

# 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.

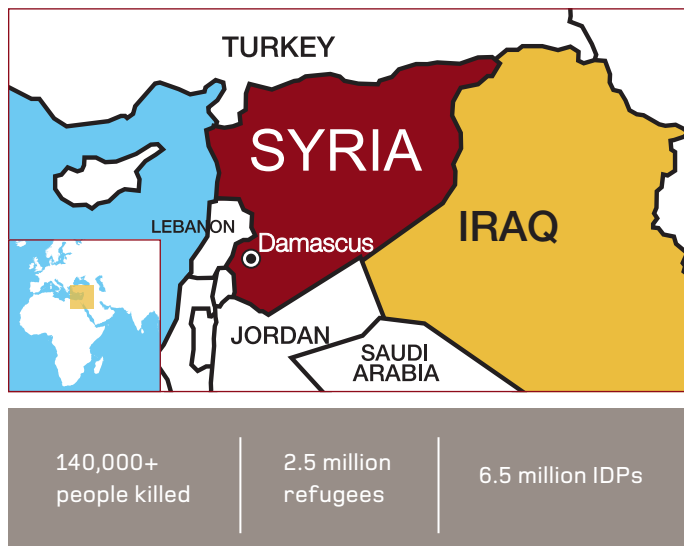
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## CURRENT CRISIS

Mass atrocity crimes are occurring and urgent action is needed.



## 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 are also committing war crimes.*

### BACKGROUND

After three years of conflict in Syria at least 140,000 people have been killed. On 3 February the UN Secretary-General released a report on the war's impact on Syrian children, detailing killings, maiming and torture, as well as their arbitrary detention and forced recruitment into anti-government armed groups. As of 3 March there were over 2.5 million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries and over 6.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs). Ongoing fighting has left at least 9.3 million Syrians in need of humanitarian assistance, 3.3 million of whom remain in inaccessible areas.

The Syrian government continues its aerial bombardment of opposition-held residential areas. At least 517 people, including 151 children, were killed between 15 and 29 December 2013 in government "barrel bomb" attacks on Aleppo. Similar attacks resumed on 1 February, killing at least 150 people, mostly civilians, by 5 February. Recent government ground offensives and the ongoing use of siege tactics, including the denial of humanitarian assistance to starving communities, also threaten civilians trapped by intense fighting. On 20 February the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that all parties to the conflict "have laid sieges across the country," trapping at least 240,000 people and impeding access to humanitarian relief.

On 6 February the UN announced that the government and opposition agreed to a three-day ceasefire in order to allow

for humanitarian aid to enter the Old City area of Homs and the evacuation of civilians. Despite attacks on the humanitarian convoys, the UN and Syrian Red Crescent were able to evacuate over 1,350 civilians by 12 February.

A UN investigation confirmed that on 21 August 2013 a large-scale attack of sarin gas, delivered by rockets, hit several areas of Ghouta, Damascus, killing an estimated 1,400 people. A joint UN-Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) team began the process of dismantling Syria's chemical weapons on 6 October. The government has so far transported four consignments of chemicals, although the war is hampering efforts to remove and destroy the weapons according to the agreed timeline. On 26 February the OPCW's Director-General called upon the Syrian government to "accelerate its efforts to transfer the remaining chemicals" by the 30 June 2014 deadline.

Government-allied militias have committed large-scale massacres in several towns and have perpetrated war crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) as a matter of state policy. The Human Rights Council-mandated Commission of Inquiry (CoI) has reported that pro-government forces "have continued to conduct widespread attacks on the civilian population, committing murder, torture, rape and enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity." On 2 December the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said the CoI had evidence of "responsibility at the highest level of government" in Syria for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Some armed opposition groups have also committed war crimes, including torture and extrajudicial killing. Several armed groups also continue to target religious minorities for violent reprisals.

While Syria's main political opposition group, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (National Coalition), is widely recognized outside Syria as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people, it has not gained extensive support inside the country. The rising salafist presence amongst the armed opposition has caused friction between groups competing for support and resources, with widespread fighting between extremists and more moderate rebel militias in Aleppo and Idlib. At least 3,300 people have been killed since January as a result of fighting between various rebel groups and the al-Qaeda-affiliated "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL).

International actors continue to vie for influence in shaping the outcome of the conflict. Saudi Arabia and Qatar are providing arms to some rebel groups. Meanwhile, Russia and Iran have criticized international efforts to undermine President Bashar al-Assad's government and continue to provide it with critical economic, military and political support.

The conflict poses a growing threat to peace and stability throughout the Middle East. Sectarian violence in Iraq has been exacerbated by the Syrian civil war, while friction between Syria and Turkey also remains high following a number of deadly cross-border incidents.

Lebanon, which hosts over 957,000 Syrian refugees, has been most severely impacted. Sporadic clashes continue to occur between Lebanese supporters and opponents of the Assad government. Suicide bombings have killed dozens of people during 2014, including former Finance Minister Mohamad Chatah. Hezbollah has directly engaged in fighting with Syrian rebels on both sides of the Syria-Lebanon border and on 9 February the group's Deputy Secretary-General vowed it would remain militarily active inside Syria.

Despite the ongoing civil war, the first round of the "Geneva II" peace conference, aimed at ending the violence and establishing a transitional governing body in Syria, took place from 22 to 31 January. Representatives from the Syrian government and opposition, as well as approximately 40 other countries and regional organizations, attended. At the conclusion of the talks, the UN-League of Arab States Joint Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, reported no progress towards an agreement. The conference resumed during the week of 10 February. On 15 February Brahimi publicly apologized to the Syrian people for the lack of progress towards ending the civil war.

## ANALYSIS

With each side in Syria still committed to an outright military victory, the conflict imperils the lives of countless civilians who continue to be directly threatened by the ongoing civil war.

The government continues to utilize its military resources to retain power at all costs and perpetrate ongoing crimes against humanity and war crimes. With superior capabilities and external assistance, the Syrian government has been able to make military gains, but alarm over the shift in the balance of power on the battlefield has influenced several governments to provide expanded military assistance to some rebel groups.

The fracturing and radicalization of the Syrian opposition has also strengthened the position of the government and compounded the difficulty of achieving a negotiated political settlement to the conflict. ISIL and several other extremist armed groups pose a direct threat to Syrian civilians, especially those from minority religious communities.

External political influence upon the Syrian government via the UN and regional actors remains weak. Sanctions have had limited success as Syria's few remaining allies continue to provide crucial economic insulation. Despite a 22 February resolution demanding humanitarian access to displaced and besieged civilians, long-standing UN Security Council (UNSC) divisions over Syria have allowed the situation to deteriorate to the point where few options for a peaceful political solution exist. Despite this, it remains imperative that diplomatic efforts continue.

The government of Syria has not only failed to uphold its Responsibility to Protect, it bears primary responsibility for the ongoing commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

## 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 November 2013, [see GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in Syria.](#)]

Between October 2011 and July 2012 Russia and China vetoed three UNSC resolutions aimed at holding the Syrian government accountable for mass atrocity crimes. However, on 27 September 2013 the UNSC adopted Resolution 2118, enabling the expeditious destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpile.

On 22 February 2014 the UNSC adopted another unanimous resolution demanding that all parties, but especially the Syrian government, immediately allow unhindered humanitarian access, including across borders, to civilians in need. The resolution demanded a halt to violence, called upon all parties to protect civilians and noted the government's "primary responsibility to protect."

On 19 November the UN General Assembly adopted its most recent resolution condemning ongoing violence in Syria, including the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government.

The UN Human Rights Council has adopted eleven resolutions condemning atrocities in Syria, the most recent passed on 24 September 2013.

An international humanitarian conference for Syria took place in Kuwait on 15 January, during which donors pledged over \$2.4 billion, less than half of the \$6.5 billion the UN considers necessary to address the "worst humanitarian crisis" in decades.

## NECESSARY ACTION

Syrian government forces and armed opposition groups must halt the commission of mass atrocity crimes and adhere to IHL. Both sides must facilitate immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access to civilian populations trapped or displaced by fighting, in keeping with UNSC Resolution 2139.

