

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

Populations in Syria continue to face mass atrocity crimes committed by state security forces and affiliated militias. Some armed opposition groups are also committing war crimes. The increasing presence of outside actors militarily contributing to the conflict puts civilians at even greater risk, as does the recent large-scale use of chemical weapons.

BACKGROUND

After more than two and a half years of conflict in Syria, at least 100,000 people have been killed. The UN reported that as of 3 September there were over 2 million Syrian refugees registered in neighboring countries, with over 5 million people internally displaced. On 21 August, just three days after the UN-mandated fact-finding team tasked with investigating chemical weapons use began its mission in the country, reports emerged of a major attack in several areas of Ghouta, Damascus. Médecins Sans Frontières reported having treated approximately 3,600 patients displaying neurotoxic symptoms, 355 of whom died. The UN inspection team was permitted access to the area the week of 26 August.

The chemical weapons attack has ignited international debates regarding a possible military intervention, with several states threatening to take action if there is sufficient evidence that Syrian government forces perpetrated the attack.

Meanwhile, the Syrian government continues its aerial bombardment of opposition strongholds and residential areas, in some cases with cluster munitions. On 5 August Human Rights Watch reported that between February and July 2013 government ballistic missile attacks on populated areas killed at least 215 civilians, including 100 children. Recent government ground offensives against opposition-held cities have also threatened civilians trapped

by intense fighting. With the direct military assistance of Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon, the government has been able to make significant military gains. At the end of July government forces recaptured the district of Khalidiya, a key rebel stronghold in central Homs.

Government-allied militias have committed large-scale massacres in several towns over the last two years and continue to commit war crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) as a matter of state policy. The UN Human Rights Council-mandated Commission of Inquiry (CoI) reported on 11 September that government and pro-government forces "have continued to conduct widespread attacks on the civilian population, committing murder, torture, rape, and enforced disappearance as crimes against humanity."

Some armed opposition groups have also committed war crimes, albeit on a smaller scale than that of the government, including torture and extrajudicial killing. On 2 August the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, urged an independent investigation into possible war crimes after an armed opposition group allegedly executed dozens of captured government soldiers in late July. In a conflict that the CoI has described as "overtly sectarian in nature," some armed groups have deliberately desecrated Shia and Christian religious sites. Armed rebel groups battling for control of towns outside Aleppo have threatened reprisals against Shia civilians accused of harboring pro-government forces.

While Syria's political opposition formed the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (National Coalition) during November 2012, it continues to be plagued by divisions. The growing Salafist presence amongst the armed opposition has also caused friction between rebel groups competing for support and resources. On 19 August the International Committee of the Red Cross said these divisions are limiting humanitarian access to opposition-held areas.

International actors continue to vie for influence in shaping the outcome of the conflict, which UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has described as a "proxy war, with regional and international players arming one side or the other." Several states have formally recognized the National Coalition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people, while 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 is being exacerbated by the situation while Israel has launched several airstrikes on military targets in Syria. Friction between Syria and Turkey also remains high following a number of deadly cross-border incidents.

The conflict is severely affecting Lebanon, which remains divided along sectarian lines between supporters and opponents of the Assad government and hosts nearly 700,000 Syrian refugees. Hezbollah has directly engaged in fighting with Syrian rebels on both sides of the Syria-Lebanon border. On 15 August a car bomb struck a Beirut suburb dominated by Hezbollah, killing at least 20 people. One week later twin blasts outside two mosques in the largely Sunni city of Tripoli killed at least 42 people and wounded 400 others.

ANALYSIS

The use of chemical weapons is a grave violation of IHL and constitutes a war crime. The 21 August attack on civilians comes after more than two years of the government perpetrating ongoing crimes against humanity and war crimes. While the Syrian government continues to vehemently deny the use of chemical weapons, on 12 September President Assad signed a legislative decree providing for Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

With each side in Syria committed to a military victory, the conflict threatens the lives of countless more civilians. The government continues to utilize its military resources to retain power at all costs. Sectarian violence has exacerbated divisions within Syria and throughout the region.

