

R2P MONITOR

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A bimonthly bulletin by
the Global Centre for the
Responsibility to Protect

The **Responsibility to Protect** (R2P) is a global norm, unanimously adopted by heads of state and government at the 2005 UN World Summit, aimed at preventing and halting Genocide, War Crimes, Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity. R2P stipulates that:

- » Every State has the Responsibility to Protect its populations from the four mass atrocity crimes (Pillar I).
- » The wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual States in meeting that responsibility (Pillar II).
- » If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter (Pillar III).

R2P Monitor applies the Responsibility to Protect lens to the following situations of concern:

CURRENT CRISIS

Mass atrocity crimes are occurring and urgent action is needed.

IMMINENT RISK

The situation is reaching a critical threshold and the risk of mass atrocity crimes occurring in the immediate future is very high if effective preventive action is not taken.

SERIOUS CONCERN

There is a significant risk of occurrence, or recurrence, of mass atrocity crimes within the foreseeable future if effective action is not taken.

R2P Monitor:

- » Provides *background* on populations at risk of mass atrocity crimes, with particular emphasis on key events and actors and their connection to the threat, or commission, of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
- » Offers *analysis* of the country's past history in relation to mass atrocity crimes; the factors that have enabled their possible commission, or that prevent their resolution; and the receptivity of the situation to positive influences that would assist in preventing further crimes.
- » Tracks the *international response* to the situation with a particular emphasis upon the actions of the United Nations (UN), key regional actors and the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- » Suggests *necessary action* to prevent or halt the commission of mass atrocity crimes.

Syria {p. 2}
Iraq {p. 4}
Yemen {p. 5}
Sudan {p. 7}
Burma/Myanmar {p. 9}

Lake Chad Basin {p. 11}
DR Congo {p. 13}

CAR {p. 14}
Burundi {p. 16}
South Sudan {p. 17}
Libya {p. 19}

CURRENT CRISIS

Mass atrocity crimes are occurring and urgent action is needed.



260,000+
people killed

6.6 million IDPs

13.5 million in need
of assistance

SYRIA

The ongoing civil war in Syria leaves populations facing mass atrocity crimes committed by state security forces and affiliated militias. Some armed opposition groups and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant are also committing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

BACKGROUND

Five years of conflict in Syria has resulted in over 260,000 people killed. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that as of February there were 4.6 million Syrian refugees and at least 6.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) – the largest number of people displaced by any conflict in the world. Over 13.5 million Syrians are in need of protection and humanitarian assistance. All parties to the conflict have impeded humanitarian access to vulnerable civilians, with 4.5 million Syrians in inaccessible areas, an estimated 400,000 of whom are living under siege.

On 14 November the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) – including the UN, European Union (EU), League of Arab States and other countries – agreed on “the need to convene Syrian government and opposition representatives in formal negotiations under UN auspices.” After meeting in Munich on 11 and 12 February, the ISSG agreed to “the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254,” including accelerating the delivery of humanitarian aid and implementing a nationwide cessation of hostilities, excluding attacks against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Sustained Russian and Syrian government airstrikes continued in advance of the proposed cessation, especially around Aleppo. On 22 February the United States and Russia finally brokered a cessation of hostilities that began on 27 February. President Bashar Al-Assad’s government and the opposition High Negotiation Committee both agreed to the cessation. As

of 15 March, despite numerous violations of the cessation, the general level of violence in Syria has decreased.

In its eleventh report, released on 22 February, the UN Human Rights Council-mandated Commission of Inquiry (CoI) asserted that crimes against humanity continued to be committed by government forces and ISIL, while the commission of war crimes by all sides remained “rampant.” Meanwhile, an “overwhelming yet consistent intensification of external military involvement in Syria” was having “devastating consequences for civilians and various communities.”

Syrian government forces and allied militias have committed large-scale massacres and perpetrated war crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) as a matter of state policy. The CoI has reported that pro-government forces have conducted “widespread attacks on the civilian population,” committing crimes against humanity. Several armed opposition groups have also committed mass atrocity crimes, violated IHL and targeted religious minorities for attack.

In its 3 February report on deaths in detention in Syria, the CoI said that the government “has committed the crimes against humanity of extermination, murder, rape or other forms of sexual violence, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance and other inhuman acts.” The CoI and the UN Secretary-General have called for the situation in Syria to be referred to the ICC.

The government has conducted airstrikes in residential areas, contravening UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2139 of 22 February 2014, which demanded all parties cease attacks on civilians and the use of indiscriminate weapons. The Syrian Network for Human Rights reported on 10 January that 17,318 barrel bombs were dropped in Syria during 2015, killing 2,032 people.

The government has also obstructed the delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid, contravening UNSC Resolutions 2165 and 2191. On 11 January an aid convoy was finally granted access to Madaya, near the Lebanese border, after a six-month blockade by pro-government forces. Madaya’s 42,000 residents represent approximately 11 percent of Syria’s besieged population. On 14 January the UN Secretary-General described the use of starvation as a weapon as a “war crime.”

The use of chemical weapons in Syria was confirmed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), leading to the government agreeing to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile. Despite this, an OPCW Fact-Finding Mission has presented three reports establishing that chlorine continues to be used as a chemical weapon in Syria. On 22 February the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism reported that seven incidents of chemical weapons use will be further investigated to determine the identity of the perpetrators.

ISIL poses a direct threat to civilians as its fighters have carried out mass executions and sexual enslavement in areas under their control. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), between June 2014 and December 2015 ISIL executed 3,700 people, including 2,000 civilians. An international coalition of nine states is currently conducting airstrikes against ISIL in Syria. The SOHR reported that at least 3,547 ISIL fighters and 250 civilians were killed during coalition airstrikes between September 2014 and November 2015.

On 30 September Russia commenced airstrikes in Syria, claiming it would target ISIL. However, it has been reported that most airstrikes have been on other opposition forces, including in civilian-populated urban areas. The SOHR reported on 20 January that Russian airstrikes had killed 1,015 civilians, including over 200 children.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar are providing arms to some rebel groups. Meanwhile, Iran continues to provide crucial economic, military and political support to the Syrian government. Hezbollah has directly engaged in fighting against Syrian rebels on both sides of the Syria-Lebanon border.

On 1 February, after a one-week delay, indirect talks between Syrian government and opposition factions began in Geneva, mediated by UN Special Envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura. After several delays, talks resumed on 14 March.

ANALYSIS

With all sides in Syria committed to an outright military victory, the lives of countless civilians are imperiled by the ongoing civil war.

The government continues to utilize its military resources to retain power at all costs and perpetrate crimes against humanity and war crimes. The government increasingly relies upon Iran, Hezbollah and Russia to fight the civil war, and directs operations against armed rebels and populations presumed to be supporting them, regardless of the consequences to civilians. Russian airstrikes have enabled the government to regain significant areas previously lost to rebel forces.

The fracturing and radicalization of the opposition has compounded the difficulty of achieving a negotiated political settlement. ISIL, which is not part of the peace talks, and several other armed groups continue to pose a direct threat to civilians, especially those from minority religious communities.

External political influence upon the Syrian government via the UN and regional actors remains weak. Despite adopting several resolutions concerning humanitarian access and chemical weapons, the UNSC has been unable to enforce their compliance, with significant divisions over Syria evident amongst the permanent members. The unstable nature of the current cessation of hostilities and political intransigence on all sides further complicates the possibilities for substantive peace talks.

The government of Syria has not only manifestly failed to uphold its Responsibility to Protect, it bears primary responsibility for the ongoing commission of mass atrocity crimes.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following the outbreak of violence during March 2011, the international community responded by censuring the regime for its widespread violations of human rights. [For responses prior to December 2015 see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in Syria](#).]

The UNSC has utterly failed to adequately respond to the conflict in Syria and to meet its obligations under the UN Charter. Four draft resolutions were vetoed by Russia and China between 2011 and 2014. During 2014 the UNSC finally passed Resolutions 2139, 2165 and 2191 on ending the use of indiscriminate weapons and increasing humanitarian access, but these have not been fully implemented.

On 18 December 2015, following the third meeting of the ISSG, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2254, endorsing a road map for a peace process, including a nationwide ceasefire. On 22 December 2015 the UNSC passed Resolution 2258, demanding that all parties comply with their obligations under IHL and renewing for 12 months the decisions of Resolution 2165, authorizing cross-border humanitarian access. Resolutions 2254 and 2258 both reiterate the primary responsibility of the Syrian government to protect populations.

On 26 February the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2268, endorsing the 22 February cessation of hostilities agreement, demanding the compliance of all parties to whom it applies, and calling upon all sides to allow humanitarian agencies unrestricted access to people in need.

The UN Human Rights Council has adopted 15 resolutions condemning atrocities in Syria. The latest, adopted on 1 October, demanded that all parties take all appropriate steps to protect civilians and stressed that the primary responsibility to protect the Syrian population lies with the Syrian authorities

On 14 March President Vladimir Putin ordered a partial withdrawal of Russian forces from Syria as part of the peace process.

NECESSARY ACTION

Syrian government forces and armed opposition groups must facilitate immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access to civilians trapped or displaced by fighting, in keeping with UNSC Resolutions 2139, 2165 and 2258. The international community must intensify efforts towards finding a potential political solution to the conflict while increasing assistance to populations already affected by the civil war.

