community actively advocates gender-sensitive aid, legal protection, and women's engagement in peacebuilding processes. Organizations partner with local communities to enable women's security, rights, and leadership become priority in conflict recovery and response.

In South Sudan, protecting women from sexual violence in conflict zones faces serious obstacles, hindering effective intervention. Politically, the ongoing conflict and weak governance impede the enforcement of law and accountability. Logistically, widespread insecurity and poor infrastructure complicate aid organizations' access to victims. Culturally, stigma and fear of retaliation prevent many survivors from reporting abuses. Socially, displacement has left many women without support networks, legal protection, or access to services. Together, these elements allow sexual violence to persist with little consequence.

Effective intervention in the protection of women in war zones is faced with a number of significant challenges. Politically, unstable regimes, ongoing violence, and a deficiency of commitment to

women's rights often interrupt the enactment of protective legislation and sometimes make international cooperation difficult. Logistically, war-torn infrastructure and insecurity make it difficult to deliver aid, ensure safe space, or provide extended support. Culturally, deep-seated gender norms and taboos with regard to issues of sexual violence can silence the survivors while denying women access to assistance. Socially, displaced or affected women tend to be stigmatized, illiterate, and endowed with little economic resources, which makes it even harder for them to heal and participate in the reconstruction process.

It has direct implications for the peace and development of East Africa, undermining social stability, increasing insecurity, and reducing economic growth. When women suffer violence, are left out of decision-making, or are denied education or healthcare due to conflict, entire communities are affected. Displacement and gender-based violence generate cycles of trauma, poverty, and inequality that make it increasingly challenging to reconstruct peaceful societies. In addition, if women are excluded from peacebuilding processes, less sustainable peace agreements are achieved. The inability to safeguard and empower women during conflicts undermines human rights, impedes recovery, and hinders long-term development in the region.

II. HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

On April 15th, 2023, South Sudan violent clashes erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This caused a displacement of almost 13 million people, which includes internally displaced people (IDPs), as well as asylum seekers and refugees. This problem aggravates most of Sudan's existing problems, such as ongoing conflicts, disease outbreaks, economic and political instability and climate emergencies.

Sexual violence in South Sudan has significantly affected women, with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) documenting 193 cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 142 women, 46 girls. The situation is fueled by systemic impunity and male dominance, which constructs violence against women as permissible. (Verified in 2020)

Cases of forced nudity, forced marriage, sexual slavery and threats of sexual violence were also recorded. Service providers reported 227 incidents perpetrated by armed actors. Sexual violence was often committed during or on the margins of military operations and in the vicinity of military bases and cantonment and training sites, while victims were engaged in routine livelihood activities. Nursing mothers and pregnant women were not spared, and attacks were also reported against internally displaced persons and individuals with disabilities. Victims were often targeted on the basis of their actual or perceived ethnic or political affiliation, with some stripped naked in public as a form of humiliation.

Liebling H, Barret H. and Artz L, (2020), mentioned that fighting in South Sudan is so complicated. Sexual violence is rife and is used as a weapon of war, it has devastating physical, sexual, reproductive, and mental health effects and destroys communities' social fabric. Women and girls face brutal forms of sexual violence, and armed groups often control access to medical services. UN human rights observed that officers on both sides of the civil war order their military to perpetrate rapes. Cone (2019).

There are several armed actors that are involved in the violations of human rights in South Sudan. The UN said that the army, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in Opposition (SPLM-IO), led by Riek Machar, non-state armed groups and unknown armed persons have committed important violations and abuses against 243 children. The real number could be higher. The violations included abduction, killing, maiming, rape and forced recruitment for combat and support roles as porters, cooks and spies. Amnesty International USA (2025).

While the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan (CHRSS) is investigating these serious abuses and holding evidence in reserve for future accountability, impunity is rampant. Some sanctions (travel ban and asset freeze) have also been imposed by the UN Security Council against individuals who are obstructing peace or abusing human rights. The UN and human rights groups routinely accuse the Riek Machar SPLM-IO of recruiting children and other grave abuses, although it is rare to see such commanders individually held accountable for them. A case in point was a former First Vice President, Taban Deng Gai (who had defected from the SPLM-IO to President Kiir's government), who was specially sanctioned by America. The administration invested in horrific violations of human rights in 2020 to consolidate the political authority of the leader and to intimidate rivals.