The UNSC needs to take proximate steps to end atrocities in Syria, including imposing an arms embargo and referring the situation to the ICC. Those deemed responsible for mass atrocity crimes in Syria should be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators, regardless of affiliation, brought to justice. Donor countries should allocate funds for additional UN-sanctioned human rights monitors on the Syrian border.

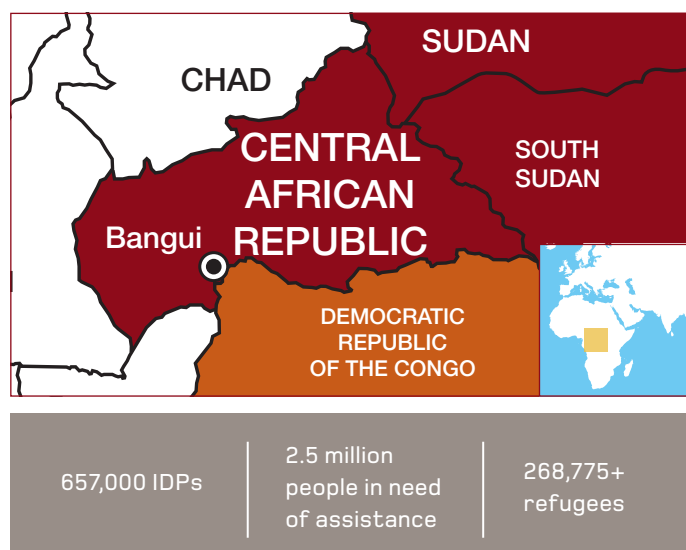
Russia, Iran and Hezbollah must cease arming and enabling the crimes of the Syrian government. Countries opposed to

the rule of President Assad should deny support to armed groups who commit war crimes or target Alawites and other minorities for reprisals.

The international community must intensify efforts towards finding a political solution to the conflict and increase efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to populations trapped or displaced by the civil war.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic A/HRC/24/46](#), 11 September 2013
- » [Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic](#), 27 January 2014
- » [Living under siege: The Syrian Arab Republic](#), OHCHR, 20 February 2014
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2139](#), 22 February 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Syria](#)



## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

*Mass atrocity crimes are being committed against civilians in the Central African Republic by ex-Séléka rebels, “anti-balaka” militias, other armed groups and mobs of civilians.*

### BACKGROUND

Violence against civilians remains pervasive in the Central African Republic (CAR), including in the capital, Bangui, and in the northwest and southwest. The Muslim population of CAR is being deliberately and systematically targeted by predominantly Christian “anti-balaka” (anti-machete) militias and mobs of civilians. Muslim civilians are fleeing to neighboring countries while the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that targeted violence against the country’s Muslim population constitutes “massive ethno-religious cleansing.” At an Arria meeting of the UNSC on 14 March it was reported that 90 percent of Muslims in Bangui have fled or been killed.

Formed largely in response to abuses by the Séléka rebel alliance, who overthrew former President François Bozizé on 24 March 2013, anti-balaka militias have conducted vicious reprisals against Muslims and are now responsible for the majority of attacks on civilians. Ex-Séléka forces have retreated from Bangui and are re-grouping in the north and east, resulting in renewed attacks on civilians in these areas. The predominantly Muslim Séléka fighters previously committed grave human rights abuses against the majority Christian population.

A further and rapid deterioration of the security situation began on 5 December 2013 after an attack against former Séléka rebels in Bangui by anti-balaka militias and loyalists of ousted President Bozizé. The UN estimates that over 2,000 people have been killed in Bangui since early December, including 133 children.

Despite the deployment of French and African Union (AU) peacekeepers, the security situation remains desperate. On 15 February a convoy of nearly 1,000 people leaving Bangui was attacked, leaving 3 people dead. Fighting near Bangui M’Poko airport between anti-balaka elements and Chadian soldiers from the AU force between 19 and 22 February left at least 12 people dead. On 22 February three Muslim civilians in a taxi were killed in Bangui by an angry mob. The International Committee of the Red Cross reported that 11 people were killed in Bangui between 1 and 2 March, with reports that a number of the victims had been hacked to death by machetes.

Attacks against civilians are also escalating in the northwest and southwest of the country, with UNHCR estimating that at least 15,000 civilians, mainly Muslims, are at a “very high risk” of attack by armed groups. Seventy Muslim civilians were killed by anti-balaka militias in Carnot in early February, with reports that a number of the victims were lined up and executed. Attacks on civilians have also been perpetrated elsewhere in CAR, but death tolls and displacement figures remain difficult to confirm.

According to UNHCR, over 268,775 civilians have sought refuge in neighboring countries. More than 657,000 people have been internally displaced since December 2013, including at least 232,000 people in Bangui. CAR has been ranked as a “Level-3” humanitarian emergency by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The transitional government, led by recently-elected interim President Catherine Samba-Panza, is struggling to control the situation. Interim President Samba-Panza formally requested the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation on 28 January. As extreme levels of violence and displacement continue, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned that the “de-facto partition” of the country along ethno-religious grounds is a distinct possibility.

### ANALYSIS

CAR has suffered decades of recurring political instability and humanitarian crisis. Since March 2013 the state has effectively

ceased to function. While important steps have been taken to address the political situation, the interim government is unable to exercise sovereignty over CAR and cannot prevent various armed groups and civilian mobs from perpetrating attacks.

Intensified fighting between ex-Séléka rebels, anti-balaka militias and other armed groups, including former soldiers loyal to ex-President Bozizé, has increased the risks to civilians. The violence has mobilized communities against one another, with armed mobs of civilians perpetrating attacks against Muslims and Christians. Most deadly attacks are conducted openly, without fear of sanction.

Despite an increase of international peacekeepers, French and AU forces have been unable to contain the violence and provide adequate protection to civilians. The AU force also continues to face critical operational gaps. A robust multi-dimensional UN presence is required to comprehensively address the current crisis. Chadian forces within the AU mission (MISCA) have been implicated in serious violations of human rights and have allegedly facilitated the retreat of some ex-Séléka elements from Bangui.

Accelerating the political transition and preparing to hold elections in a climate of pervasive insecurity will only increase the risk of mass atrocity crimes being perpetrated against civilians.

The interim government is currently unable to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and requires urgent assistance.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following the deadly surge of violence during late 2013, the international community intensified its response to the crisis in CAR, including through passing three UNSC resolutions between October 2013 and January 2014. [For responses prior to December 2013, [see GCR2P's Timeline of the International Response to the Situation in the Central African Republic.](#)]

France deployed 1,200 troops to assist in protecting civilians following approval by the UNSC on 5 December. On 7 December it was announced that MISCA would also be increased from 3,600 to 6,000 troops as a result of the rapidly deteriorating situation. The AU assumed command of MISCA from the Economic Community of Central African States on 19 December.

Joint patrols and disarmament efforts conducted by French and AU forces have been underway since 9 December and approximately 7,140 ex-Séléka fighters have been cantoned across 14 sites in Bangui. Three French and twenty AU peacekeepers have been killed since 5 December.

The UNSC held a briefing on the situation in CAR on 22 January during which the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, stated that the continued attacks against civilians constitute crimes against humanity and that the world “must uphold our responsibility to protect

Central Africans from the risk of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

On 28 January the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2134, which emphasized the primary responsibility of the interim government to protect civilians. The resolution extends and reinforces the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in CAR (BINUCA) and authorizes travel bans and asset freezes against individuals identified by the sanctions committee that was established during December 2013. Acting under Chapter VII, the UNSC also authorized the deployment of a European Union military force for a period of six months.

On 7 February Chief Prosecutor of the ICC Fatou Bensouda opened a preliminary investigation into the situation in CAR. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay reminded CAR's leaders on 19 February that they will be held personally accountable for serious human rights violations.

France announced on 14 February that it would increase its deployment from 1,600 to 2,000 troops.

On 20 February the UN Secretary-General articulated a six-point plan to urgently address the crisis, including the reinforcement of French and AU forces, establishment of a coordinated command for international forces in CAR, provision of humanitarian aid and support to the interim government, and acceleration of the political and reconciliation process.