The UNSC needs to take proximate steps to end atrocities in Syria, including imposing an arms embargo and referring the situation to the ICC. In keeping with Resolutions 2139, 2165 and 2235, the UNSC must take expeditious action to end the

use of chemical weapons and other indiscriminate and illegal weapons and hold all perpetrators accountable, regardless of position or affiliation.

Russia, Iran and Hezbollah must cease enabling the crimes of the Syrian government. Countries opposed to the rule of President Assad must withhold all support from armed groups who commit war crimes or target minority communities. All foreign states participating in airstrikes in Syria must ensure all necessary precautions are taken to avoid civilian casualties and uphold IHL.

Russia and the United States need to press their respective allies to consolidate the cessation of hostilities and agree to a permanent ceasefire in conjunction with meaningful negotiations over how to fundamentally resolve Syria's conflict.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2254](#), 18 December 2015
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2258](#), 22 December 2015
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2268](#), 26 February 2016
- » [Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria](#), 22 February 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Syria](#)



3.3 million displaced
since January 2014

7,000+ civilians
killed in 2015

IRAQ

The extremist armed group the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant is committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Iraq. As the Iraqi Security Forces, Shia militias and Kurdish fighters confront ISIL, civilians remain at risk of further mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

The security situation in Iraq remains dire as a result of ongoing attacks by ISIL, which has declared a caliphate spanning Syria and Iraq. Widespread fighting between the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and ISIL, as well as several other armed groups, has also led to sectarian violence and gross human rights abuses. The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) reported that 410 civilians

were killed in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict during February. Over 7,000 civilians were killed during 2015.

OCHA estimates that as of 6 February, 10 million people in Iraq – nearly one third of the population – are now in need of humanitarian assistance, with nearly 3.3 million people internally displaced since January 2014. OCHA also reported that as of 20 February at least 3 million Iraqis are living under ISIL control.

ISIL continues to systematically attack and persecute vulnerable ethnic and religious minority communities, including Christians, Shabak, Yazidis and Turkmen, causing their mass displacement. Iraq's Defense Minister claimed that ISIL had killed an estimated 2,000 civilians in Nineveh province by 7 August 2015. ISIL also routinely targets Shia neighborhoods in bombings, including attacks on 28 February in Sadr City that killed at least 75 people and on 6 March near Baghdad, killing at least 60 people.

UNAMI and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have reported that ISIL's violations, which include targeted killings, forced conversions, slavery and sexual abuse, "may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and possibly genocide."

On 15 May ISIL captured the strategic city of Ramadi, Anbar Province. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi deployed Shia militias to assist the ISF counter-offensive, heightening concern for the civilian population. On 29 December Prime Minister Abadi declared the ISF had recaptured Ramadi. On 27 January the government reported having uncovered a mass grave in Ramadi containing at least 40 bodies, including women and children, killed by ISIL.

The United States has been conducting airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq since 8 August 2014, following the Iraqi government's request for assistance after the group seized the northern town of Sinjar, threatening genocide to the minority Yazidi community. ISIL killed at least 500 Yazidis and abducted 1,500 women and girls. Since then Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Jordan, Netherlands and United Kingdom joined the military coalition against ISIL in Iraq, with some also participating in airstrikes on ISIL in Syria. On 22 February Canada ended its combat role in the anti-ISIL coalition.

Responding to sectarian terrorist attacks and the rise of ISIL, Shia militias have carried out violent reprisals against Sunni civilians. The ISF has also been accused of extrajudicial killings, illegal detention, torture and other violations of IHL and human rights law. UNAMI and OHCHR have reported armed groups affiliated to the government carrying out targeted killings, abductions of civilians and destruction of property. On 4 December OHCHR expressed concern at reports of forced evictions and extrajudicial killings committed by Iraqi and Kurdish security forces and affiliated militias "against Sunni Arab communities in parts of Iraq that have been reclaimed from ISIL." Amnesty International reported on 20 January that Kurdish Peshmerga forces have destroyed thousands of homes

of perceived ISIL "sympathizers" across 13 towns and villages in northern Iraq, possibly amounting to war crimes.

ANALYSIS

ISIL poses an existential threat to ethnic and religious minorities, who face the risk of further mass atrocities, as well as a direct threat to members of the majority Shia community. ISIL has consistently failed to protect civilians in areas under its control and is committed to the eradication of all religious communities and minority cultures that do not conform to its strict interpretation of Islam.

Despite a November 2010 power-sharing agreement between political parties representing Shias, Sunnis and Kurds, many Sunnis felt marginalized under former President Nouri al-Maliki. The government's violent response to a Sunni protest movement that started in December 2012 further aggravated these divisions. ISIL exploited widespread disaffection to build alliances with Sunni tribes and seize large swathes of territory and resources. Cultural identities and religious loyalties continue to be manipulated by various political forces in Iraq. Some Shia militias, mobilized by the government to fight ISIL, pose a direct threat to Sunni civilians.

There are grave fears for the fate of civilians who continue to be trapped by fighting between ISIL and the ISF and allied Shia militias. Human rights violations continue to be perpetrated by the ISF, who often commit abuses in the name of counterterrorism.

The Iraqi government is unable to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and needs ongoing international assistance.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

In addition to United States support to the Iraqi government, several EU member states, as well as Albania and Canada, have provided ongoing assistance to Kurdish fighters battling ISIL.

On 16 December the UNSC held its first meeting on the issue of modern slavery, hearing testimony from a Yazidi survivor of ISIL's sexual slavery. The UNSC issued a Presidential Statement deploring all acts of human trafficking by ISIL, including for the purpose of sexual slavery and forced labor, emphasizing that these acts constitute war crimes.

On 20 February the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq expressed concern for thousands of civilians who are trapped in Fallujah and the Sinjar region, calling upon the government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to uphold their obligations under IHL and "facilitate the evacuation and relocation of civilians to safer areas."

NECESSARY ACTION

The international community should continue to provide support to the Iraqi government to combat the threat ISIL poses to vulnerable populations, especially religious and ethnic minorities. While confronting ISIL and other armed groups, the government

must protect civilians and address the underlying sources of conflict between Sunnis, Shias and Kurds in Iraq.

The government must actively prevent reprisals against Sunni civilians in areas recaptured from ISIL. Displaced populations also require urgent humanitarian assistance.

Iraq's international supporters must ensure that the ISF and Kurdish forces strictly and consistently comply with their obligations under international human rights law. The Kurdistan Regional Government is also in need of international support to defend vulnerable populations from ongoing ISIL attacks.

All members of the international anti-ISIL coalition must abide by IHL and avoid civilian casualties.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNAMI Website](#)
- » [Casualty Figures](#), UNAMI, 1 March 2016
- » [Report on Kurdish abuses in northern Iraq](#), Amnesty International, 20 January 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Iraq](#)



YEMEN

Mass atrocity crimes are being committed in Yemen as a regional military coalition and pro-government forces fight against Houthi rebels, who have taken control of much of the country.

BACKGROUND

The ongoing armed conflict in Yemen leaves civilians facing mass atrocity crimes. According to OCHA, ongoing violence between Houthi rebels and various pro-government forces, as well as months of sustained Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, resulted in an estimated 3,000 civilians killed between March and December 2015. Despite recent attempts to negotiate an end to the conflict, widespread violence continues.

During 2014, amidst a UN-facilitated political transition process, the Houthis, a Shia militia from northeast Yemen, and military units loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, took control of the governorates of Saada, Hodeida, Dhamar, Amran and Sana'a. On 26 March Saudi Arabia and a coalition of nine other countries responded to a government request for regional military intervention. Growing violence forced President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi to seek temporary refuge in Riyadh. Despite recent military setbacks, Houthis and pro-Saleh forces still control much of Yemen, including the capital, Sana'a.

According to OCHA, the majority of the violence has taken place in populated areas, with civilians comprising 95 percent of casualties in these areas. More than 2.4 million Yemeni civilians have been forcibly displaced by violence while an estimated 21.2 million people, over 82 percent of the population, require humanitarian assistance.

Houthi and government-allied forces have both targeted civilian infrastructure and international humanitarian workers. The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Kyung-wha Kang reported that since March 2014 more than 170 schools and 70 health facilities have been destroyed. The Houthis have also been accused of indiscriminately shelling civilian areas while Saudi airstrikes have reportedly included banned cluster munitions. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reported during December that Saudi-led airstrikes have caused a disproportionate number of civilian deaths. On 27 February an airstrike hit a market in Sana'a, killing 32 civilians.

The UN and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have made numerous attempts to broker peace talks between the warring parties. The UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, facilitated negotiations between 15 and 20 December, but cancelled the talks because of ongoing armed violence in the country. The Special Envoy had called upon parties to adhere to a ceasefire during negotiations, but this was not adhered to.

Other armed groups are also taking advantage of the current conflict to perpetrate violence against civilians. Since March 2015 ISIL has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on Shia mosques and detonated car bombs in Sana'a. ISIL has also claimed responsibility for several assassinations in Aden, while Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has also perpetrated terrorist attacks.