The current situation for women in South Sudan is dire, with up to 65% experiencing physical or sexual violence in conflict zones. More than half of the 2 million people displaced within South Sudan are women and girls, who are at high risk of gender-based violence and forced and child marriage.

As Euroasia Press and News (2025), expressed that the oil economy has always played a very important role in South Sudan's political sector. "The government uses oil money to buy arms" said

James Okuk of Juba University to Anadolu Agency in Juba. He said that the government of South Sudan is using oil money to get arms and military supplies. If the payments for recruited fighting soldiers come from oil revenues, then the oil is contributing to worsen the conflict in South Sudan.

“They have used the country’s oil to buy weapons, fund deadly militias and hire companies owned by political insiders to support military operations that have resulted in horrific atrocities and war crimes” Said J. R. Mailey, who led special investigations at The Sentry (Investigative and policy organization that seeks to disable multinational predatory networks that benefit from violent conflict, repression and kleptocracy).

Investigation led by The Sentry in 2018, reported high levels of corruption in the oil sector in South Sudan. They found that South Sudan’s elite is using the country’s oil revenue to get rich and use it to support the military.

Some regional countries have influenced the war in South Sudan. Africa News reported that Uganda deployed an unknown number of troops to South Sudan to protect the fragile government of President Salva Kir against a possible rebel advance in Juba. The information was given by Maj Gen Felix Kulayigye spokesperson for Uganda Military.

The ceasefire agreements have failed to protect civilians. The Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operation Jean-Pierret Lacroix told the Security Council that the ceasefire agreements were signed but the parties involved violated the agreements.

The conflict in South Sudan is constantly affecting democracy. According to Justice Truth Dignity, the election has constantly been postponed. The general election for a new democratically elected government will be held in December 2026.

All this prolonged political uncertainty and delay in democratic processes greatly limit the political participation of women. Without regular electoral processes and robust democratic institutions, channels through which women can emerge as politicians, cast their votes, and engage in political rhetoric are limited. Coupled with that, fear and displacement created by war usually discourage

women from visiting polling stations or community politics, relegating their voice in the administration of the country to the background.

Militarization of the government has affected human rights in South Sudan. Soldiers' acts against civilians mostly fueled impunity.

In the time of humanitarian emergencies, e.g., conflict, natural disasters, or forced migration, women and girls have typically higher and unique vulnerabilities. They include higher exposure to gender-based violence, deprivation of access to health care, especially maternal health care, and higher economic vulnerability. Emergency conditions can reinforce gender roles as customary to limit women's decision-making capacity and access to assistance. Alternatively, they take primary care and local leadership functions during the recovery phase. The gender response needs to be addressed during humanitarian emergencies in order to make the response effective, equitable, and accessible to all affected groups.

The sexual abuse in South Sudan is a violation of the human rights established at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Sexual abuse affects the right to life and security (article 3), right to be free from torture and cruel or degrading treatment and the right to health and dignity.

In South Sudan about 65 percent of women will experience some form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), such as child marriage and rape during their lifetime. Peter Kongmalavong (2022).

The displacement caused by conflicts has greatly aggravated the vulnerability of women, exposing them to greater dangers of sexual violence, exploitation, and abuse, especially in refugee camps or during migrations. They often lose access to basic services, such as healthcare, education, and legal protection, making it quite difficult to meet their needs or seek justice. It is not uncommon that displaced women become heads of households without any economic means, and as a result are driven to seek employment in risky endeavors or become reliant on other people. Secondly, their lack of legal status or documentation puts them at risk of trafficking and discrimination, and these further increase their insecurity and marginalization.

According to Tigere Chagutah, Amnesty International's Acting Regional Director for East and Southern Africa (2023), the South Sudanese government claims that the whole level of violence that directly affects the civilians' lives are due to inter communal violence or between opposition groups. Assuming that the high level of violence in South Sudan has no connection to the armed conflict started in 2013. This government position conveniently uses the local armed actors to fight their battles and weaken the opposition. The lack of government intervention reinforces the impunity at those cycles of violence.

International organizations typically help women, especially in war zones or after they end. They offer humanitarian aid, such as food, shelter, and specialized medical care depending on what women need, including reproductive health services. They also support survivors of gender-based violence with legal and psychological counseling. Organizations like UN Women and UNHCR economically empower women via training, small business grants, and other jobs. They empower women to engage in peacebuilding as well as in decision-making so that their voices get heard while rebuilding their communities. All these are done in an attempt to safeguard rights, restore dignity, and foster long-term resilience.