Despite the government's recent victories, its forces remain locked in an ongoing civil war with armed rebels inside Syria's major cities. Hezbollah's involvement in the conflict has bolstered the government and allowed for significant military advances. Alarm over the shift in the balance of power on the battlefield has influenced several Western governments to provide military assistance to some rebel groups. Civilians continue to bear the brunt of armed violence.

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. Notwithstanding significant bilateral and multilateral efforts to resolve the crisis, the UN Security Council's (UNSC) division over Syria has allowed the situation to deteriorate to the point where few options for a peaceful political solution exist. Despite this, it is imperative that diplomatic efforts continue. An influx of arms will enable further atrocities and increase civilian deaths.

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 in March 2011, the international community responded by censuring the regime for its widespread violations of human rights. [For responses prior to June 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. In its 15 and 23 August Press Statements on the terrorist attacks in Beirut, the UNSC called upon all parties to refrain from involvement in the Syrian conflict.

The UN Human Rights Council has adopted ten resolutions on Syria. Several resolutions called upon the Syrian authorities to uphold their responsibility to protect civilians.

A peace conference ("Geneva 2") led by the United States and Russia was scheduled to take place by the end of June, but has been postponed until at least October. On 13 June the United States announced that it would provide some Syrian opposition groups with "direct military aid." The following week, the "Friends of Syria" group, including the United Kingdom, France and Germany, agreed to provide urgent support to opposition groups.

On 21 August the UN Secretary-General expressed his shock at reports of the chemical weapons attack in Damascus, calling for an immediate investigation. The following day, High Commissioner Pillay strongly condemned the attack as a "flagrant contravention of international law." The UN Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect echoed this condemnation and reminded the Syrian government of its responsibility to protect its population.

Numerous states, including members of the League of Arab States, condemned the 21 August chemical weapons attack. On 26 August United States Secretary of State John Kerry said, "the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, the killing of women and children and innocent bystanders by chemical weapons is a moral obscenity" and suggested that the United States would respond militarily.

In mid-September Russia offered to facilitate the surrender of Syria's chemical weapons via a UN-controlled process. At the time of publication, the UNSC, United States and several other states were still deliberating about a course of action.

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 unimpeded humanitarian access to civilian populations trapped or displaced by fighting.

The UNSC needs to take immediate steps to end atrocities in Syria. If it is determined by UN inspectors that chemical weapons were used at Ghouta on 21 August, then those deemed responsible must be held accountable by the UNSC and appropriate action taken in accordance with international law.

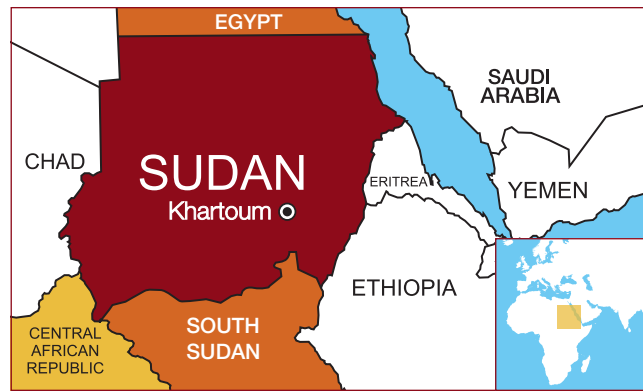
All mass atrocity crimes in Syria should be thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators, regardless of affiliation, brought to justice. Donor countries should allocate funds for additional UN-sanctioned human rights monitors on the Syrian border in order to collect evidence for prosecutions.

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 to find a political solution to the conflict. This includes setting a firm date to advance the “Geneva 2” peace talks, as well as facilitating the surrender and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11095](#), 15 August 2013
- » [Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic A/HRC/24/46](#), 11 September 2013
- » [“Syria: Ballistic Missiles Killing Civilians, Many Children,”](#) Human Rights Watch, 5 August 2013
- » [Statement by the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria](#), 23 August 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Syria](#)



SUDAN

Populations in the Sudanese states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile continue to face mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by the Sudanese Armed Forces and armed groups. Populations are also at 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 has continued indiscriminate aerial bombardments of populated areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, including with cluster munitions. 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. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented the SAF's use of scorched earth tactics, including the systematic targeting of food sources and the deliberate destruction of civilian structures.