ANALYSIS

All sides of the conflict have perpetrated indiscriminate attacks and targeted civilian infrastructure, amounting to possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. The use of banned cluster munitions and the worsening humanitarian crisis further threatens civilian lives. Ongoing fighting and attempts to subvert the political transition are in violation of various UNSC resolutions.

The country has become another proxy battlefield between Saudi Arabia and Iran. While Saudi Arabia remains the main

force backing the regional military coalition, Iran has allegedly provided substantial military assistance to the Houthis.

Fighting between Houthi rebels and pro-government forces threatens to further fracture Yemeni society along tribal and sectarian lines. Terrorist groups such as AQAP and ISIL are trying to exploit tensions between Shia and Sunni populations to increase their influence.

The Yemeni government is unable to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and requires international support.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

In 2011 the UNSC adopted Resolution 2014, which condemned human rights violations by the government of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and affirmed Yemen's primary responsibility to protect its population.

The UNSC imposed sanctions on former President Saleh and Houthi leaders in November 2014 and has extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen until 27 March 2017. On 15 February 2015 the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2201, condemning the armed takeover of the capital and demanding the Houthis withdraw.

On 14 April the UNSC passed Resolution 2216 establishing an arms embargo against Houthi leaders and some supporters of former President Saleh, and demanding full implementation of previous resolutions. On 24 February 2016 the UNSC renewed the sanctions regime for an additional year.

The UN Special Advisers for the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect issued a statement on 17 February calling upon "the international community, and particularly on the UN Security Council – to take action to end this unacceptable situation." The Special Advisers also urged all parties to the Arms Trade Treaty to respect their treaty commitments. On 18 February the UNSC issued a Press Statement urging all parties to resume talks and demanding full implementation of previous resolutions, including calls for a ceasefire.

On 2 February the International Development Committee of the United Kingdom's House of Commons urged the government to cease the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia in response to allegations that ongoing airstrikes were destroying civil infrastructure and killing civilians. On 25 February the European Parliament passed a Resolution on the Humanitarian Situation in Yemen, including an amendment calling for an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia.

NECESSARY ACTION

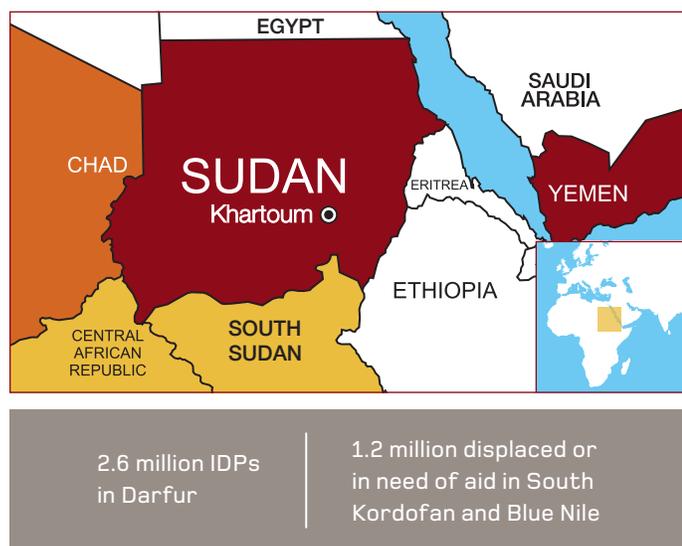
The distinction between military and civilian targets is central to IHL and must be adhered to. Parties to the conflict must halt the use of illegal and indiscriminate weapons, including banned cluster munitions. All parties must uphold their Responsibility to Protect vulnerable populations regardless of their tribal, religious or political affiliations.

All parties to the conflict must respect agreed ceasefires in order to ensure humanitarian access to vulnerable civilians in desperate need of food, water and medical supplies. Parties to the conflict should also support the full establishment of the UN-sanctioned "De-escalation and Coordination Committee."

The UNSC, GCC and all parties to the conflict need to ensure that Resolutions 2201 and 2216 are fully implemented and that Yemen returns to the previously agreed political transition process. The UN Human Rights Council should establish an international commission of inquiry to investigate serious violations of IHL and international human rights law in Yemen.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2266](#), 24 February 2016
- » [UNSC Press Statement, SC/12250](#), 18 February 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk Page: Yemen](#)



SUDAN

Populations in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur continue to face mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by the Sudanese Armed Forces, affiliated militias and armed rebel groups.

BACKGROUND

For nearly five years the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and armed rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) have been engaged in hostilities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, directly threatening vulnerable civilians. The government of Sudan continues to prohibit access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile and is systematically preventing aid from reaching populations at risk of starvation.

The collapse of peace talks, held 19 to 23 November and 16 to 18 December, under the auspices of the African Union (AU) High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan, resulted in both parties reportedly mobilizing forces and amassing weapons ahead of the dry season. A subsequent round of informal

discussions between the government and SPLM-N was held in Berlin, Germany, on 22 and 23 January, but no tangible political progress was made.

Despite President Omar al-Bashir declaring a one-month ceasefire on 31 December, the SPLM-N accused the SAF of renewed attacks in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Between 1 and 10 January the SAF bombed villages in Kurmuk county, Blue Nile, leading to widespread destruction. Ground offensives were also reported in South Kordofan on 15 February near Abraj and on 25 February near Dilling.

According to OCHA, since June 2011 the conflict has resulted in over 1.2 million people "internally displaced or severely affected and in need of humanitarian assistance," while more than 246,500 have fled to South Sudan and Ethiopia.

The SAF has committed war crimes, including extrajudicial killing, forced displacement and widespread sexual violence against civilians in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. It has also engaged in "scorched earth" tactics, systematically targeting food sources and deliberately destroying civilian infrastructure, including at least 26 health facilities since 2011. The SPLM-N has also perpetrated war crimes, including indiscriminate attacks on civilian-populated areas, alleged recruitment of children and attacks on UN personnel.

Sudan has consistently failed to honor AU-brokered agreements and UNSC resolutions calling for a cessation of hostilities. This includes the failure to end aerial bombardments, disarm pro-government militias and allow humanitarian access.

The situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate, with civilians facing ongoing inter-communal violence, as well as attacks by the SAF and Rapid Support Forces, a pro-government militia with aerial and ground support from the SAF. Heavy clashes between the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA-AW) in Jebel Marra, North Darfur, since mid-January has led to the displacement of over 105,000 civilians. Previous fighting between the SAF and rebel groups contributed to the displacement of more than 233,000 people during 2015. A total of 2.6 million people are now displaced in Darfur.

The AU-UN hybrid peacekeeping force in Darfur (UNAMID), tasked with a civilian protection mandate, has been systematically obstructed by the government from carrying out human rights monitoring. The UN Secretary-General has condemned the increase in attacks on UNAMID, including the recent killing of two peacekeepers, and called upon the government to respect the Status of Forces Agreement.

ANALYSIS

The government has a history of perpetrating atrocities in Darfur and during its civil war with the south. It has consistently defied external pressure to halt mass atrocity crimes. Such crimes are currently being committed in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, where patterns of violence targeting civilians for

their perceived support of the SPLM-N have been witnessed for almost five years.

The UNSC and AU have failed to push the government and SPLM-N to honor past agreements on the cessation of hostilities and delivery of humanitarian assistance. Indiscriminate bombings of rebel-held areas by the SAF demonstrate an unwillingness to distinguish between combatants and civilians, actions that violate IHL and may amount to crimes against humanity. Populations are at heightened risk of hunger-related deaths as a result of ongoing fighting and the lack of humanitarian access.

Despite the presence of UNAMID, civilians have not been afforded adequate protection in Darfur. Ongoing inter-communal violence and SAF operations contribute to the risk of further mass atrocity crimes. Attacks on UN peacekeepers also constitute war crimes, while restrictions on their freedom of movement contravenes the Status of Forces Agreement.

Not only is the government of Sudan manifestly failing to uphold its Responsibility to Protect, it is directly responsible for perpetrating mass atrocity crimes in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The UNSC has adopted 61 resolutions on Sudan since 2004, most of which have not been fully implemented. The response of the international community to mass atrocities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile has been grossly inadequate. [See also, [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States.](#)]

Members of the current government, including President Omar al-Bashir, the Defence Minister, Abdel Raheem Muhammad Hussein, and the current governor of North Kordofan, Ahmad Haroun, were indicted by the ICC in 2007 for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. President Bashir was also indicted in 2010 for perpetrating genocide in Darfur. The ICC issued an additional arrest warrant during September 2014 against rebel leader Abdallah Banda for war crimes resulting from an attack on AU peacekeepers during 2007 in northern Darfur. None of the indictees have been surrendered to the Court.

On 29 June 2015 the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2228, which extended UNAMID's mandate until 30 June 2016. The resolution emphasized that those responsible for violations of IHL and abuses of human rights "must be held accountable and that the Government of Sudan bears the primary responsibility to protect civilians within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including protection from crimes against humanity and war crimes."

In a briefing to the UNSC on 15 December the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC criticized the Council for failing to meaningfully assist in the arrest of indicted suspects noting that the "people of Darfur have continued to endure desolation, alleged gross violations of human rights, indiscriminate killings, mass rape and

sexual abuse." On 10 February the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2265, extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 12 March 2017.