Survivors of sexual violence in refugee camps often face tremendous challenges even with international efforts for their aid. Frequently, many camps lack adequate medical, psychological, and legal services, which makes it difficult for survivors to obtain the care they need. Some may feel terrified to report abuses out of fear of stigma, retaliation, or because they fear they won't be believed. In some cases, the communities themselves blame or isolate the victims. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations like UNHCR, UN Women, and NGOs do work to provide safe spaces, trauma counseling, legal assistance, and emergency medical care, including access to post-rape treatment. Still, the level and quality of support can vary greatly depending on available resources, security conditions, and cultural attitudes within the camp.

According to the United Nation Mission in South Sudan, sexual assault survivors also suffer for the inability to access to health care for physically and emotional recover. A new report by the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan documented the important lack of health care for sexual violence.

International help constantly is trying to support health for South Sudan refugees. The United Nations Missions in South Sudan (UNMISS) is always trying to protect civilians and boost the community's confidence.

Blue Helmets from India provide free medical treatment to 315 displaced South Sudanese at the UN Protection of Civilians site, near the Mission's base in Malakal.

In the year 2023, women and children make up a substantial fraction of the internally displaced persons (IDP) in the world, there is no doubt. Let's take an example, in Sudan, more than half of the internally displaced population are women and over a quarter are children under five years old.

Similarly, in Somalia, nearly half of the IDPs are children under 11 years old, and another 25% are women and teenage girls. Globally, women and children together account for approximately 80% of the newly displaced persons, which highlights the disproportionate impact of displacement on these groups. This demographic imbalance underscores the urgent need for targeted humanitarian interventions that address the specific vulnerabilities of women and children in displacement contexts.

One of the main challenges that victims of sexual violence face are related to social cultural believes. The Refugees International team heard from one medical service provider near the agencies that work in the Juba and Malakal PoCs, that the biggest risk for women is at their houses. He said that women are not allowed to decide about their own bodies and that their resources are denied. Another NGO (Not Government Organization) representative said that men beat women in their households, engage marital rape and sexual assault and force young girls to marry. In this situation, it is difficult to get South Sudanese women and girls to talk about the sexual violence they suffer.

III. CURRENT HAPPENINGS

The current situation of sexual violence in conflict and affected areas of South Sudan remains extremely alarming. Women and girls continue to face widespread sexual and gender violence, including rape, gang rape, and sexualslavery, often perpetrated by armed groups and sometimes security forces during clashes, raids or displacement. Recent UN reports indicate a rise in cases, though the true scale is likely far greater due to severe underreporting caused by stigma and fear of reprisals.

International and local organizations are providing multifaceted support in South Sudan, including the United Nations (UNMISS, WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO) focusing on humanitarian assistance and protection, and organizations like the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and International Medical Corps offering health, water, food, and livelihoods programs.

Discord undermined national and regional stability, driving violence, displacement, and economic chaos. Nationally, persistent fighting weakens government authority, interrupts essential services, and fractures social cohesion complicating the maintenance of order. Regionally, conflicts frequently spill across borders, causing refugee flows and cross-border tensions, destabilizing neighboring countries. The spread of armed groups and networks of illicit trade threatens the security of the broader region. This instability hinders development, discourages investment, and prolongs cycles of poverty and violence, creating a challenging environment for lasting peace and growth.

Certain fundamental structures fail to stop abuses against women in conflict areas, all due to various limitations. First, weak legal enforcement prevails, as many countries lack the political will or the capacity to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of gender-based violence; this leads to impunity. Second, limited access to justice for survivors, especially in remote or conflict-affected areas, prevents them from seeking protection or redress. Third, insufficient protection from peacekeeping forces or security personnel, sometimes due to a lack of training or resources, fails to deter violence and even contributes to abuse. Fourth, cultural and social norms that tolerate or cover up violence against women discourage reporting and accountability. Finally, insufficient funding and coordination among international organizations, governments and local groups undermine the effectiveness of prevention programs and support services.

There is much to do in order to empower and protect women in conflict areas that are displaced and are in violence risk. The principal responsibility of the Security Council is the maintenance of international peace and security. It is formed by 15 members and all states must comply with the Council resolutions. The Security Council calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it in peaceful ways. The Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or authorize the use of force to keep international peace and security.