The SPLM-N has also perpetrated war crimes, including the alleged forced recruitment of youths in South Sudanese refugee camps. The group has shelled civilian areas of Kadugli, South Kordofan, in direct violation of IHL.

The conflict has led to the internal displacement of over 1 million civilians while more than 224,000 have fled to South Sudan and Ethiopia. Clashes during August between the SAF and the SPLM-N in Kashankaro, Blue Nile, resulted in the displacement of over 2,500 civilians. The government continues to block UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations, independent monitors and the media from access to rebel-held areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

Sudan has consistently failed to honor African Union (AU)-brokered agreements and UNSC resolutions calling for a cessation of hostilities.

The AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) on Sudan facilitated direct talks between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N on 24 April. Following the talks, which ended without agreement on 26 April, the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), an umbrella organization consisting of the SPLM-N, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and other armed rebel groups, launched a major offensive that displaced more than 63,000 civilians. Fighting continued during July, but heavy flooding in South Kordofan and Blue Nile led the SPLM-N to announce a month-long ceasefire starting on 31 August.

The conflicts in South Kordofan and Blue Nile are partly connected to border tensions between Sudan and South Sudan. On 27 September 2012, under the auspices of the AUHIP, both governments signed cooperation agreements addressing contentious issues, including oil transit fees and the status of citizens in the other's territory. They also agreed to demarcate their borders and establish a safe demilitarized border zone (SDBZ) to be monitored by the UN peacekeeping force in Abyei (UNISFA) as part of the Joint Border Verification Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM).

Following mediation by the current chairperson of the AUHIP, Thabo Mbeki, on 8 and 12 March Sudan and South Sudan signed border security agreements that were predicated upon both sides withdrawing their security forces from the SDBZ area. Despite these agreements, tensions escalated on 9 June when the government of Sudan ordered a shutdown of South Sudanese oil imports after accusing South Sudan's military of providing ongoing support to the SRF. Sudan and South Sudan have since remilitarized the SDBZ area.

The AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development launched the Ad Hoc Investigative Mechanism on 22 July to examine allegations of both countries supporting rebels operating in the other's territory. The government of Sudan responded by announcing it would postpone the oil pipeline shutdown. The AU also launched the AU Border Programme, which will operationalize the SDBZ by determining the area's centerline. The presidents of Sudan and South Sudan held a summit on 3 September.

The security situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate as a result of inter-communal and state-sponsored violence, which has displaced over 300,000 people so far this year. In Central Darfur at least 94 civilians were reportedly killed following heavy fighting between the Salamat and Misseriya communities on 27 July. On 6 August the national authorities refused to renew 20 permits for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) international staff

working in Darfur, hindering the UN's ability to provide assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs). Inter-communal violence between ethnic Maalia and Rizeigat in late August resulted in over 190 fatalities.

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 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.

Recent tensions have undermined diplomatic progress between Sudan and South Sudan, particularly regarding border demilitarization. The failure to resolve the final status of Abyei continues to endanger civilians living in the area.

Despite the presence of a UN peacekeeping force (UNAMID), the security situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate. The government continues to restrict UNAMID's movement, impeding its ability to uphold its civilian protection mandate. Recent inter-communal violence and the expanded operations of Darfuri rebel groups into North Kordofan and Abyei have heightened the risk of further mass atrocities.

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 South 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 July 2013, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States](#).]

Acting on behalf of the AUHIP, since July 2011 Mbeki has facilitated regular talks between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan. The UNSC has expressed its support for the AU's efforts, including through Resolution 2046, which called upon the parties to implement all provisions of an April 2012 "Roadmap" for Sudan and South Sudan. Mbeki

has also brokered agreements between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N.