On 3 March the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the UN Secretary-General issued a joint statement expressing deep concern about the escalating violence in Jebel Marra and called upon the Sudanese government to "fully cooperate with UNAMID to facilitate its freedom of movement, as well as that of the humanitarian actors, in their continued efforts to protect and provide assistance to the civilian population."

On 10 March the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a statement, urging the government to "take action to comply with its responsibility to protect civilians from violence, and to hold accountable those who violate international humanitarian and human rights law."

NECESSARY ACTION

After more than 10 years and 61 resolutions it is time for the UNSC to review its entire approach to endemic conflict and ongoing atrocities in Sudan. The UNSC should immediately expand the arms embargo on Darfur to include South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

The UNSC and AU must ensure the government and SPLM-N facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as stipulated in the 2011 Framework Agreement and 2012 cooperation agreements. The UNSC should mandate the establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry for South Kordofan and Blue Nile and actively support efforts to bring ICC indictees to justice.

States with major investments in Sudan, including China, Qatar, Iran and Saudi Arabia, should press the government to fulfill its commitments. The UNSC should ensure that violators of the arms embargo are held to account.

The government and SPLM-N, in accordance with UNSC Resolution 2046, must cease armed hostilities and address the underlying causes of the conflict. The government must stop obstructing UNAMID and allow them to uphold their mandate, including investigating gross human rights violations. Mediation efforts should be facilitated between the government and armed groups operating in Darfur.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNISFA Website](#)
- » [UNAMID Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2265](#), 10 February 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Sudan](#)



1 million Rohingyas are subject to systematic persecution and the denial of their ethnic identity

BURMA/MYANMAR

Stateless Rohingya in Burma/Myanmar face systematic persecution that poses an existential threat to their community.

BACKGROUND

Discriminatory state policies and systematic persecution in Burma/Myanmar threaten the existence of the Rohingya, a distinct Muslim ethnic minority group. Despite the historic 8 November democratic elections, Rohingyas were largely disenfranchised in advance of the vote and continue to be denied citizenship and other fundamental human rights. While the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) won the elections, it did so while excluding all Muslims as candidates. A spokesman for the party said in November that the Rohingya's plight was not an NLD priority.

On 29 September 2014 at the UN General Assembly, the outgoing government announced the "Rakhine Action Plan," requiring the estimated 1 million stateless Rohingyas in Burma/Myanmar to accept ethnic reclassification as "Bengali" in order to obtain citizenship or be forced into detention camps. Many Rohingyas in Arakan/Rakhine state also face the ongoing threat of violence at the hands of Buddhist extremists who reject their right to exist in Burma/Myanmar.

An estimated 145,000 people, mostly Rohingyas, remain segregated in IDP camps as a result of previous inter-communal violence, where "conditions remain abysmal and access to adequate basic services severely limited," according to the last report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee. The government continues to restrict the IDPs' movement and block their access to food, water, healthcare and other vital humanitarian assistance.

On 31 March 2015 the government invalidated the identification cards held by many Rohingyas, forcing them to apply for citizenship as "Bengalis," suggesting their illegal migration from Bangladesh. This follows the government denying Rohingyas the ability to self-identify on the national census of March 2014,

the first since 1983. On 31 August Burma/Myanmar's outgoing President, Thein Sein, signed into law the last of four so-called "Protection of Race and Religion" bills. These discriminatory laws place harsh restrictions on women and non-Buddhists, including on fundamental religious freedoms, as well as reproductive and marital rights.

The former UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, has said that the government's failure to address the ongoing human rights situation in Arakan/Rakhine state "will ultimately mean the extermination of the Rohingyas."

The cumulative impact of deteriorating living conditions, combined with ongoing persecution by the government and some Buddhist chauvinist groups, has led tens of thousands of Rohingyas to flee to neighboring countries, where they are often subject to further abuse, human trafficking and refoulement.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that at least 32,600 people, mostly Rohingyas, fled during 2015, approximately 370 of whom died in the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea as a result of "mistreatment and disease brought about by smugglers who abused and in many cases killed passengers with impunity." During May mass graves containing the bodies of Rohingyas were discovered at human trafficking camps in Thailand and Malaysia.

The country's military forces (Tatmadaw), which have previously perpetrated atrocities against several ethnic minority groups, also pose an ongoing threat. While the government signed a ceasefire agreement on 15 October with eight armed ethnic groups, conflict between the Tatmadaw and several other groups continues, including in Kachin and Shan states. On 12 January representatives from the army, parliament and ethnic armed groups gathered for five days of political dialogue at the Union Peace Conference.

On 28 January the outgoing parliament passed the "Former Presidents' Security Law," which could grant amnesty to former presidents for crimes under international law, including serious human rights violations. Burma/Myanmar's new parliament convened for the first time on 1 February. On 15 March parliament elected U Htin Kyaw, a confidant of NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi, as president with a term starting on 1 April.

ANALYSIS

The current government's refusal to grant the Rohingya access to citizenship or end discriminatory state policies, as well as its failure to restrict hate speech, encourages ongoing violations of their fundamental human rights and reinforces the dangerous perception of the Rohingya as ethnic outsiders. Recent government initiatives, including the Protection of Race and Religion bills, appear to be intended to eradicate the Rohingya's legal right to exist as a distinct ethno-religious group.

The 8 November elections have legitimized a state that denies the Rohingya their most fundamental human rights. As a result

of the government curtailing their voting rights and barring many Muslim candidates, Rohingyas have also lost political representation in Arakan/Rakhine state. Disenfranchisement, combined with years of persecution, exclusion and poverty, is causing Rohingyas to flee from Burma/Myanmar, despite the refusal of several countries in the region to offer asylum.

There is an urgent need for the incoming NLD government to protect the human rights of all populations in Burma/Myanmar. The incoming NLD government has an opportunity to reverse discriminatory policies and drastically improve the plight of the Rohingya, but currently appears unwilling to do so.

The country's constitution still exempts the Tatmadaw from prosecution for any act carried out "in the execution of their respective duties." On 25 June the military-dominated parliament defeated a bill that would have abolished the Tatmadaw's veto power over constitutional amendments. With a pervasive culture of impunity, the military has not been held accountable for previous mass atrocity crimes.

The government of Burma/Myanmar is failing to uphold its primary Responsibility to Protect with regard to the Rohingya.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following decades of military dictatorship, democratic reforms have contributed to rapprochement between Burma/Myanmar and the international community, including the lifting of sanctions by a number of countries. [For responses prior to October 2015, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation of the Rohingya and Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma/Myanmar](#).]

On 16 October the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Parliamentarians for Human Rights released a report warning that the region risks another major refugee crisis as a result of the persecution of the Rohingya and urged the Burma/Myanmar government and ASEAN states to address the situation.

On 4 November the UN Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect released a statement expressing concern that the electoral process has resulted in "further marginalization of religious minorities," highlighting "decades of institutionalized discrimination in law, policies and practice" against Rohingyas.

On 23 December the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution regarding the Rohingya and "other minorities subject to marginalization and instances of human rights violations and

abuses." The resolution called upon Burma/Myanmar to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals, including Rohingyas, facilitate the safe and voluntary return of IDPs to their communities and ensure unhindered access to humanitarian assistance.

Following his 22 to 25 February visit to Burma/Myanmar, the Director of Operations for OCHA, John Ging, briefed the media on the "appalling sanitation conditions" in Rohingya displacement camps and appealed for an end to the "discriminatory and repugnant policies" of segregation and disenfranchisement.

NECESSARY ACTION

The newly-elected government of Burma/Myanmar must uphold their Responsibility to Protect all populations, regardless of their ethnicity or religion. The incoming NLD government should immediately abolish the Rakhine Action Plan and end institutionalized discrimination against the Rohingya, including the denial of citizenship. It must hold accountable all those who commit human rights abuses, including inciting ethnic and religious intolerance and violence.

In Arakan/Rakhine state the government must facilitate the safe, voluntary return of IDPs to their communities. Neighboring countries should offer protection and assistance to Rohingya asylum seekers.

The international community must urge the new NLD government to develop a comprehensive reconciliation plan, including establishing a commission of inquiry into crimes committed against the Rohingya in Arakan/Rakhine state. The new government must demonstrably improve the welfare of ethnic and religious minorities and repeal laws and discriminatory practices that pose an existential threat to the Rohingya community.

A central component of the new government's reform process must include constitutional reform that addresses the needs of ethnic minorities, as well as the development of an independent judiciary as a means of safeguarding human rights and tackling the culture of impunity regarding past mass atrocity crimes.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [Statement by the UN Special Advisers](#), 4 November 2015
- » [Report of the Special Rapporteur](#), 6 October 2015
- » [UN General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/70/233](#), 23 December 2015
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Burma/Myanmar](#)

IMMINENT RISK

The situation is reaching a critical threshold and the risk of mass atrocity crimes occurring in the immediate future is very high if effective preventive action is not taken.