Since the resolution #1325 of 2000, the Security Council recognized the importance of women participation and the inclusion of gender perspectives to keep peace.

On 2008, the resolution number 1820 of the Security Council recognizes sexual violence as a tactic of war and make it part of the international peace so sexual violence must be attendant by the Security Council.

By ensuring women's participation in peace processes, providing access to essential services including legal aid and livelihoods, providing direct response to gender based violence victims and survivors

and improving their access to justice. Implementing gender supporting programs to address root causes of gender based violence, supporting women's empowerment through access to resources and strengthening local women's organizations to advocate for their rights and needs and including women's issues in national agendas.

According to the CARE organization, since South Sudan's independence in 2011, about 9 million people have been affected by the conflict; this is 72% of the population. One of the main issues is food insecurity. This situation is worst for children; about 1.6 million children are at risk of malnutrition. By June 2025, it was estimated that 2.1 million children under 5 years old will be affected.

Another important issue is displacement; CARE reports that about 2.3 million South Sudanese are refugees.

According to the United Nations and international right groups, the war in South Sudan has been marked by many humanitarian violations.

One of the last reported events by AP News in May 2025, was a suspected drone by Sudanese paramilitaries that attacked the Obeid International Hospital in South Sudan, killing at least six people, at least another 15 were wounded and putting the hospital out of service.

The Emergency Lawyers, which tracks Sudan's war, said the attack on the hospital was part of a large-scale artillery offensive on the city, which is held by the military.

Armed groups and, in some cases, government affiliated forces have committed systematic rape and gang rape of women and girls during attacks on villages and displacement camps. This constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law and is classified as a war crime and crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The sanction for such violations, if prosecuted, is individual criminal responsibility, including long-term imprisonment.

Victims and survivors of abuse related to conflicts often face inclusion and exclusion in society, all depending on various factors. Many survivors feel marginalized due to stigma, discrimination, and trauma, leading to social isolation, loss of family support, and limited access to education or work. In certain communities, survivors of sexual violence may be unfairly blamed or marginalized, deepening their exclusion. Nevertheless, efforts by international organizations, local NGOs, and governments seek to include survivors through rehabilitation programs, psychosocial support, and empowerment

initiatives that restore their dignity and help them reintegrate. Participation of women in peacebuilding and leadership roles is also encouraged, thereby promoting inclusion and transforming social attitudes. Despite these efforts, exclusion remains a significant challenge in many conflict-affected areas.

1. IV. INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

UN Women in 2024, South Sudan achieved a progressing move for gender equality and women's empowerment with the adoption of the South Sudan Women's Charter... This document, supported by UN Women, promotes women's meaningful participation in constitution-making, elections, political parties, and policy interventions, directly contributing to the Sustainable Development Goal 5, Target 5.5, by prioritizing women's leadership.

This was inspired by experiences from other countries like Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Libya. It was co-funded by the Peacebuilding Fund, the Governments of the Netherlands and Norway, and developed in collaboration with UNHCR, UNDP, UNMISS, civil society organizations, government, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Peacebuilding and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC).

As a result of UN Women's capacity-building efforts with key partners, including the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC), National Legislative Assembly (NLA), civil society, youth, persons with disabilities, and media practitioners

The South Sudan Women's Charter represents a transformative step toward embedding gender equality in South Sudan's governance and legal frameworks, ensuring inclusive, transparent, and accountable systems that protect and empower women and marginalized groups.

General Assembly has set a target of 35 percent representation of women in all governance institutions in South Sudan. However, the country has appointed its first female Speaker and a number of women Parliamentarians, but it is still far from meeting the target set. For decades, South Sudanese women have been at the forefront of the nation's struggle for peace, stability, and development. A study engaged government ministries, civil society, women's groups, academia, and development partners to examine gender equality, women's rights, and governance. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are central to the mandate of UNDP and intrinsic to its development approach.

The Security Council has provided a framework for guiding decisions on women's participation in leadership, peace building, reconstruction, security sector reform, and efforts to prevent and protect women and girls against violence in South Sudan. Members of the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security conducted a mission to South Sudan, meeting with government officials, civil society representatives, women's associations, and UN entities.