On 3 March the UN Secretary-General released a report on CAR in which he recommended the rapid deployment of a multi-dimensional UN peacekeeping operation consisting of 10,000 troops and 1,820 police with the core task of protecting civilians.

## NECESSARY ACTION

The interim government must publicly condemn all attacks on civilians. It is essential that perpetrators responsible for violence, particularly public killings, be brought to justice. National armed forces and police that return to duty should be thoroughly vetted to ensure they have not participated or been complicit in human rights violations and attacks on civilians.

French and AU forces must disarm all armed groups who threaten civilians. Vulnerable civilians, especially encampments of IDPs, must be robustly protected and provided adequate access to humanitarian relief.

The European Union should expeditiously deploy its authorized force to assist in providing civilian protection in Bangui and elsewhere.

The UNSC should support the UN Secretary-General's six-point plan. Planning and preparations for the transition from MISCA to a UN peacekeeping operation should be accelerated. Additional support must be provided to BINUCA to ensure it has necessary resources to fulfill its reinforced mandate, including human rights monitoring and assisting with a political transition.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [BINUCA Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2127](#), 5 December 2013
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2134](#), 28 January 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Central African Republic](#)



460,000 civilians displaced  
in Darfur in 2013

1 million+ IDPs from South  
Kordofan and Blue Nile

## SUDAN

*Populations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile continue to face mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by the Sudanese Armed Forces and affiliated armed groups. Populations are also at heightened risk in Darfur.*

### BACKGROUND

Since June 2011 the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have conducted a counterinsurgency campaign in South Kordofan against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), a rebel group that fought alongside forces associated with the government of South Sudan during the 1983-2005 civil war. These forces have also been fighting in neighboring Blue Nile since the conflict expanded during September 2011.

The SAF and their allied paramilitaries, the Popular Defense Forces (PDF), have committed war crimes, including extra-judicial killing, forced displacement and sexual violence against civilians in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented the SAF's widespread use of "scorched earth" tactics, including the systematic targeting of food sources and deliberate destruction of civilian structures.

The SPLM-N has also perpetrated war crimes. On 14 December 2013 the group shelled civilian areas of Kadugli, South Kordofan, in direct violation of IHL.

Heavy fighting between the SAF and the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organization consisting of the SPLM-N and other armed rebel groups, has been reported since mid-November in South Kordofan. The SAF issued a statement on

21 December claiming to have recaptured 17 areas previously controlled by the SRF. The Satellite Sentinel Project has used satellite imagery to confirm large-scale aerial bombardment of civilian areas by the SAF in Buram and Dilling counties, South Kordofan, during mid-November. Clashes between the SRF and the SAF were also reported in Jebel Abu Domou on 1 December. The SAF has continued indiscriminate aerial bombardments, including strikes on Yabus, Blue Nile, on 27 January and Korongo, South Kordofan, on 31 January.

The ongoing conflict has led to the internal displacement of over 1 million civilians while more than 230,000 have fled to South Sudan and Ethiopia. Recent violence in South Sudan has resulted in some refugees returning. The government continues to block UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations, monitors and independent media from access to rebel-held areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. On 1 February the government ordered the International Committee of the Red Cross to halt its operations in Sudan.

Sudan has consistently failed to honor AU-brokered agreements and UNSC resolutions calling for a cessation of hostilities. Direct negotiations between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N to reach a comprehensive solution to the conflict commenced on 13 February following an invitation from the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan. The talks adjourned on 18 February with the AUHIP proposing a new draft framework agreement.

The governor of South Kordofan alleged that the SPLM-N shelled Kadugli immediately after the suspension of talks. He announced that military operations, including the reinforcement of SAF troops in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, would continue until the next round of negotiations. Both parties resumed talks on 28 February, but on 2 March the AUHIP noted that negotiations had broken down again and referred the issue to the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC). On 12 March the AU PSC announced a 30 April deadline for the government and SPLM-N to reach a settlement.

The security situation in Darfur also remains volatile as a result of inter-communal and state-sponsored violence, which displaced over 460,000 people during 2013. The UN peacekeeping force in Darfur (UNAMID) reported on 3 March that increasing levels of violence in South Darfur had led to the displacement of nearly 120,000 people. UNAMID also criticized the government for restricting its movement and ability to uphold its civilian protection mandate.

### ANALYSIS

The government of Sudan 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 more than two years.

Indiscriminate bombings of rebel-held areas demonstrate an unwillingness to distinguish between combatants and civilians, actions which violate IHL and may amount to crimes against humanity. Both the government and the SPLM-N have continued attacks against civilian areas despite negotiations.

The UNSC and AU have failed to push the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N to uphold agreements to cease hostilities and allow the delivery of humanitarian aid to South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

The failure to resolve the status of the disputed region of Abyei also continues to endanger the lives of civilians living there. Heightened tensions between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities during the migration season as well as the influx of South Sudanese refugees has increased the risk of a recurrence of significant inter-communal violence.

Despite the presence of UNAMID, the security situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate. Recent inter-communal violence and the expanded operations of Darfuri rebel groups into North Kordofan and Abyei contributes to the risk of further mass atrocity crimes.

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

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

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 for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur. President Bashir was also indicted in 2010 for perpetrating genocide in Darfur. [For responses prior to October 2013, [see GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States.](#)]

Acting on behalf of the AUHIP for Sudan, former South African President Thabo Mbeki has facilitated regular talks between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N since 2011.

The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 14 February welcoming the resumption of negotiations between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N. The statement called upon both parties to cease hostilities and reach an agreement to end the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

On 26 February the ICC called upon the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to arrest President Bashir during his visit to the country and surrender him to the court.

The UN Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued statements on 10 and 11 March, respectively, expressing concern regarding the situation in South Darfur

and calling upon the government to protect civilians and hold perpetrators accountable.

## NECESSARY ACTION

The government of Sudan and SPLM-N must cease hostilities and address the underlying causes of the conflict. The UNSC should expand the arms embargo on Darfur to include South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

The UNSC and AU must ensure that the 2011 Framework Agreement and 2012 cooperation agreements are rigorously implemented. States with major investments in Sudan, including China, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, should press the government to fulfill its commitments.

Crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur must be thoroughly investigated. The UNSC should mandate the establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry for South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

Sudan and South Sudan must continue to negotiate outstanding post-secession issues and resolve the status of Abyei. Both governments should end support for armed groups operating in the other's territory. During the volatile migration season the UN peacekeeping mission in Abyei (UNISFA) should continue to implement its conflict prevention and mediation strategy and increase the number of temporary operating bases in the region.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNISFA Website](#)
- » [UNAMID Website](#)
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11282](#), 14 February 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Sudan](#)



708,900+ IDPs since  
15 December

75,000+ civilians  
sheltering in 8 UN bases

## SOUTH SUDAN

*Political divisions within South Sudan have resulted in heavy fighting and mass atrocities committed by rival pro and anti-government forces, plunging the country into civil war. Ethnic mobilization threatens wider inter-communal violence, heightening the risk of further mass atrocity crimes.*

### BACKGROUND

Violent clashes between Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers from rival political and ethnic groups has left several thousand people dead and displaced over 708,000 civilians since 15 December. The fighting began in Juba after President Salva Kiir accused Riek Machar, the former Vice-President who was removed from office during July 2013, of an attempted coup.

The worst fighting has mainly been between ethnic Dinka and Nuer SPLA soldiers loyal to the President and former Vice-President, respectively. Both sides have been accused of targeting civilians based upon their ethnicity and presumed political allegiances. On 31 December the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) stated that, "extra-judicial killings of civilians and captured soldiers have occurred in various parts of the country, as evidenced by the discovery of large numbers of bodies in Juba, as well as the Upper Nile and Jonglei state capitals of Malakal and Bor." In Central Equatoria state, the UN reported Nuer civilians being "tied to each other in a line before being forced to walk to another location to be killed."

UNMISS released an interim report on 21 February outlining human rights abuses committed by both sides between 15 December and 31 January. The report concluded that "civilians bore the brunt of much of the fighting and that gross violations of human rights were committed."