On 22 July the European Union (EU) Foreign Affairs Council, referring to the conflicts in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile, recalled “the responsibility of the Government of Sudan to protect all its civilians and the obligation of all parties to respect international humanitarian and human rights law.”

The UNSC adopted Resolution 2113 on 30 July, extending UNAMID’s mandate until August 2014 and calling upon rebel groups operating in Darfur to cease hostilities and hold peace talks with the government.

On 23 August the UNSC issued a Presidential Statement calling upon Sudan and South Sudan to fully implement the 27 September cooperation agreements. It also called upon the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N to cease hostilities, engage in direct talks, end attacks against civilians and allow unhindered humanitarian access in South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

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 also include South Kordofan and Blue Nile and enforce all provisions of Resolution 2046 relating to humanitarian access.

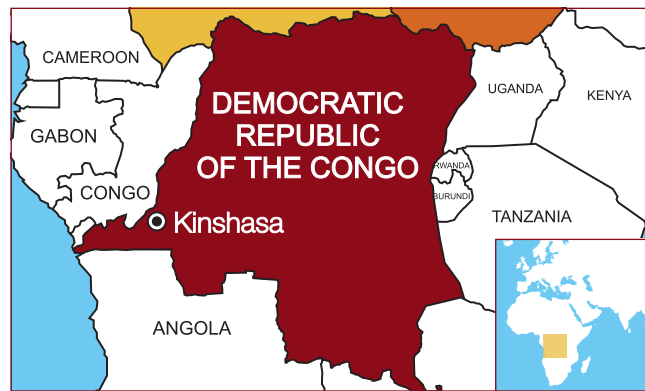
The UNSC and AU must ensure that the 2011 Framework Agreement and 2012 cooperation agreements are rigorously implemented. States with major investments in Sudan, including China, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, should press the government to fulfill its commitments.

Crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur must be thoroughly investigated by a credible and independent body. The UNSC should mandate the establishment of an 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.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNISFA Website](#)
- » [UNAMID Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2113](#), 30 July 2013
- » [UNSC Presidential Statement S/PRST/2013/14](#), 23 August 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Sudan](#)



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Crimes against humanity and war crimes are being perpetrated by armed groups and military forces operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

BACKGROUND

Insecurity in the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (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 has 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 2.6 million IDPs in the DRC. Peace negotiations between M23 and the DRC government led by the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) began on 8 December, but a formal agreement was not reached and the talks stalled. The two sides resumed negotiations on 9 September.

M23 has committed human rights violations against civilians, including summary executions, gender-based violence and use of child soldiers, actions which may amount to crimes against humanity. On 27 July the UN stabilization mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) reported that M23 regularly conducts operations against the civilian population, including murders, arbitrary arrests and widespread harassment.

Following two months of relative calm, fighting between M23 and the FARDC resumed on 14 July. On 30 July MONUSCO announced that it would utilize its newly deployed intervention brigade to establish a security zone around Goma and Sake. The announcement gave armed rebels 48 hours to disarm, warning that they would be treated as an imminent threat otherwise.

Despite the protection zone, fighting intensified between M23 and FARDC on 21 August, resulting in the death of at least 15 people. On 22 August MONUSCO troops were ordered to take all necessary action to protect civilians. The

DRC's Information Minister, Lambert Mende, has accused Rwanda of participating in the M23 attack on Goma. After artillery fire fell across its border, Rwanda accused the FARDC of directly shelling Rwandan villages, nearly leading to war between the two countries. M23 declared a ceasefire on 30 August, but the FARDC continued to push them back from Goma during the first week of September.

Other armed groups have increased their operations in a security vacuum created by the redeployment of FARDC troops to confront the M23 mutiny. 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 have utilized insecurity in the east to attack populations with increasing frequency.

Patterns of violence perpetrated by these groups, including killing, sexual violence, abduction and forced recruitment of civilians, have been witnessed in North Kivu, South Kivu, Katanga and Oriental Province over the past nine months. Some armed groups have been implicated in targeting particular ethnic groups while perpetrating widespread crimes.