The United Nations Human Rights Office has monitored, investigated, and reported on violations and abuses of international human rights law in South Sudan, including conflict-related sexual violence against women¹³⁴. Despite progress in implementing gender equality policies, systemic impunity remains a challenge

The South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) is a multi-donor humanitarian financing mechanism established in 2012 by the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan, the SSHF is managed by the OCHA South Sudan's Humanitarian Funding Unit based in Juba. The mandate of the SSHF is to allocate funding to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity based on humanitarian needs and priorities identified. By providing timely, coordinated, and principled assistance, the Fund aims to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the humanitarian response.

Unicef has repeatedly condemned sexual violence as a weapon of war in South Sudan, especially against women and girls. In various official statements, the organization has declared that this type of violence is a serious violation of human rights and international humanitarian law.

- Concrete actions.

Psychosocial and medical support: UNICEF has established safe centers for women and girls where emergency medical care, psychological support, and specialized counseling are provided to victims of sexual violence.

Community campaigns: It has developed educational and awareness campaigns to prevent gender-based violence, promoting respect and the rights of women in conflict areas.

Training for local staff: UNICEF has trained social workers, community police, and medical personnel in protocols for caring for survivors of sexual violence, focusing on protection and humanitarian response.

Protection in displaced persons camps: It has collaborated in designing safer spaces for women and girls in the camps, including lighting, protection patrols, and safe access to bathrooms and water points.

Legal support and documentation: UNICEF has worked with local partners to document cases of sexual violence, assist victims in accessing justice, and promote legislative changes that punish these crimes.

The African Union has been actively involved in supporting peace and stability in South Sudan. It has reaffirmed its commitment to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the conflict in South Sudan (The R-ARCSS is a peace agreement made in September 2018 that was made with the intention of ending the violent conflict in South Sudan). The African Union is working with government, regional partners and the UN to ensure this agreement is fully implemented.

The partnership between South Sudan and the EU seeks to foster stability, resilience, and sustainable development. The EU and Member states work together to ensure long-lasting stability, economic resilience and social progress in South Sudan.

The EU supports South Sudan by improving food and nutrition security, fostering climate-resilient pastoral systems, increasing smallholder agricultural production, developing value chains (MSEs) and boosting market access and connectivity.

An international medical humanitarian organization that provides emergency medical care in conflict areas. In South Sudan, they offer vital services such as surgery, maternal care, and treatment for malnutrition, malaria, and survivors of sexual violence.

A global NGO that responds to humanitarian crises by providing health services, protection, and support to displaced communities. In South Sudan, the IRC focuses on women's safety, reproductive health, access to clean water, and education in conflict-affected areas.

This organization supports people affected by armed conflict. In South Sudan, it provides medical assistance, supports hospitals, reunites families separated by war, and promotes humanitarian law.

An organization focused on the rights and well-being of children. In South Sudan, it provides education, child protection, nutrition, and health services, especially in camps for displaced families.

An organization that advocates for the rights and protection of displaced women and girls. It works in South Sudan assessing needs, influencing policies, and promoting access to reproductive health, security, and leadership opportunities for women in humanitarian settings.

V. BLOCK ANALYSIS

Republic of South Sudan: South Sudan faces the most severe crisis, with widespread conflict related sexual violence committed by armed groups and militias against women and girls during raids, displacement, and clashes.

Republic of the Sudan: Sudan has serious cases of sexual violence in Darfur and since the 2023 war between the SAF and RSF. The government is under scrutiny for human rights violations and tends to resist strong international interventions, though it cooperated on humanitarian assistance.

Republic of Uganda: Uganda is not directly affected by conflict related to sexual violence but hosts over a million refugees from South Sudan and Sudan, many of whom are women and girls vulnerable to gender violence. Uganda positions itself as a humanitarian leader in the region, stressing the need for international support to manage refugee protection.

South Sudan and Uganda are neighboring countries with economic and political ties. These two countries have been friendly for years. One of the reasons for this is that Omar Al-Bashir supposedly provided support to the LRA, which Uganda had been terrorized by, for many years. Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni was a close friend of John Garang, who was South Sudan's rebel leader and supporter of the SPLA.

A border dispute arose between these two countries in 2005 when incidents of violence forced the suspension of a project to construct a road and a communications tower. Both the presidents of Uganda and South Sudan met in 2010 to reach a resolution but they didn't reach an agreement.

And finally in 2020, the SSPDF and the UPDF, which are the people's defense forces of each country, clashed and it resulted in the death of two South Sudanese soldiers passing. Both of the countries believe they were on their countries side of the border.