Approximately 75,300 people have sought refuge in eight UNMISS bases across the country, including nearly 43,000 people in two sites in Juba. OCHA has noted that maintaining law and order within some UN compounds is becoming increasingly difficult, with reports of ethnic violence between IDPs increasing.

South Sudan has been ranked as a "Level-3" humanitarian emergency by OCHA.

The ethnic dimension to the conflict has fueled inter-communal violence elsewhere in the country. On 18 December an estimated 2,000 Lou Nuer youth attacked Dinka civilians sheltering at an UNMISS base in Akobo, Jonglei state, resulting in the death of 11 civilians and 2 UN peacekeepers.

In late December, over 25,000 Lou Nuer fighters, known as the "White Army," marched towards Bor, Jonglei state. Although most of the fighters disbanded following mediation efforts, on 30 December approximately 5,000 White Army members joined Machar's rebel forces outside Bor.

White Army elements, reportedly under the control of Machar, have also been involved in attacks against Dinka civilians in Malakal. One of the country's key oil producing areas, Malakal has changed hands several times since the conflict began. The UN has noted that ethnic Shilluk and Dinka civilians were attacked when the opposition controlled Malakal, while Nuer civilians were targeted when the government retook the town.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) held a summit on 27 December to discuss the crisis in South Sudan. Prior to the summit President Kiir expressed his willingness to engage in negotiations and declared that he will hold accountable anyone committing atrocities. Twenty SPLA soldiers have since been charged for civilian killings. Delegations from both sides met with IGAD mediators in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 3 January with direct negotiations starting two days later.

Despite acting as a mediator during the peace talks, the Ugandan government has militarily intervened in South Sudan in support of President Kiir. Ugandan People's Defence Force troops were initially deployed to help secure Juba airport, but later engaged in major combat operations alongside the SPLA, including the recapture of Bor on 18 January.

After five weeks of fighting an Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities (COH) was signed on 23 January between the government and opposition forces, known as the "SPLA in Opposition." Both sides have since accused each other of violating the COH as fighting continued in Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile and Lakes states. On 31 January ongoing insecurity in Leer, Unity state, caused thousands of civilians to flee while more than 1,550 residential structures were burned, according to satellite imagery provided by the UN. On 11 February talks between the government and opposition forces continued.

Heavy fighting resumed in Malakal on 18 February, where ethnic clashes were reported inside the UN compound, leaving 10 people dead and causing 2,000 of the 20,000 civilians sheltering in the base to flee.

Due to ongoing security concerns and a lack of personnel, UNMISS has been unable to frequently patrol outside of their

bases. The UNSC adopted Resolution 2132 on 24 December, temporarily enlarging UNMISS by an additional 5,500 troops and 440 police. These troops have yet to be fully deployed.

The government has become increasingly hostile towards UNMISS since 15 December, with inflammatory statements made by numerous senior government officials. Status of Forces Agreement violations, including attempts by the SPLA to forcibly enter UNMISS bases, have affected the mission's ability to uphold its protection of civilians mandate.

## ANALYSIS

The high number of casualties and large-scale displacement since 15 December illustrate the severity of the crisis confronting South Sudan. The rapid descent into civil war highlights the fragility of the government as well as the SPLA's political and ethnic divisions. UNMISS and the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, have implicated both pro and anti-government forces in the commission of mass atrocities. Despite the signing of the COH, the risk to civilians remains high due to ongoing fighting. UNMISS and humanitarian agencies continue to face severe difficulties in accessing key areas.

The ethnic dimension to the conflict dramatically heightens the risk to civilians. Civilians in Bor have been subjected to atrocities in the past, including a 1991 massacre of Dinka by Nuer fighters loyal to Machar. The absence of accountability for previous atrocities perpetuates recurring ethnic mobilization and targeted violence.

The government of South Sudan and UNMISS require immediate international assistance to reestablish security throughout the country, ensure accountability and uphold their Responsibility to Protect.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

UNMISS has approximately 7,000 troops in South Sudan with a civilian protection mandate. UNSC Resolution 2109, which extended UNMISS' mandate until July 2014, called upon the government of South Sudan to "take greater responsibility for the protection of its civilians."

On 24 December the UN Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect issued a statement recalling that "targeted attacks against civilians and against UN personnel, such as those that have occurred in Juba and Jonglei state, could constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity."

The AU issued a Communiqué on 29 January condemning the ethnic targeting of civilians and noting that all perpetrators must be held accountable. The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 13 February condemning violations of the COH by both parties.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement on 20 February following renewed violence in Malakal, emphasizing

that those who perpetrated crimes against civilians will be held accountable.

The AU announced the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry on 7 March. Headed by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, the Commission will investigate human rights violations committed since 15 December and make recommendations on appropriate accountability and reconciliation measures. On 13 March IGAD agreed to deploy a stabilization force and monitor the COH.

## NECESSARY ACTION

All parties to the current conflict must uphold their Responsibility to Protect. President Kiir and Machar must fully abide by the commitments made under the COH and continue to engage with IGAD to resolve the crisis. The UNSC, AU and major international supporters of South Sudan, including the United States, should assist in mediation efforts and assist IGAD in facilitating the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism of the COH.

UNMISS must assume a more robust role in upholding its protective mandate. The international community should enhance UNMISS' protective capabilities through the rapid provision of additional troops and resources, including level-two field hospitals. The supply of additional tactical and utility helicopters could assist surveillance efforts aimed at detecting and deterring potential attacks upon vulnerable communities.

UNMISS' Human Rights Division must investigate reports of extra-judicial killings and possible mass graves. The Commission of Inquiry should initiate investigations as soon as possible. The UN should assist the Commission by sharing best practices and providing logistical support.

The government must ensure that UNMISS has the ability to move freely to all parts of the country. It must cease inciting public hostility against UNMISS, endangering the security of the mission and its personnel. The government must hold all perpetrators of mass atrocities accountable, regardless of their affiliation or position.

The government of South Sudan must initiate a comprehensive strategy aimed at ethnic and political reconciliation. This must include justice for victims of past conflicts, including those targeted during inter-communal violence in Jonglei state and elsewhere. It is critical that members of civil society participate in the process as well as the peace negotiations in Addis Ababa.

## MORE INFORMATION:

- » [UNMISS Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2132](#), 24 December 2013
- » [AU PSC Communiqué, PSC/AHG/COMM/1.\(CDXVI\)](#), 29 January 2014
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/112278](#), 13 February 2014
- » [UNMISS Interim Report on Human Rights: Crisis in South Sudan](#), 21 February 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: South Sudan](#)

## UN Security Council Resolutions and R2P

Since the 2005 UN World Summit, the UN Security Council has referenced the Responsibility to Protect populations from mass atrocity crimes in 21 resolutions. These resolutions have addressed more than ten country situations as well as the

thematic issues of Protection of Civilians and Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Security Council has already referenced the Responsibility to Protect in two Resolutions so far this year regarding the situations in Central African Republic and Syria.