2.7 million IDPs

3,500+ civilians
killed in 2015

LAKE CHAD BASIN (BOKO HARAM)

The extremist Islamist group Boko Haram poses an ongoing threat to populations in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, where it continues to commit sporadic attacks and mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

Despite more than a year of joint military operations against Boko Haram, attacks by the group against civilians continue in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. More than 17,000 people have been killed since Boko Haram launched its armed offensive in 2009.

According to OCHA, over 2.7 million people are currently displaced in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger due to Boko Haram activity. Most areas previously affected by violence remain unsafe for the return of refugees and IDPs. An estimated 8.3 million people are in need of food assistance in Nigeria's Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, where Boko Haram has been most active.

Boko Haram continues to target women and girls for kidnapping and has used some previously-kidnapped girls to perpetrate suicide bombings. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), as of December 2015 more than 1 million children in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger are unable to attend school because of Boko Haram attacks on infrastructure and personnel.

A joint military campaign against Boko Haram was initiated in early 2015 by a coalition of troops from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Despite the offensive, cross-border raids increased, with the Diffa region of Niger alone experiencing more than 70 attacks during 2015, while more than 30 attacks have been carried out in Cameroon since the start of 2016. Attacks also

continue in Chad where the government has declared a state of emergency in the Lake Chad region.

On 24 December Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari, said that Nigeria had "technically won the war" against Boko Haram, whom he said were no longer capable of conducting "conventional attacks" against security forces or major population centers. Despite this claim, on 30 January Boko Haram attacked Dalori village and nearby refugee camps in northeast Nigeria, killing more than 90 people, including children, some of whom were reportedly burned alive. Suicide bombings were also carried out on 9 February at the Dikwa IDP camp in Borno state, killing at least 60 people.

Nigerian security forces have previously failed to provide sufficient protection from Boko Haram and there have been extensive reports of soldiers deserting during attacks. The military has also been accused of committing human rights abuses against civilians, including arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings of suspected Boko Haram members.

Nigerian security forces have also been accused of grave abuses while clashing with members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), a Shia group, in Kaduna state. According to Human Rights Watch, at least 300 members of the IMN were killed by security forces between 12 and 14 December, many of them buried in mass graves. The governor of Kaduna state announced the establishment of a Judicial Commission of Inquiry on 17 December. In January the IMN claimed that more than 700 members still remained missing following the December clashes.

Inter-communal violence also continues in Nigeria. According to Benue state officials, hundreds of people were reportedly killed during week-long clashes between Fulani herdsmen and local farmers before violence was halted by security forces on 27 February. President Buhari ordered an investigation. Inter-communal clashes in Nigeria's "middle belt" region are a recurring phenomenon rooted in longstanding grievances over access to land and other resources.

ANALYSIS

Although Boko Haram's insurgency started in Nigeria, during 2015 cross-border attacks became increasingly common, transforming the group into a regional security threat. Despite Boko Haram being significantly weakened by joint military operations, it continues to target civilians in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. While offensives during early 2015 drove Boko Haram out of many previously occupied territories, the group has continued hit-and-run attacks and suicide bombings, killing civilians and destroying villages, demonstrating its resilience and enduring threat.

Displacement and insecurity have increased unemployment and poverty within Nigeria, Africa's largest economy. Destroyed civilian infrastructure across the northeast and the threat of continued Boko Haram attacks makes the return of displaced populations dangerous and severely limits humanitarian access.

The deadly military crackdown on the IMN and alleged human rights abuses by Nigeria's security forces demonstrate the need for security sector reform. Such abuses risk triggering a backlash from the affected communities if not addressed urgently and impartially by judicial organs.

Recurring inter-communal clashes in central Nigeria demonstrate the ongoing need for the government to address the root causes of conflict in the country.

The governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger are struggling to uphold their Responsibility to Protect and need ongoing support from the international community.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Despite the escalating crisis, during Nigeria's 2014–2015 term as an elected member of the UNSC, the Council only issued three Presidential Statements on efforts to combat Boko Haram. In a 2 February 2016 Press Statement, the UNSC condemned the attack on Dalori village.

In January 2015 the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) authorized deployment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), comprised of troops from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. The mandate of the force includes "the protection of civilians under immediate threat" of attack from Boko Haram. In January 2016 the AUPSC renewed the MNJTF mandate for 12 months. International actors supporting the force include France, United Kingdom and United States. On 2 February the AU held a donor conference for the MNJTF, but funding remains short of its target \$700 million budget.

On 25 January UNHCR and 24 partner organizations called for \$198 million in support to refugees and host communities in Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

On 11 February UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the suicide attacks in the IDP camp in Dikwa.

On 12 February UN human rights experts, including four UN Special Rapporteurs and a Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, urged the government of Nigeria to ensure the safety of areas designated for the return of displaced people and improved protection of IDP camps.

In February the United States announced that it will provide training assistance to approximately 750 soldiers from selected units of the Nigerian army and deploy special operations advisers to help build military capacity to defeat Boko Haram.

NECESSARY ACTION

Improved coordination between the security forces of the four affected countries is crucial to defeating Boko Haram. Governments involved in the MNJTF and ongoing military operations against Boko Haram need to ensure they mitigate the risk to civilians and strictly adhere to IHL and international human rights law.

In addition to military efforts, root causes of the insurgency must be seriously addressed, including through social initiatives and political reforms to address poor governance, land rights, access to employment and educational opportunities. More resources should be allocated to the de-radicalization program by Nigeria's Office of the National Security Adviser and the Ministry of the Interior.

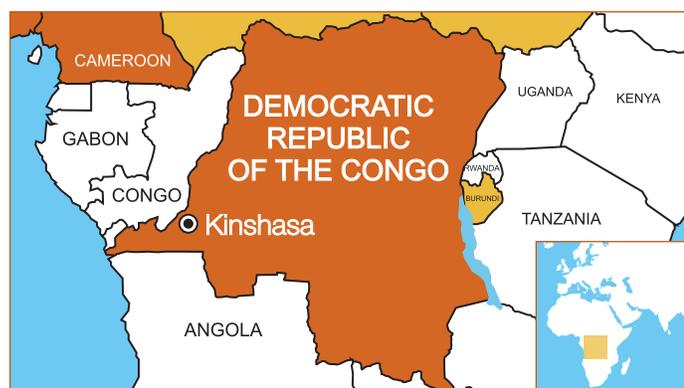
Families of Boko Haram members, as well as captives living in Boko Haram camps and child soldiers, need to be adequately protected and carefully reintegrated into society. Greater steps have to be taken to rescue civilians abducted and possibly enslaved by Boko Haram.

The return of refugees and IDPs should be conducted on a strictly voluntary basis. The UN, AU, Economic Community of West African States, and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), as well as individual governments, should urgently assist Lake Chad Basin governments in meeting humanitarian needs of affected communities and provide technical and military expertise to help combat Boko Haram.

Captured Boko Haram leaders should be held accountable for crimes against humanity committed in areas under the group's command and control. With international support, the Nigerian government needs to urgently undertake security sector reform to ensure that the army and police are trained to protect civilians and prevent mass atrocities while respecting human rights. The government should conduct thorough investigations into all abuses, including alleged extrajudicial killings.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Press Statement, SC/12233](#), 2 February 2016
- » [Chad: Situation in the Lake region and the impact of the Nigerian crisis, Situation Report no. 11](#), OCHA, 11 February 2016
- » [Boko Haram: Make 'liberated areas' truly safe for returnees](#), OHCHR, 12 February 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Lake Chad Basin](#)



1.8 million IDPs

500+ civilians killed by the ADF since October 2014

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Populations in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo remain at imminent risk of possible mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by armed groups.

BACKGROUND

Pervasive insecurity in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has allowed armed groups to perpetrate mass atrocity crimes against civilians. Armed groups – such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and various Mayi-Mayi militias – have been operating in the DRC for more than 20 years and continue to sporadically attack vulnerable populations in a region that is home to 1.8 million IDPs.

Despite offensives conducted by the government's armed forces (FARDC) with assistance from the UN's stabilization mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and its force intervention brigade, violence committed by the more than 30 armed groups operating in the DRC continues throughout the eastern regions of the country. Populations in Maniema, Katanga and North Kivu have been particularly affected by recent fighting between various Mayi-Mayi groups and the FARDC. According to OCHA clashes in Shabunda and Uvira resulted in over 10,000 newly displaced during January and February.

The FARDC launched offensive operations against the FDLR in February 2015. Although the FARDC has reportedly liberated localities previously occupied by the group, the FDLR continues to threaten civilians. Mayi-Mayi militias, particularly the Raia Mutomboki, have also clashed with the FDLR as the group flees from the FARDC. On 26 January, following a nearly year-long suspension of joint operations, MONUSCO and the FARDC agreed to resume cooperative action against the FDLR.

On 6 January 14 civilians, including family members of local traditional chiefs, were killed by suspected FDLR in the village

of Miriki. Related inter-communal clashes have also sparked reciprocal violence between armed groups affiliated with the FDLR, and those affiliated with ethnic Nandes in Lubero and Walikale, North Kivu. At least 21 ethnic Hutus were reportedly killed by Nande militias in revenge attacks on 7 and 8 February.