- **Republic of Kenya:** It strongly supports stability in the Horn of Africa and often advocates for humanitarian aid and protection of women and girls in refugee camps. Kenya is likely to push for regional cooperation and international support while presenting itself as a neutral broker in negotiations.
- **Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia:** Ethiopia has forced internal conflicts, including the Tigray war, where sexual violence was documented as a weapon of war. As a result, it faces international criticism over its own record but also plays a role in hosting South Sudanese refugees.
- **United States of America:** They strongly condemn sexual violence in conflict and regularly highlight it in security council debates and state department reports. It supports survivor centered responses, accountability and sanctions against perpetrators.

- **Canada:** Canada has a consistent focus on gender equality and women's protection in its foreign policy, particularly through its feminist international assistance policy. It supports survivor services, humanitarian aid and accountability measures in conflict zones, including South Sudan.
- **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:** The UK condemns sexual violence in conflict, funds survivor services, and supports accountability through the UN and ICC, aligning with Western partners.
- **French Republic:** The French Republic is and has been actively supporting South Sudan. France has given financial support to address the humanitarian crisis as well as being vocal about lessening the situation at hand. The French Republic supports the UNMISS (United Nations mission in South Sudan) due to its ability to provide protection for civilians in South Sudan.
- **People's Republic of China:** They have strong diplomatic relations with South Sudan, China plays a significant role in South Sudan's development and security, however China also maintains a diplomatic relation with North Sudan and is mediating between both sides of the civil war.
- **Russian Federation:** They support the activities of the Blue Helmets and they recognize its contribution for South Sudan's stability. Putin said Russia would assist South Sudan in handling its domestic political situation and ensuring security. Russia considers that the level of violence and the number of human rights violations have fallen.
- **Arab Republic of Egypt:** Calls to the parties in conflict at South Sudan to get an agreement in favor of their country and its people.
- **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is concerned about the civilians at South Sudan. They reaffirm its commitments to protect civilians. This includes allowing passage for Sudanese people to leave hostile areas on a voluntary basis.
- **Kingdom of Norway:** Norway's Ambassador to South Sudan, overviewed the importance of recognizing that sexual violence and conflict-related sexual violence are not just human rights violations but also big obstacles for peace and stability in South Sudan. Norway is calling to advance gender equality in peace and security to stop the impunity for gender-based violence.
- **Kingdom of Sweden:** They wish to develop cooperation with South Sudan that contributes to a peaceful and inclusive society, improved access to equal health, education services and improving living conditions for people living in poverty.

VI. KEY POINTS

- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** A critical threat in South Sudan made worst protracted conflict, displacement, and prevailing cultural norms, affecting women and girls disproportionately through physical violence, sexual violence, domestic violence, and child marriage.
- **Sexual violence in conflict:** sexual violence has been instrumentalized as a reward and entitlement for youth and men participating in conflict. The goal is to inflict maximum disruption of the fabric of communities, including through their constant displacement, the report continues.
- **Displacement of women:** a severe crisis caused by persistent conflicts, with women and children making up the majority of displaced populations, both internally and as refugees in neighboring countries.
- **Empowerment of women in humanitarian response:** focuses on promoting their leadership in peace and security initiatives, supporting their economic independence through entrepreneurship and vocational training, improving their access to justice and protection against gender-based violence, and ensuring women's meaningful participation in governance and decision-making processes
- **Mechanisms of protection in conflict zones:** community-based approaches, and integrated responses via Areas of Responsibility for specific needs like child protection and gender-based violence.
- **Human Rights:** The UN reported numerous human rights violations including extrajudicial executions, conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, and the recruitment and use of children by armed groups.
- **Violation of Human Rights:** In South Sudan, “systemic government corruption” and “brazen predation” on the part of political elites have created a human rights crisis that must be urgently addressed, the UN Commission on Human Rights in the country said in a new report issued on Tuesday.
- **Refugee:** Nearly 2.32 million South Sudanese have fled to neighboring countries, and 2.22 million remain internally displaced in South Sudan due to violent conflict throughout the country. It is the largest refugee crisis in Africa and the third-largest refugee crisis in the world.
- **Internally Displaced Person:** South Sudan faces a major humanitarian crisis with approximately 2 million people living as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as of mid-2025, fleeing conflict and insecurity that continues to escalate both within South Sudan and from the conflict in Sudan. IDPs lack basic necessities like food, shelter, and healthcare, facing severe

humanitarian needs due to ongoing violence, attacks on health facilities, and a lack of access to aid.