Date	Document #	Situation or Issue	Text
27 January 2006	S/RES/1653	DRC and Burundi	"Underscores that the governments in the region have a primary responsibility to protect their populations,"
28 April 2006	S/RES/1674	Protection of Civilians	"Reaffirms the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,"
31 August 2006	S/RES/1706	Sudan (Darfur)	"Recalling also its previous resolutions 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, 1502 (2003) on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict, and 1674 (2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, which reaffirms inter alia the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 United Nations World Summit outcome document,"
11 November 2009	S/RES/1894	Protection of Civilians	"Reaffirming the relevant provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including paragraphs 138 and 139 thereof regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,"
26 February 2011	S/RES/1970	Libya	"Recalling the Libyan authorities' responsibility to protect its population,"
17 March 2011	S/RES/1973	Libya	"Reiterating the responsibility of the Libyan authorities to protect the Libyan population and reaffirming that parties to armed conflicts bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians,"
30 March 2011	S/RES/1975	Côte d'Ivoire	"...reaffirming the primary responsibility of each State to protect civilians and reiterating that parties to armed conflicts bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians..."
8 July 2011	S/RES/1996	South Sudan	"Advising and assisting the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, including military and police at national and local levels as appropriate, in fulfilling its responsibility to protect civilians,"
21 October 2011	S/RES/2014	Yemen	"Recalling the Yemeni Government's primary responsibility to protect its population,"
27 October 2011	S/RES/2016	Libya	"...underscores the Libyan authorities' responsibility for the protection of its population, including foreign nationals and African migrants,"

12 March 2012	S/RES/2040	Libya	"...underscores the Libyan authorities' primary responsibility for the protection of Libya's population,"
19 December 2012	S/RES/2085	Mali	"(d) To support the Malian authorities in their primary responsibility to protect the population,"
6 March 2013	S/RES/2093	Somalia	"Recognizing that the Federal Government of Somalia has a responsibility to protect its citizens and build its own national security forces,"
12 March 2013	S/RES/2095	Libya	"...underscores the Libyan government's primary responsibility for the protection of Libya's population, as well as foreign nationals, including African migrants,"
25 April 2013	S/RES/2100	Mali	"Reiterates that the transitional authorities have the primary responsibility to protect civilians in Mali,"
11 July 2013	S/RES/2109	Sudan/South Sudan	"Recalling the Presidential Statement of 12 February 2013 that recognized that States bear the primary responsibility to protect civilians as well as to respect and ensure the human rights of all individuals within their territory and subject to their jurisdiction as provided for by relevant international law, reaffirmed that parties to armed conflict bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians, urged parties to armed conflict to meet civilians' basic needs, and condemned all violations of international law against civilians, in particular the deliberate targeting of civilians, indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks, and sexual and gender based violence."
26 September 2013	S/RES/2117	Small Arms and Light Weapons	"Recognizing that the misuse of small arms and light weapons has resulted in grave crimes and reaffirming therefore the relevant provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including paragraphs 138 and 139 thereof regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,"
10 October 2013	S/RES/2121	Central African Republic	"Underscores the primary responsibility of the Central African authorities to protect the population,"
5 December 2013	S/RES/2127	Central African Republic	"Recalling that the Transitional Authorities have the primary responsibility to protect the civilian population,"  "Underscores the primary responsibility of the Transitional Authorities to protect the population,"
28 January 2014	S/RES/2134	Central African Republic	"Recalling that the Transitional Authorities have the primary responsibility to protect the civilian population in the CAR,"
22 February 2014	S/RES/2139	Syria	"Also demands that all parties take all appropriate steps to protect civilians, including members of ethnic, religious and confessional communities, and stresses that, in this regard, the primary responsibility to protect its population lies with the Syrian authorities;"

## 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.



2.9 million IDPs

50+ armed groups  
operating in eastern DRC

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

*Populations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain at imminent risk of crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated by armed groups and military forces.*

### BACKGROUND

During 2012 and 2013 insecurity in the eastern regions of the DRC caused by fighting between the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) and a group of army defectors known as the March 23 (M23) rebel movement allowed various armed groups to perpetrate mass atrocity crimes against the civilian population. More than 967,000 civilians have fled their homes since the mutiny started during April 2012, contributing to the more than 2.9 million IDPs in the DRC. Although M23 surrendered on 5 November 2013, the civilian population still faces grave risks from other armed groups.

The government of the DRC estimates that there are approximately 52 armed groups committing abuses in eastern DRC, many of which increased their activities in the security vacuum created by redeployment of FARDC troops to confront M23. Some of these groups – namely the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and various local Mayi-Mayi militias – have been operating within the DRC for more than a decade, but utilized insecurity in the east to attack populations with increasing frequency.

Patterns of violence committed by these groups, including killing, abduction and forced recruitment of civilians, have

been witnessed in North Kivu, South Kivu, Katanga and Oriental Province over the past year. UNHCR reported a significant increase in sexual violence in North Kivu, noting over 705 registered cases in the first six months of 2013. The UN also reported that an estimated 120,000 people had been displaced by fighting between rebel groups and the FARDC in Oriental Province between August 2013 and February 2014.

Between 14 and 25 December the Allied Democratic Forces-Nalu (ADF-Nalu), an alliance of Ugandan rebel groups who also operate in the DRC, attacked civilians in Beni and Kamongo in North Kivu. The attacks reportedly resulted in the death of more than 60 civilians and displacement of 150,000.

The UN reported during February 2014 on a “humanitarian disaster” in Katanga caused by Mayi-Mayi Kata Katanga perpetrating a “scorched earth” campaign, leading to hundreds of thousands of people displaced since October 2013. On 13 February the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) reported that more than 70 people had been summarily executed in North Kivu between the end of January and early February. Armed groups allegedly burned down villages in order to terrorize the local population.

The FARDC has also been implicated in attacks upon civilians, including 135 documented cases of rape committed in Minova as M23’s forces occupied Goma during November 2012. OCHA has received allegations of FARDC troops threatening civilians on the basis of their ethnicity and perpetrating crimes against populations in reprisal for alleged collaboration with Mayi-Mayi groups. On 20 November 2013 a military court began the trial of 41 FARDC soldiers for war crimes, including rape.

The FARDC reclaimed rebel strongholds in North Kivu from M23 forces with the direct military assistance of a UNSC-authorized intervention brigade as part of MONUSCO’s enhanced mandate. Although initially focused on M23, the intervention brigade is mandated to combat all rebel groups operating in the DRC. As part of a government-initiated offensive that started during January, the head of MONUSCO authorized a helicopter attack against an ADF-Nalu base in Beni on 1 March. The government declared victory over the ADF-Nalu on 14 March.

### ANALYSIS

Despite ongoing military offensives and M23’s defeat, the threat posed by armed groups remains high. The weakness of government structures undermines attempts to prevent atrocities and protect civilians. This is particularly evident in eastern DRC, where the government has previously lost control of areas to various rebel groups and has historically

been incapable of controlling its borders. Rising threats from other armed groups and widespread displacement poses an ongoing challenge to the FARDC and MONUSCO. Refugee flows into northern DRC from conflicts in CAR and South Sudan may increase insecurity in an already volatile region.

Competition for control of minerals as well as underlying conflict between communities that consider themselves “indigenous” and those with alleged Rwandan ancestry contribute to the pervasiveness of armed violence. Without adequately addressing the root causes of conflict in the eastern DRC, armed groups will continue to emerge and threaten populations residing there.

FARDC troops have routinely committed crimes against populations they have been deployed to protect. The FARDC also continues to incorporate local militias into its ranks, a practice that exacerbates divisions within the military and potentially puts civilians at risk.

The government of the DRC has struggled to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and its own forces have at times been complicit in mass atrocity crimes. Following the military defeat of M23 the DRC needs ongoing support in order to halt atrocities committed by other armed groups, especially the FDLR.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The international community has responded to violence in eastern DRC by taking diplomatic, political and military measures to confront the operations of armed groups. [For responses prior to January 2013, [see GCR2P’s Timeline of International Response to the Situation in the DRC.](#)]

MONUSCO is responsible for more than 21,000 UN personnel operating under a civilian protection mandate. Since 2002 the UN has facilitated a reduction in membership of various armed groups through its Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement program.

The UNSC currently subjects 9 entities and 31 individuals, including several M23 and FDLR leaders, to the enforcement of travel bans and asset freezes. On 23 January 2014 the UN Group of Experts on the DRC released their final report for 2013, alleging that even after M23’s surrender rebels continue to receive support from neighboring countries. On 30 January the UNSC extended the Group of Experts’ mandate until February 2015.

On 13 January the Secretary-General’s Special Representative to the DRC, Martin Kobler, briefed the UNSC regarding the ongoing redeployment of MONUSCO troops to eastern DRC, which will result in two thirds of the mission’s staff operating there by July.

The Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region held its third meeting on 31 January on the sidelines of the AU Summit.

## NECESSARY ACTION

The DRC government and MONUSCO need to ensure that the protection of civilians remains a priority as they address the military threat posed by various armed groups. MONUSCO troops redeployed to eastern DRC must actively uphold their protection of civilians mandate.

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.