Elsewhere in North Kivu the ADF has been regularly attacking villages, massacring civilians and perpetrating possible crimes against humanity. Despite MONUSCO and FARDC offensives against them, the ADF has killed more than 500 people since October 2014 and attacked MONUSCO helicopters and convoys. On 29 February suspected ADF members killed at least 12 civilians in an attack on a village near Beni.

ANALYSIS

While military measures are taken against the FDLR, ADF and other armed groups, civilians remain at risk of reprisal violence. The FARDC has also previously been implicated in attacks on civilians, including widespread sexual violence, and has often failed to hold its members accountable for human rights violations.

The weakness of government structures undermines attempts to prevent atrocities. This is particularly evident in the eastern DRC, where the government has previously lost control of areas to various rebel groups. While the government has undertaken important reforms, impunity for crimes committed against civilians remains rampant.

Despite the government and MONUSCO encouraging militias to participate in Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programs prior to launching offensives against them, rebel groups continue to perpetrate abuses against populations in eastern DRC. Competition for control of minerals, as well as underlying conflict between communities that consider themselves indigenous and those perceived as outsiders, has enabled the proliferation of armed groups, which will continue to emerge and threaten populations even after the eradication of the ADF and FDLR if these issues are not resolved.

The government of the DRC has struggled to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and its own forces have been complicit in some previous mass atrocity crimes. The DRC needs ongoing international support to prevent recurring violence.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The international community has responded to violence in the eastern DRC by taking measures to confront various armed groups. [For responses prior to January 2015, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in the DRC.](#)]

On 29 January 2015 the UNSC extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until August 2016, stressing the importance of accountability for mass atrocities. The UNSC subjects 9 entities and 31 individuals in the DRC to sanctions.

On 26 March the UNSC extended MONUSCO's mandate for an additional year, emphasizing that the government of the DRC "bears the primary responsibility to protect civilians within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including protection from crimes against humanity and war crimes." On 30 November the UNSC issued a Press Statement condemning "repeated attacks perpetrated against civilians by the ADF" and stressed the ongoing importance of neutralizing armed groups in eastern DRC.

On 8 February OHCHR condemned the escalating inter-communal violence in North Kivu, urging the government to protect civilians.

NECESSARY ACTION

The DRC government and MONUSCO must ensure that the protection of civilians remains their primary priority as they address the ongoing threat posed by armed groups. The FARDC and MONUSCO need to increase their capacity to respond to early warning of attacks by armed groups and inter-communal violence.

MONUSCO should also support the government in facilitating local peacebuilding initiatives and encourage civil society to help

facilitate DDRRR. The government, with MONUSCO's support, should enhance security and protection measures, particularly in eastern DRC, in advance of the 2016 general elections.

The FARDC must not permit individuals who have previously committed atrocities to join its forces and should train all recruits in the protection of civilians, respect for human rights and IHL. The government should adopt legislation establishing specialized mixed chambers in the national judicial system and remove all FARDC members accused of serious human rights violations from leadership positions.

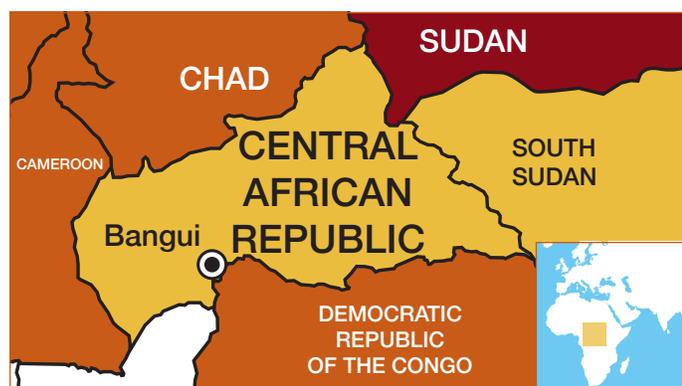
Together with the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, the AU, International Conference for the Great Lakes Region and Southern African Development Community should ensure that all signatories to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework continue to fulfill their commitments.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MONUSCO Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2211](#), 26 March 2015
- » [UNSC Press Statement, SC/12145](#), 30 November 2015
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: DRC](#)

SERIOUS CONCERN

There is a significant risk of occurrence, or recurrence, of mass atrocity crimes within the foreseeable future if effective action is not taken.



3,000+ killed
since December
2013

36,000 besieged
Muslim civilians

470,000
refugees

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

As the country awaits final election results, civilians in the Central African Republic remain at serious risk of mass atrocity crimes committed by "anti-balaka" militias, ex-Séléka rebels and other armed groups.

BACKGROUND

Civilians in the Central African Republic (CAR) remain at serious risk of mass atrocity crimes despite the largely peaceful election of a new President, Faustin-Archange Touadéra, on 14 February 2016.

Presidential and legislative elections have been underway since 30 December. A constitutional referendum held on 13 December was marked by violence in Bangui and several major towns, including Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro and Birao. The first round of elections, held on 30 December, was largely peaceful, with 72 percent of registered voters participating. Legislative elections were annulled due to administrative difficulties and the second round will be held on 20 March.

The crisis in CAR began after the 24 March 2013 overthrow of President François Bozizé by the predominantly Muslim Séléka rebel alliance. Abuses by the Séléka led to the formation of predominantly Christian and animist "anti-balaka" militias. A UN peacekeeping operation (MINUSCA), French military forces and an EU military assistance mission (EUMAM-RCA) are presently deployed in the country.

The overall situation continues to be marked by insecurity and ongoing human rights violations, with armed groups continuing

to exercise control over much of the country. Attacks against civilians, humanitarian workers and peacekeepers are ongoing in western prefectures. More than 15 people were killed in clashes and reprisals between the anti-balaka and factions of the Séléka in Bambari between 4 and 10 March. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which is active in eastern and southern prefectures, escalated its sporadic attacks during January and February, including abductions and the killing of civilians.

According to the International Commission of Inquiry (CAR-Col), the anti-balaka and Séléka have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The CAR-Col estimated that at least 80 percent of CAR's Muslim population had been driven out of the country by December 2014, and concluded that crimes committed by the anti-balaka constitute a "policy of ethnic cleansing" against CAR's Muslims. According to the UN, there are still approximately 36,000 Muslim civilians trapped in seven besieged communities. These enclaves have been systematically encircled by the anti-balaka, subjected to periodic attack, and cut off from regular food and medical supplies.

There are currently more than 435,000 IDPs in CAR, including 67,000 in Bangui, and over 470,000 refugees in neighboring countries. An estimated 2.7 million people remain in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

ANALYSIS

The largely peaceful presidential and legislative elections represent important progress, but they have not resolved the underlying conflict in CAR. Armed groups may still engage in violence around the end of the transition period on 31 March and the formation of the new government.

National security forces remain unable to prevent attacks by various armed groups without the assistance of international forces. The ongoing fragmentation of the Séléka and anti-balaka will prove challenging for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs.

Hostilities between anti-balaka militias, factions of the Séléka, armed Muslim self-defense groups and other armed groups, as well as between international peacekeepers and these groups, continue to pose a threat to civilians. Violence between nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturalist communities in the transhumance corridor also continues. Some armed groups, including the LRA, continue to illegally exploit natural resources to fund their activities.

MINUSCA continues to face critical capacity gaps that impede its ability to uphold its mandate to protect civilians throughout CAR. The scaling down of French military forces presents additional operational challenges for MINUSCA.

CAR's Transitional Authorities are unable to uphold their Responsibility to Protect and require sustained international assistance.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following the deadly surge in violence during late 2013, the international community intensified its response to the crisis in CAR, including passing six UNSC resolutions between October 2013 and April 2015 that emphasized the interim government's responsibility to protect the civilian population. [For response prior to March 2015, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in CAR.](#)]

On 22 December the UNSC imposed sanctions on two individuals for undermining peace and security in CAR. On 27 January 2016 the UNSC passed Resolution 2262, which renewed the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo, and recalled the primary responsibility of the CAR authorities to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

On 10 February the head of MINUSCA called for a renewed focus on ending impunity and prosecuting those responsible for serious human rights violations and abuses. The mission also called upon armed groups to end attacks on civilians and for the reform of CAR's armed forces.

On 21 February UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commended CAR for the peaceful elections. On 4 March the UN, AU, ECCAS, EU and International Organization of La Francophonie welcomed the final results of the presidential elections.

The UN Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in CAR arrived in Bangui on 1 March.

NECESSARY ACTION

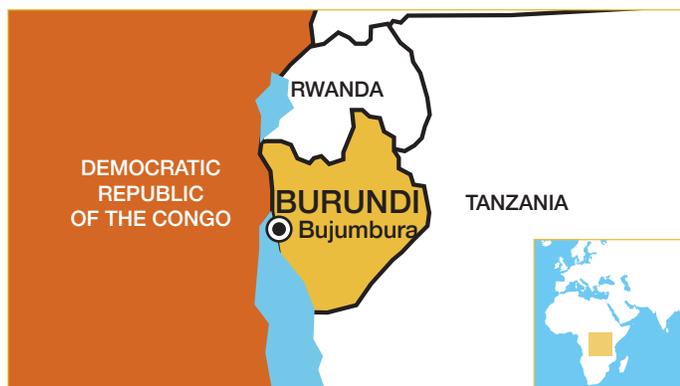
The newly-elected President should prioritize accountability for mass atrocity crimes and other violations of international human rights law and IHL, including through cooperation with the ICC. Urgent financial and logistical resources are also needed to establish the Special Criminal Court for CAR.