- **Peacekeeping:** More than 18,000 peacekeepers serve with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan to protect civilians, help facilitate the safe delivery of humanitarian aid, promote human rights, and build durable peace in the conflict-affected country. The civilian, police and military personnel from at least 75 countries carry out many duties under the mandate provided by the United Nations Security Council. Their work falls under four main pillars.
- **Humanitarian Aid:** Humanitarian aid to South Sudan focuses on addressing widespread hunger, food insecurity, and protection needs for millions affected by conflict and climate-related disasters, with major actors like the UN, EU, providing food, water, healthcare, and shelter.
- **International Sanctions:** The UN created the South Sudan Sanctions Committee in 2015 in response to fighting between the Government of South Sudan and the opposition Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and imposed a travel ban and assets freeze on individuals and entities complicit in actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of South Sudan by UN Resolution 2206 (2015)
- **Women, Peace and Security Agenda:** This Working Group calls for a stronger commitment to peaceful and inclusive dialogue, gender equality and justice. Progress on women's participation and protection as stipulated in the R-ARCSS remains slow, with only 10% of gender-related provisions fully implemented, while rising insecurity and economic hardship further threaten women's rights and inclusion.

VII LEADING QUESTIONS

- ❖ **Which are the crises that South Sudan is facing?**
- ❖ According to the President of the Security Council and permanent Representative of the Republic of Panama to the UN, Eloy Alfaro Alba, South Sudan is facing political instability and climate collapse, including floods and desertification.
- ❖ **What are the main consequences of the crises that South Sudan is facing?**
- ❖ The president of the Security Council mentioned that climate collapse in South Sudan is creating competition for natural resources. He also emphasized that the combination of Political instability and climate collapse is devastating the livelihoods and keeps destabilizing communities that have been suffering from decades of conflict. Also, those crises fuel the inter communities violence that increase the number of refugees and the need of humanitarian aid.

❖ **Which is the viable framework to stop the violence in South Sudan?**

- ❖ Matha Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa Political and Peace building Affairs and Peace Operation said that the only viable framework to break the violence in South Sudan and advance the country's first democratic election is the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), from September 12, 2018. Murithi Mutiga, briefer from the International Crisis Group, mentioned that the Revitalized Agreement from 2018, required that the President Salva Kir works with his rival, First vice President Riek Machar.

❖ **How many people in South Sudan are in humanitarian need and how many are in need of gender-based violence (GBV)?**

- ❖ In the report of Humanitarian needs and response Plan 2025, published on September 16, 2024, by OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at the United Nations), from the total population of 13.4 million, 9.3 million are in need. And the people targeted are 5.4 million. People in need for gender-based violence (GBV) are 2 million and only 412 people are targeted.

❖ **How is the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) composed?**

- ❖ At the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), dated September 12, 2025, it is established that the RTGoNU is composed by
- ❖ The Incumbent TGoNU, comprising: the former GRSS; the former SPLM/A-IO (led by Gen. Taban Deng Gai); and the other Political Parties in TGoNU represented, as such, at the HLRF;
- ❖ The SPLM/A-IO;
- ❖ The South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA);
- ❖ The Former Detainees (FDs);
- ❖ The Other Political Parties outside of the Incumbent TGoNU, including the Alliance, Umbrella and political parties who participated, as such, at the HLRF.

❖ **What is the response of the parties in conflict in South Sudan about the Peace Agreement?**

- ❖ Martha Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa Political and Peace building Affairs and Peace Operations, mentioned that since March, 2025, military offensive primarily between

South Sudan's People Defense Force and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition. The aerial bombardments and ground operation continued.

- ❖ **What is the UN resolution to put an end to conflict-related sexual violence?**
- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed June 19 the international Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, in order to generate awareness to stop conflict-related sexual violence, to honor the victims around the world and to pay tribute to those who have given their lives trying to eradicate these crimes.
- ❖ **Why is impunity a central problem?**
- ❖ In South Sudan, the justice system is weak, and often inaccessible in rural areas. Very few cases of sexual violence reach courts, and survivors often face pressure not to report crimes because of fear. This lack of accountability allows perpetrators to continue committing these abuses without any consequence.

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