All perpetrators of mass atrocity crimes in the DRC, including members of the FARDC, need to be held accountable. MONUSCO should support the DRC government in facilitating local peacebuilding initiatives. The government must increase efforts to restore state authority in eastern DRC.

Together with the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, the AU, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) must continue to ensure that signatories to the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation in the DRC fulfill their commitments. Signatories must use the momentum from the defeat of M23 to help eliminate other armed groups, particularly the FDLR and Mayi-Mayi militias, and continue diplomatic efforts aimed at greater regional cooperation to prevent recurring conflict.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [MONUSCO Website](#)
- » [Joint SADC-ICGLR Final Communiqué on the Kampala Dialogue](#), 12 December 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: DRC](#)



138,000 people still displaced  
by 2012 ethnic violence in  
Arakan/Rakhine state

2,000 Muslims displaced  
by latest violence in  
Maungdaw township

## BURMA/MYANMAR

*Ethnic and religious minorities in Burma/Myanmar, especially stateless Rohingya and other Muslims, continue to face an imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes.*

### BACKGROUND

Outbreaks of anti-Muslim violence that first began in mid-2012 in Burma/Myanmar continue to put minority populations at imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes. Sporadic attacks against Muslims have recurred since June and October 2012 when clashes broke out between Arakanese/Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in Arakan/Rakhine state, killing nearly 200 people. Some 138,000 people remain displaced as a result of this violence.

Between 9 and 13 January 2014 at least 40 Rohingyas were reportedly attacked and killed by local Buddhist residents and state security forces in Maungdaw Township, Arakan/Rakhine state. Officials then ordered the arrest of all male Rohingya. The central government has since denied the attacks and any deaths. However, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported treating 22 patients in the area with “violence-related injuries.” On 27 February the government ordered MSF to cease all operations, alleging the organization’s bias in favor of Rohingya. Days later the government permitted MSF to resume operations throughout Burma/Myanmar, except in Arakan/Rakhine state.

Rohingyas continue to face discriminatory state policies, including the denial of citizenship and a two-child limit for families. During June 2012 President Thein Sein asserted that Burma/Myanmar will not take responsibility for Rohingya because they are “not our ethnicity.” The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, has expressed concern over the “increasingly permanent” segregation of communities in Arakan/Rakhine state, with many Muslims confined to IDP camps and denied their fundamental human rights. Buddhist monk organizations have called for the deportation of Rohingya and have attempted to block the delivery of humanitarian aid to those displaced by violence.

Persecution has led thousands of Rohingyas to seek protection in neighboring countries, where they are often subject to further abuse, human trafficking and refoulement.

As violence has affected the broader Muslim community, security forces have consistently failed to adequately protect civilians during outbreaks of violence and in some cases have been complicit in attacks. For example, police failed to intervene to protect victims during a 21 March 2013 massacre of over 30 Muslim students and teachers in Meikhtila, despite witnessing the attack.

Conditions for Burma/Myanmar’s other minorities also remain grave. After 60 years of civil war, the government has reached ceasefire agreements with several ethnic armed groups. Despite this, fighting continues in Kachin, Karenni/Kayah, Karen/Kayin, Chin and Shan states. Special Rapporteur Quintana reported on 19 February that “the implementation of ceasefire agreements has been poor.”

The government’s armed forces (Tatmadaw) have committed violations including extrajudicial killing, sexual violence and the recruitment of child soldiers, possibly amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. OCHA has said the government continues to block parts of Kachin and Shan states from access to humanitarian relief for those affected by the fighting.

### ANALYSIS

While the government has been commended for introducing extensive democratic reforms, widespread abuses against several of Burma/Myanmar’s minorities continue. Anti-Rohingya and anti-Muslim violence has spread and is evidence of a dangerous communal fracture that the government is failing to adequately address. In particular, the government has taken little action towards improving the plight of the Rohingya. The government’s refusal to grant them citizenship and failure to restrict anti-Rohingya hate speech enables ongoing violations of their fundamental human rights.

Attacks by the Tatmadaw also pose a grave threat to civilians, particularly in Kachin state, and indicate that the military’s commitment to reform remains questionable. 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 Responsibility to Protect.

### INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following decades of political isolation and military dictatorship, democratic reforms have contributed to rapprochement between Burma/Myanmar and the international community, including the lifting of sanctions and cancellation of bilateral debt by a number of countries.

Since the outbreak of anti-Muslim violence during June 2012, the UN, regional organizations and individual states have censured the government for failing to protect

civilians from attacks. [For responses prior to November 2013, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation of the Rohingya and Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma/Myanmar](#).]

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Inter-Parliamentary Caucus and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have condemned violence against Rohingya. Burma/Myanmar holds the chairmanship of ASEAN for 2014.

The UN General Assembly's Third Committee adopted a resolution on 19 November 2013 urging the government to address the root causes of attacks against Muslims and grant the Rohingya equal access to citizenship. The appeal was rejected by Burma/Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the UN, who said the government does not recognize the term "Rohingya" and has a sovereign right to deny citizenship to those ineligible under its existing laws.

Following the events in Maungdaw Township, several UN officials, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator, condemned the violence and called for an impartial investigation. The government denied access to the area and claimed it conducted its own investigations, reporting "no evidence" of the killing of Rohingya.

Between 14 and 19 February Special Rapporteur Quintana undertook a visit to Burma/Myanmar. He raised concerns about impunity for anti-Muslim abuses and killings. On 14 March the Special Rapporteur released his final report, saying that the government has taken no "clear action" aimed at addressing widespread discrimination and human rights violations against Rohingya, which he describes as possibly amounting to crimes against humanity.

## NECESSARY ACTION

The government of Burma/Myanmar must uphold its Responsibility to Protect all populations, regardless of their ethnicity or religion.

The government must end endemic discrimination against Rohingya, including the denial of citizenship. It must hold accountable all those who commit abuses, including inciting ethnic and religious violence. In Arakan/Rakhine state, the government must facilitate the safe, voluntary return of IDPs to their communities. Neighboring countries should offer protection to Rohingya asylum seekers.

The government must allow unhindered humanitarian access to those affected by violence in Arakan/Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states.

The international community must urge the government of Burma/Myanmar to prioritize the development of a comprehensive plan to engage ethnic minorities in an inclusive reconciliation process. Remaining sanctions should only be lifted following a demonstrable improvement in the welfare of ethnic and religious minorities.

A central component of the 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 mass atrocity crimes.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [Situation of human rights in Myanmar](#), UN General Assembly, 19 November 2013
- » [Statement of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), 23 January 2014
- » [Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar](#), 19 February 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Burma/Myanmar](#)



1,900+ people killed  
since May 2013

470,000+ IDPs since May  
2013

## NIGERIA

*Attacks by Boko Haram, excessive use of force by the security forces and the recurring threat of inter-communal violence create a deadly dynamic that leaves populations at risk of crimes against humanity in Nigeria.*

## BACKGROUND

More than 1,900 people in Nigeria have been killed in escalating attacks by Boko Haram since President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency for Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states during May 2013. According to UNHCR, the violence has displaced more than 470,000 people while more than 57,000 have taken refuge in neighboring countries.

Boko Haram, which has been perpetrating attacks against civilians since 2009, is committed to overthrowing Nigeria's secular government and establishing an Islamic state. In its attacks, the group targets Christians and moderate Muslims, often bombing churches and mosques as well as schools since it considers secular education "un-Islamic." Indiscriminate attacks on social gatherings and isolated villages are also common.

Despite the state of emergency, which has been extended until May 2014, Amnesty International has reported that since the beginning of 2014, “over 600 people have been killed by gunmen, often suspected to be Boko Haram,” marking a grave escalation in the violence.

Although a presidential spokesman declared on 18 February that the army was “winning the war” against Boko Haram, the group has perpetrated several major attacks on civilian targets during February and March.

On 11 February Boko Haram attacked villages in Konduga, Borno state, killing at least 51 people and burning a mosque, school and other buildings. On 15 and 23 February Boko Haram attacked the predominantly Christian town of Izghe, Borno state, killing at least 109 people. The group set fire to a boarding school in Yobe state on 25 February, killing at least 59 students. On 27 February they also killed 40 people in three separate attacks on villages in Adamawa state. At least 140 people were reportedly killed in a series of attacks by suspected Boko Haram members in and around Maiduguri, Borno state between 28 February and 3 March. The UN Special Representative for West Africa, Said Djinnit, described the attacks as an “unprecedented cycle of violence” against innocent civilians.