Elected candidates who are proven to have incited or committed violations of human rights should not be permitted to assume positions in the new government. The UNSC should sanction individuals responsible for atrocities and other serious human rights abuses.

UN and French forces must use all necessary means to protect civilians and forcibly disarm groups that continue to threaten populations. MINUSCA must ensure it deploys in adequate numbers to all areas where vulnerable civilians lack sufficient protection, including in areas affected by the LRA.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MINUSCA Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2262](#), 27 January 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Central African Republic](#)



239,000 refugees
since April 2015

439 people killed since
April 2015, including 130
during December

BURUNDI

Civilians in Burundi face a serious risk of potential mass atrocity crimes as ongoing political violence threatens to further destabilize the country.

BACKGROUND

There is a serious risk of mass atrocity crimes in Burundi as a result of targeted killings, widespread human rights violations and ongoing clashes between the security forces and armed opposition elements. The UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, have warned of a possible relapse into civil war if violence is not halted.

Since 26 April 2015 at least 439 people have been killed in civil unrest. The crisis developed following the announcement by the ruling Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD–FDD) that President Pierre Nkurunziza would seek a third term in the country's elections. President Nkurunziza's candidacy was regarded by the political opposition and many civil society groups as being in violation of the constitution and the 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, which brought an end to a civil war that claimed over 350,000 lives and led to the displacement of more than 1 million civilians between 1993 and 2005.

Violence steadily increased in Bujumbura between November and December following the call by President Nkurunziza for all citizens to disarm or face action by Burundian security forces as "enemies of the nation." According to the UN, at least 130 people were killed in Burundi during December, including at least 100 people reportedly killed in Bujumbura on 11 December following coordinated attacks against military barracks by unidentified armed opposition elements. There were also reports of extrajudicial executions of suspected opposition supporters by the security forces. On 1 March Burundian police reportedly discovered a mass grave containing 30 bodies in the Mutakara neighborhood of Bujumbura.

High Commissioner Zeid has raised concern over a systematic policy of targeting members of the opposition, journalists and human rights defenders. OHCHR has also reported cases of sexual violence by the security forces, including against women in neighborhoods viewed as opposition strongholds in Bujumbura. Independent media outlets have been systematically destroyed or shut down. Members of the Burundian army have also been targeted for assassination. There are ongoing reports of hate speech and incitement to violence by some government officials and some opposition supporters.

UNHCR reported that over 239,000 Burundians have fled the country since April, with a surge of refugees following the failed 13 May coup and another wave in advance of the expiry of President Nkurunziza's November ultimatum. Refugees have reported harassment, enforced disappearances and murder, including by the Imbonerakure, the CNDD–FDD's paramilitary youth movement.

ANALYSIS

The protracted political crisis in Burundi could deteriorate into an ongoing armed conflict between forces loyal to the President and those that oppose his third term. There have been credible reports of armed opposition elements recruiting from refugee populations in neighboring countries.

Despite a sustained period of stability since the end of the civil war in 2005, recurring political and ethnic conflict have previously caused mass atrocities in Burundi. While the current conflict is primarily political in nature, there is a risk that widening conflict could reignite pre-existing cleavages.

Tensions between the army, traditionally dominated by the ethnic Tutsi minority, and ethnic Hutu political organizations have also been a perennial source of conflict. There is a risk that the army, which has been a source of stability since the end of the civil war, could fracture along political and ethnic lines.

The Burundian government must take urgent action to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and consolidate peacebuilding gains made since the Arusha Peace Agreement.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

On 6 July the East African Community (EAC) appointed Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to facilitate dialogue in Burundi. On 23 July the AU deployed human rights monitors and military observers to the country.

On 12 November the UNSC passed Resolution 2248, warning of possible further measures against those perpetuating violence in the country and calling for the Secretary-General to report on options for an enhanced UN presence.

On 17 December the UN Human Rights Council held a special session on the situation in Burundi and decided to deploy a mission of existing independent human rights experts. On 1 March three UN independent experts arrived in Burundi to investigate human rights violations.

On 17 December the AUPSC authorized the deployment of a 5,000-strong African Prevention and Protection Force in Burundi for a period of six months pending acceptance of the proposal by the government. The government rejected the deployment and the force was not approved during the AU Summit on 30 and 31 January.

On 22 January the UNSC visited Burundi and discussed the ongoing crisis with President Nkurunziza. On 23 February UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Bujumbura and held discussions with President Nkurunziza, who announced inclusive dialogue would resume.

On 25 to 26 February a high-level AU delegation, comprised of five Heads of State, visited Bujumbura. The AU decided to deploy an additional 100 human rights observers and 100 military experts following the visit.

NECESSARY ACTION

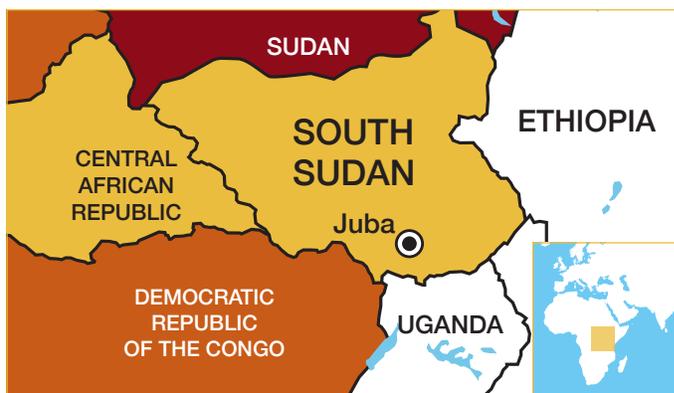
Immediate steps must be taken by the government and opposition to decrease tensions and avoid any further militarization of the political conflict. Allegations of human rights abuses, torture and extrajudicial killings should be subject to thorough and independent investigation and prosecution. All individuals must refrain from using inflammatory language or inciting violence. The use of such language should be immediately and publicly condemned.

The UNSC should immediately authorize a UN special political mission with the mandate to facilitate political dialogue and monitor and report on the human rights situation. An international police force should be deployed as part of the mission with appropriately trained and adequately equipped officers to protect civilians, assist in maintaining the rule of law and monitor Burundi's borders.

The AU, UNSC and individual states should impose targeted sanctions on any individuals implicated in targeted killings or deemed responsible for inciting violence or breaching the Arusha Peace Agreement.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MENUB Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2248](#), 12 November 2015
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Burundi](#)



193,000 civilians
still sheltering in
6 UN bases

1.7 million IDPs and
640,000 refugees
since December 2013

SOUTH SUDAN

Despite the August 2015 peace deal, violence continues and civilians in South Sudan remain at serious risk of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

Despite some improvement in the security situation in South Sudan since November, both the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and armed rebels have routinely violated a peace agreement signed in August, with heavy fighting reported in Unity and Upper Nile states. On 17 February there was an outbreak of inter-communal violence between armed elements of the Shilluk and Dinka communities inside the UN site in Malakal, which was hosting 48,000 IDPs. There were also credible reports that some SPLA soldiers entered the camp and fired upon civilians. The fighting left more than 25 people dead, including 3 humanitarian workers, and displaced over 26,000.

OHCHR published a report on 11 March on the human rights situation in South Sudan following an October 2015 to January 2016 assessment mission. The report noted all parties to the conflict had committed systematic violations which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity. The report particularly highlighted the widespread use of rape as a weapon of war by the SPLA and affiliated militias in Unity state.

The civil war resulted in over 2.8 million people needing life-saving assistance. According to the 22 January report of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan, the dire humanitarian situation in Unity state "reflects the devastating results of the Government's systematic attack against its own citizens."

President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, leader of the main rebel group, agreed in August to end the country's two-year civil war by signing the "Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan." The power-sharing agreement calls for a permanent ceasefire, as well as the establishment of an independent Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS) to investigate mass atrocities committed during the conflict.

On 24 December President Kiir divided the country's existing 10 states into 28 new states, thereby complicating the agreed upon power-sharing formula and aggravating tensions with the former rebels. On 7 January the parties reached an agreement on the division of ministries in the Transitional Government of National Unity, but missed a 22 January deadline to establish the body. On 17 January Machar withdrew opposition politicians from Juba in protest over President Kiir's re-division of states, further endangering the peace process. On 11 February President Kiir reappointed Machar as Vice President as part of the agreed peace process.

The civil war was the result of a conflict that started on 15 December 2013 between soldiers from rival SPLA factions. Fighting began after President Kiir accused Machar, the then-former Vice President, of an attempted coup. The worst fighting has been between ethnic Dinka and Nuer soldiers loyal to Kiir and Machar, respectively. At least 24 armed militias loosely aligned with either side have also been operating in South Sudan, including the powerful Nuer White Army. Since August some rebel commanders have split from Machar and are not part of the peace agreement.