Nigerian security forces have been accused of failing to provide adequate protection to vulnerable populations as they confront Boko Haram’s insurgency and have committed widespread human rights violations themselves. During the April 2013 “Baga massacre” over 180 civilians were killed and more than 2,000 houses destroyed by security forces pursuing Boko Haram members. According to a Borno state senator, security forces made no attempt to protect local populations during the 15 February attack on Izghe and failed to prevent the second attack in the same town a week later. Security forces also reportedly killed 20 civilians in air raids on Daglun village as they responded to Boko Haram’s 28 February attack.

Inter-communal conflict also continues to plague Nigeria. According to Human Rights Watch, between January 2010 and December 2013 an estimated 3,000 people were killed in Plateau and Kaduna states during inter-communal violence. Several attacks by suspected Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen against Christian Barome villagers were reported in Plateau state during February.

## ANALYSIS

While Boko Haram uses terrorism as a tactic to destabilize the Nigerian state, their threat to populations should be understood through the lens of the Responsibility to Protect. Civilians in northern Nigeria remain at risk of mass atrocity crimes as Boko Haram continues attacks, which may constitute crimes against humanity, targeting Christians, moderate Muslims, government officials, pro-government vigilantes and students. As fighting between the security forces and Boko Haram continues under the state of emergency, indiscriminate violence heightens the risk of further mass atrocity crimes.

Conflict in central and northern Nigeria stems from a number of sources, including poverty, discriminatory policies towards Nigerians regarded as “settlers” and the manipulation of religious and ethnic identities to serve political and economic interests. Boko Haram has successfully exploited these tensions and facilitated the spread of inter-communal violence beyond the north and middle-belt to central and southern Nigeria.

The government has been unable to adequately protect populations in the north from the threat posed by Boko Haram or to prevent recurring inter-communal violence in central Nigeria. The security forces’ acts of arbitrary detention and extra-judicial killing of suspected Boko Haram members violate international human rights law. In spite of the government’s deployment of additional forces in the north under the state of emergency, Boko Haram attacks have increased.

General elections scheduled for 2015 may further exacerbate religious tensions and heighten the risk of widespread conflict.

The government of Nigeria is struggling to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and needs the ongoing support of the international community.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The ICC reported during August 2013 that there is a reasonable basis to believe that Boko Haram has perpetrated crimes against humanity. The ICC is conducting a preliminary examination assessing whether the government is holding those bearing responsibility for these crimes accountable.

On 18 February OHCHR condemned Boko Haram attacks in Borno state and urged the government to provide greater security and protection to civilians.

The UN Children’s Fund expressed its “outrage at the brutal killing” of school children in Yobe state on 25 February.

On 27 February France’s President Francois Hollande visited Nigeria and vowed to support the government in its fight against Boko Haram.

The UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Rita Izsak, conducted an official visit to Nigeria between 17 and 28 February. Izsak issued a statement on 28 February insisting that a security response is insufficient to address inter-communal violence and that the government “must address long-standing and contentious political, economic and social issues and inequalities that have been neglected.”

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, released a statement on 14 March during a visit to Nigeria, noting that many of the people she met with “openly acknowledge human rights violations have been committed by the security forces, and these have served to alienate local communities, and create fertile ground for Boko Haram to cultivate new recruits.”

## NECESSARY ACTION

Authorities must provide increased security in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, particularly at educational institutions, places of worship and other sites routinely targeted by Boko Haram. The government must also address underlying causes of religious and inter-communal conflict, including youth unemployment, corruption and unequal allocation of resources as well as land and water rights.

Security forces must protect vulnerable communities in a manner that is consistent with international human rights standards. With international assistance, the government should advance security sector reform to ensure that the army and police are trained to prevent mass atrocities while respecting human rights.

The government of Nigeria should actively seek assistance from international partners, including enhanced training for security forces and intelligence officers. The AU, Economic Community of West African States and UN, along with states with significant

bilateral ties to Nigeria, should assist the government in meeting its responsibility to protect its population. These actors should urge the authorities to strengthen the rule of law and ensure accountability for all grave human rights violations.

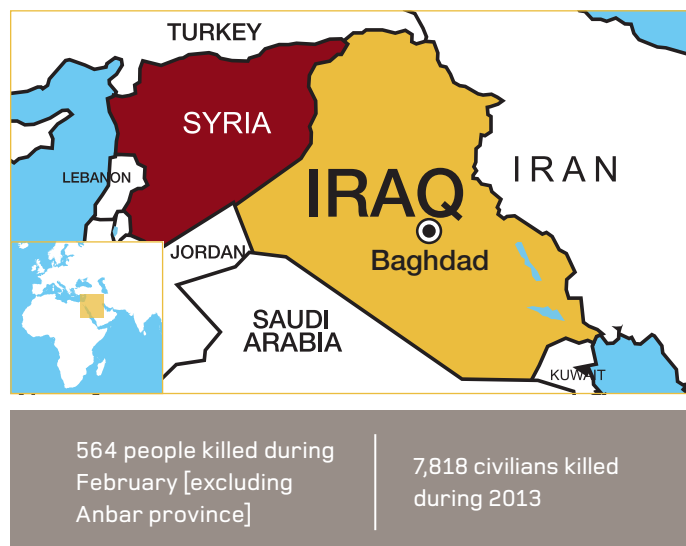
As Nigeria is preparing for the 2015 general elections, politicians from all parties should refrain from inflammatory statements that could deepen religious, ethnic and inter-communal divisions.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » ["UNICEF condemns killing of students in northeastern Nigeria,"](#) UN Children's Fund, 26 February 2014
- » ["Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on attacks in Yobe State, Nigeria,"](#) 26 February 2014
- » ["Leave Everything to God: Accountability for Inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States,"](#) Human Rights Watch, 29 November 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Nigeria](#)

## 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.



## IRAQ

*Increasing sectarian violence in Iraq leaves civilians at a heightened risk of mass atrocity crimes.*

### BACKGROUND

Growing violence and sectarian terrorist attacks killed over 7,818 civilians in Iraq during 2013, the highest civilian death toll since the end of the 2006-2008 civil war. Coordinated attacks, perpetrated largely by Sunni militant groups intent on killing Shia

civilians and toppling the government, often consist of bombings of crowded areas in targeted communities. Several religious minorities have also been the victims of targeted killings. The UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) reported that 564 civilians were killed during February, excluding in Anbar province, where the number of casualties is unconfirmed.

Widespread fighting between Iraqi security forces and al-Qaeda armed groups, including ISIL, an extremist group operating on both sides of the Iraq-Syria border, escalated in Anbar province during January and February. On 1 January ISIL fighters seized control of Falluja and parts of Ramadi in Anbar province. During February the government intensified efforts to regain control of Falluja, using indiscriminate mortar fire in civilian neighborhoods. As the humanitarian situation in Anbar continued to deteriorate, Iraqi government forces agreed on 22 February to a 72-hour ceasefire to allow humanitarian aid into the city.

Following the United States-led invasion in 2003, foreign troops left Iraq in 2011, transferring power to a Shia-dominated central government under Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. Deep divisions between Sunnis and Shias remain as a legacy of the invasion and occupation, as well as from the civil war. Iraq's ethnic Kurdish minority also remains at odds with the government.

Discontent has been growing among the Sunni minority, who are perceived as having dominated the country under former President Saddam Hussein. Sunnis accuse the government of

exclusion from the political process, with “de-Baathification” being used as a tool for Sunni marginalization. A protest movement began during December 2012, but the government has characterized it as a terrorist movement aimed at the sectarian and territorial division of the country.

Iraqi security forces have also been widely accused of committing serious human rights abuses, including unlawful use of force against peaceful protesters, illegal detentions and systematic use of torture.