Parties to the civil war engaged in widespread extrajudicial killings, torture, child abductions and sexual violence, and targeted civilians as part of their military tactics. The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has reported that some children were subjected to castration, throat-slitting and being burned alive, while UNICEF estimates that more than 16,000 children were forcibly recruited during the civil war. On 27 October the AU released its Commission of Inquiry report covering December 2013 to September 2014, concluding that widespread and systematic atrocities were perpetrated. It also noted that "indiscriminate killings of civilians" were committed by government and rebel forces in Juba, Bor, Bentiu and Malakal.

At least 50,000 people were killed during the civil war and over 193,000 people are still taking refuge in six UNMISS bases across the country. According to UNHCR, the conflict has resulted in nearly 1.7 million IDPs and 640,000 refugees in neighboring countries. In addition, fighting in Yambio County, Western Equatoria state, between local armed groups and the SPLA on 21 January has led to the displacement of 30,000 people.

ANALYSIS

Ongoing fighting in parts of South Sudan and the failure to uphold past ceasefires highlights the difficulty in achieving a sustainable peace process. While violence has not reached the same levels as before the August agreement, civilians remain at serious risk of attack from government and rebel forces. The defection of several rebel commanders, some of whom have previously perpetrated mass atrocities, also increases the risk to vulnerable civilians.

Although both sides have committed human rights violations that amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, neither the government nor armed opposition have consistently held

perpetrators within their ranks accountable. A culture of impunity has fueled recurring cycles of violence in South Sudan. Due to the breakdown of fighting along ethnic lines during the civil war there is an ongoing risk of inter-communal violence and revenge killings during the transition period.

With ongoing resource deficits and a hostile operating environment, UNMISS is struggling to uphold its protective mandate.

South Sudan requires ongoing international assistance to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and ensure accountability for mass atrocity crimes.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

In order to support UNMISS' efforts to implement its protection of civilians mandate, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2132 on 24 December 2013, expeditiously enlarging UNMISS by an additional 5,500 troops and 440 police. [For responses prior to May 2015, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Sudan](#).]

On 3 March 2015 the UNSC adopted Resolution 2206, establishing a sanctions regime for South Sudan. On 1 July the Sanctions Committee approved the designation of six senior military figures, three from each side, for sanctions.

On 15 December the UNSC adopted Resolution 2252, which extended UNMISS' mandate until 31 July 2016. The resolution emphasized that the government of South Sudan "bears the primary responsibility to protect its populations from crimes against humanity, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and genocide."

On 18 February the UN Secretary-General condemned the violence in Malakal and called upon all parties to refrain from "stoking ethnic disputes." The following day the UNSC issued a Press Statement, stressing that "attacks against civilians and United Nations premises may constitute war crimes."

Following a meeting with President Kiir in Juba on 25 February, the UN Secretary-General stressed the importance of implementing the peace agreement and urged the government to allow unfettered humanitarian access.

NECESSARY ACTION

After two years of civil war, the government and rebels must fully implement all provisions of the peace agreement. The UNSC and Intergovernmental Authority on Development should immediately impose targeted sanctions against any political and military leaders deemed responsible for violating the agreement.

UNMISS must robustly implement its civilian protection mandate. The international community should continue to enhance UNMISS' capabilities through the provision of additional aviation assets, including tactical military helicopters and unarmed unmanned aerial systems. The government must ensure that UNMISS has the ability to move freely to all parts

of the country without threats to its personnel and respect the inviolability of UN compounds.

The AU should expeditiously establish the HCSS and ensure it has the resources necessary to investigate and prosecute individuals responsible for mass atrocities committed since December 2013. UNMISS' Human Rights Division must continue to investigate violations of IHL and expeditiously publish its findings.

The government must hold all perpetrators of atrocities accountable, regardless of affiliation or position, and initiate a comprehensive strategy aimed at strengthening the peace process.

MORE INFORMATION:

- » [UNMISS Website](#)
- » [UN Secretary-General's Report on South Sudan S/2015/902](#), 23 November 2015
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2252](#), 15 December 2015
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: South Sudan](#)



Over 550,000 IDPs and 150,000 refugees displaced by ongoing violence

LIBYA

Civilians in Libya remain at risk of war crimes as a result of ongoing fighting between various armed groups.

BACKGROUND

Despite a UN-facilitated peace deal signed on 17 December, armed conflict continues in Libya. Groups affiliated to the former transitional governments (the House of Representatives in Tobruk and the General National Congress (GNC) in Tripoli) and various other armed groups continue to vie for control of the country. While the conflict has been presented as a battle between secular, moderate forces and their extremist Islamist rivals, in reality it is dominated by shifting personal, tribal and regional enmities and alliances.

During May 2014 retired General Khalifa Haftar, who was later named commander of the Libyan National Army (LNA) by the House of Representatives, initiated "Operation Dignity" against Islamist militias, including those associated with the GNC, in Benghazi and Tripoli. Fighting increased in the aftermath of June 2014 elections that replaced the GNC with the House of Representatives, with GNC-allied militias refusing to accept the new government. During July 2014 GNC-allied militias launched Operation "Libya Dawn" to counter Operation Dignity and secure political and military control of the country.

Sporadic clashes between various armed groups continue across the country. Various armed groups have committed extrajudicial executions, torture, unlawful killings and abductions. The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and OHCHR have emphasized that such acts are war crimes and those responsible are criminally liable, including at the ICC. Rival armed groups have also indiscriminately attacked civilian areas. According to OCHA, 2.4 million people, almost half the population, are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Since September 2014 UNSMIL has facilitated dialogue between major parties to the conflict. Delegates signed the UN-facilitated Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) on 17 December 2015, allowing for the appointment of a nine-member Presidency Council headed by Fayez al-Sarraj. On 19 January 2016 the Presidency Council announced the formation of a Government of National Accord, naming 32 ministers which the House of Representatives later rejected. On 15 February the Presidency Council proposed a smaller cabinet to the House of Representatives for approval. Despite some parties disputing the level of agreement by the House of Representatives, UNSMIL and the Presidency Council have announced their intention to proceed with the Government of National Accord following from the LPA.

ISIL currently controls the cities of Sirte and Nofilia and has been attacked by Libya Dawn forces. The LNA has recently taken key neighborhoods in Benghazi and also recaptured the city of Ajdabiyah from ISIL. Clashes also continue between the LNA and armed Islamist groups, including Ansar al-Sharia.

ANALYSIS

Civilians remain at risk of war crimes due to indiscriminate shelling of population centers. Armed groups on all sides have violated IHL and international human rights law. Civilians continue to face possible persecution, detention and extrajudicial killing on the basis of tribal affiliation and presumed political loyalties.

The lack of governmental control over the country has allowed arms and foreign fighters to flow across borders, further destabilizing Libya and the surrounding region. There is also evidence that competing regional powers have provided arms and air support to either Operation Dignity or Libya Dawn, despite a UN-mandated arms embargo.

ISIL's growing presence in Libya poses a direct threat to vulnerable civilians, especially those from minority cultures, nationalities and faiths.

The UN-facilitated peace process faces many obstacles, including forces on both sides of the conflict that continue to oppose signing the LPA and ongoing disputes regarding the future role of General Haftar. The Presidency Council has not yet met in Tripoli, an essential step towards establishing its legitimacy.

Both rival governments have failed to adequately uphold their Responsibility to Protect. A Government of National Accord will need urgent international assistance in order to end violations of IHL, foster reconciliation and establish the rule of law.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

On 26 February 2011 the UNSC passed Resolution 1970, calling upon the former Libyan government to cease attacks on civilians and uphold its responsibility to protect. Resolution 1973 of 17 March 2011 called upon UN member states to take "all necessary measures" to protect civilians and led to an international military intervention. Following the end of Libya's 2011 civil war, international engagement to assist in rebuilding government institutions waned.

UNSMIL was established in September 2011, but has significantly reduced personnel inside Libya due to pervasive insecurity. On 10 September 2015 the UNSC extended UNSMIL's mandate until 15 March 2016, stating the mission should undertake human rights monitoring, support key Libyan institutions, enforce arms control and provide humanitarian assistance.

On 23 December 2015 the UNSC passed Resolution 2259, welcoming the signing of the LPA and calling upon member

states to assist with the establishment of the Government of National Accord. The UNSC also emphasized the need to ensure that those responsible for violations of IHL and human rights abuses are held accountable.

On 14 March the UNSC released a Press Statement reiterating its support for the full implementation of the LPA.

NECESSARY ACTION

The UNSC should impose sanctions against all individuals and political forces who actively seek to subvert the peace process and prevent the formation of a Government of National Accord. All armed groups need to immediately cease military operations conducted in population centers. Regional powers need to act in accordance with the arms embargo reaffirmed under UNSC Resolution 2213 of March 2015.

All those responsible for mass atrocities during the 2011 civil war, as well as those responsible for violations of IHL committed during the current conflict, should be held accountable for their actions.

Breaking the culture of impunity, demobilizing and disarming armed groups, as well as establishing an accepted national government and strengthening the rule of law, remain essential. UNSMIL and the international community should continue to support all efforts aimed at securing a negotiated solution to the conflict and meeting these objectives.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSMIL Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution, S/RES/2259](#), 23 December 2015
- » [UNSC Press Statement, SC/12280-APR/3345](#), 14 March 2016
- » [Investigation by OHCHR on Libya, A/HRC/31/47](#), 15 February 2016
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Libya](#)



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