## ANALYSIS

The rising threat posed by al-Qaeda-linked Sunni militant groups imperils not only the stability of the government, but the lives of countless civilians who fear a possible return to sectarian civil war. Gross human rights violations are being perpetrated by security forces who often commit abuses in the name of counter-terrorism. A culture of impunity has protected security forces from accountability.

Despite a November 2010 power-sharing agreement between political parties representing Shias, Sunnis and Kurds, many Sunnis feel they have been marginalized by the resulting Shia-led government. The government’s response to the Sunni protest movement has aggravated these divisions. Cultural identities and transnational loyalties are being manipulated by various political forces and contribute to the government’s inability to resolve the security crisis.

The civil war in neighboring Syria has exacerbated domestic tensions. Many Sunni and Shia radicals have joined armed groups fighting in Syria, while Prime Minister Maliki is seen by some Iraqis as being overly sympathetic to President Assad’s government and its Iranian allies.

The Iraqi government is struggling to uphold its Responsibility to Protect.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Despite calls for Iraqi security forces to exercise restraint and statements of concern over increasing sectarian violence by the UN Secretary-General and UNHCR, little international action has been taken to assist the government of Iraq in upholding its Responsibility to Protect.

In a 10 January Presidential Statement the UNSC condemned ISIL attacks in Fallujah and Ramadi and the impact of the violence upon civilians.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Nickolay Mladenov, has condemned the increased violence and called upon Iraqi political and religious leaders, as well as the security forces, to work together to protect all civilians.

## NECESSARY ACTION

While confronting the security threat posed by terrorist attacks, the Iraqi government must ensure the protection of

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

The government and its international supporters, especially the United States, must ensure that Iraqi security forces comply with their obligations under international human rights law.

Sunni, Shia and Kurdish political leaders must work to address the root causes of conflict in Iraq, including issues of regional autonomy and perceptions of sectarian discrimination. Politicians should refrain from incendiary sectarian speech and work towards national reconciliation, including equal treatment and representation for all communities.

The government should actively discourage Iraqi fighters from becoming involved in the Syrian conflict. This must include increased efforts to restrict the movement of weapons and civilian fighters across the Iraqi-Syrian border.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNAMI Website](#)
- » [UNSC Presidential Statement S/PRST/2014/1](#), 10 January 2014
- » [UN Casualty Figures for February](#), 1 March 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Iraq](#)



200+ sectarian attacks  
during 2013

650+ people killed  
during sectarian  
attacks in 2013

## PAKISTAN

*Targeted sectarian attacks in Pakistan leave civilians at a heightened risk of potential mass atrocity crimes.*

## BACKGROUND

Thousands of civilians from ethnic and religious minority groups have been killed in targeted attacks in Pakistan over the past decade. According to the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, in 2013 there were more than 200 sectarian attacks, resulting in the death of at least 650 people.

Shias continue to be the focus of most sectarian violence, although recent attacks have also targeted Sufi and Christian populations. At least 29 Shia pilgrims returning from Iran were killed by a road-side bomb in Pakistan's Balochistan province on 21 January. On 4 February a suicide bomber killed nine people near a Shia mosque in the northern city of Peshawar. Sectarian attacks are mainly perpetrated by the Pakistan Taliban (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), both of which are banned groups.

Targeted assassinations also continue across Pakistan. Two Shia leaders, Allama Alim Al-Musvi and Hajji Sardar Ali and, were killed in a bazaar in Peshawar on 20 January and 4 February respectively. Another prominent Shia scholar and professor, Allama Hadi, was assassinated in Karachi on 27 February.

Attacks on Sufi Muslims have also intensified. While the majority of Pakistanis practice Sufi Islam, some extremist groups do not consider them to be true Muslims. Six bodies were found at a Sufi shrine on 7 January in Karachi, following a sectarian attack allegedly carried out by TTP. At least eight people were also killed at a Sufi gathering on 9 February in the same city.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced on 29 January the government's intention to pursue talks with TTP. The talks began on 6 February but were halted on 20 February due to ongoing violence. On 1 March TTP announced a one-month ceasefire aimed at reviving negotiations. Talks resumed on 5 March.

## ANALYSIS

While the majority of Pakistan's international partners have focused on the issue of anti-state terrorism perpetrated by TTP and other Islamic extremists, targeted sectarian attacks against civilian populations is a growing concern, particularly for Shia, Sufi and Christian communities.

Ongoing targeted attacks and killings are evidence of the government's failure to adequately confront organized terrorist campaigns aimed not just at the Pakistani security establishment, but also at vulnerable civilians.

During 2013 Pakistan undertook its first transition from one civilian government to another. The current government faces myriad challenges, but must make upholding its Responsibility to Protect minority populations from a sustained campaign of sectarian violence an urgent priority.

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The response of the international community to the sectarian violence in Pakistan has been inadequate.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has repeatedly condemned sectarian and terrorist attacks in Pakistan. On 22 January the Secretary-General condemned a 20 January Rawalpindi market bombing that killed at least 13 people and a deadly 21 January attack on a bus carrying Shia pilgrims.

## NECESSARY ACTION

The government must provide enhanced protection to communities at risk, particularly in Balochistan, Karachi and other areas that have seen the most sectarian attacks.

The government needs to intensify efforts to promote religious and ethnic tolerance. Pakistan's federal and local governments must work closely with religious leaders to prevent hate speech aimed at members of other religious communities. Formal investigations must be conducted into sectarian killings and those responsible must be prosecuted without delay.

The UN and major donors, including the United States and the United Kingdom, should actively assist Pakistan in upholding its Responsibility to Protect through supporting programs aimed at strengthening the rule of law and promoting inter-faith and inter-communal dialogue.

## MORE INFORMATION

- » ["Pakistan Security Report 2013,"](#) Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, January 2014
- » ["Pakistan: Deter Escalating Attacks on Shia Muslims,"](#) Human Rights Watch, 11 November 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Pakistan](#)

### Germany:

On 18 February, in the first Rwandan genocide trial held in Germany, a court in Frankfurt sentenced the former mayor of Kiziguro, Rwanda, Onesphore Rwabukome, to 14 years imprisonment for complicity in genocide while inciting an 11 April 1994 massacre of hundreds of Tutsis.

Prosecutors reported on 20 February the arrest of three men suspected of having served as SS guards at Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland from 1942-1944.

### Rwanda:

On 26 February the trial of former Pentecostal pastor, Jean Bosco Uwinkindi, accused of genocide and crimes against humanity during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, began in Kigali. Uwinkindi is the first suspect to be transferred from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to the Rwandan national court system.

### DRC:

On 7 March the ICC found former DRC militia leader Germain Katanga guilty as an accessory to one crime against humanity and four war crimes committed on 24 February 2003 during an attack on the village of Bogoro. The ICC found that he acted as part of a "criminal common plan devised by the militia to target the predominantly Hema population of Bogoro," including committing murder, attacking civilians, destroying property and pillaging. Katanga is the second person to be convicted by the ICC since its inception in 2002.

### France

On 14 March, in the first Rwandan genocide trial held in France, a court sentenced former Rwandan intelligence chief Pascal Simbikangwa to 25 years for complicity in genocide. Simbikangwa was arrested in 2008 after living for many years under an alias on the French territory of Mayotte.

### Sudan:

On 26 February the ICC called upon the government of the DRC to uphold its obligation as a State Party to the Rome Statute and immediately arrest Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and surrender him to the Court. President Bashir, wanted by the ICC for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Darfur, was in the DRC to attend a meeting on regional economic cooperation.

### Croatia and Serbia:

Public hearings began during the week of 3 March at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague in the case concerning Application of the Genocide Convention (Croatia v. Serbia). Croatia has accused Serbia of being in denial of committing genocide between 1991 and 1995 during the war in the former Yugoslavia. Serbia filed a countersuit, which was heard by the ICJ during the week of 10 March.

### Ukraine:

On 25 February the Ukrainian parliament voted to refer the case of ousted President Viktor Yanukovich and two senior members of his former government to the ICC for alleged "crimes against humanity during the peaceful protests in the period of November 30, 2013, and February 22, 2014." Parliament said law enforcement agencies followed orders of the "highest Ukrainian authorities" when they used violence against protestors, causing the deaths of over 100 people.



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