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. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (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. During the July fighting in Goma, FARDC troops reportedly mistreated M23 detainees and desecrated the corpses of rebels.

ANALYSIS

The threat posed by M23 and other armed groups remains high. More than 100,000 IDPs reside in camps surrounding Goma and are threatened by indiscriminate shelling of the city. The resumption of violence also risks further military escalation in the region following reports of continued outside support for M23 as well as artillery being fired into Rwanda. Relations between the governments of Rwanda and the DRC remain tense. Failure of the ICGLR's mediation process could result in renewed violence around Goma.

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

These groups continue to perpetrate atrocities against civilians. Sexual violence, in particular, is frequently used as a weapon to terrorize local populations. On 30 July UNHCR reported on a significant rise in sexual violence in North Kivu since January, noting over 705 registered cases as compared to 108 in the same time period during 2012. UNHCR warned that renewed fighting with M23 could increase the general danger to women and girls in the region.

The UN Joint Human Rights Office in the DRC (UNJHRO) has reported that following FARDC redeployments armed groups have tried to expand their areas of influence, "carrying out violent attacks against civilians and exacerbating interethnic tension." Ethnic Hutus and Tutsis remain at particular risk of targeted killing by rebel groups who perceive them as supportive of the FDLR or M23.

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 can exacerbate divisions within the military and potentially put civilians at risk.

The weakness of government structures undermines attempts to prevent atrocities and protect civilians. This is particularly evident in the eastern DRC where the government has lost control of several areas to M23 and other rebel groups and has historically been incapable of controlling movement across its borders.

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.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

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

MONUSCO is responsible for more than 19,000 UN personnel operating under a civilian protection mandate. Since 2002 the UN has facilitated a significant reduction in membership of various armed groups through its Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) program. MONUSCO's mandate was recently renewed to include an "intervention brigade" with the capacity to combat rebel groups.

The UNSC currently subjects 9 entities and 31 individuals, including several M23 leaders, to the enforcement of travel bans and asset freezes. On 31 December M23 and the FDLR

were added to the targeted sanctions list. The group of experts for the DRC briefed the UNSC on 22 July, addressing further allegations of outside support to M23 and FARDC support to the FDLR.

The UNSC held a high-level debate on the situation in the Great Lakes Region on 25 July and issued a Presidential Statement reiterating its support for the Framework Agreement.

Following the South African Development Community's (SADC) 33rd Summit it released a Communiqué on 19 August urging the government and M23 to conclude negotiations as soon as possible and reaffirming their support for the intervention brigade. The AU's Peace and Security Council also issued a statement on 19 August condemning recent fighting.

UNHCR, OCHA, the World Food Programme and the UN Children's Fund issued a joint statement with the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in the DRC, Moustapha Soumare, on 24 August reminding all parties to the conflict that "indiscriminate or deliberate attacks against civilians is a war crime." The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 29 August condemning targeted attacks against civilians and MONUSCO and threatening additional sanctions against individuals acting in violation of the arms embargo.

The ICGLR held its 7th Extraordinary Summit on the security situation in the DRC on 5 September. Following the summit the ICGLR issued a Communiqué condemning recent M23 offensives and urging the government and M23 to restart negotiations.

The UNSC released a Press Statement on 12 September commending regional and international efforts to halt the violence.

NECESSARY ACTION

The government of the DRC and MONUSCO need to ensure that the protection of civilians remains a priority as they address the military threat posed by various armed groups.

The FARDC must not permit individuals who have previously committed atrocities to join its forces and should immediately train all recruits in the protection of civilians, respect for human rights and IHL.

The UN Human Rights Council, UNSC and other key actors must take action in response to UNHCR's findings on groups committing sexual violence. All perpetrators of mass atrocity crimes in the DRC, including members of the FARDC, need to be held accountable. The government urgently needs to act on recent commitments regarding halting sexual violence.

MONUSCO should support the government in facilitating local peacebuilding initiatives.

The AU, ICGLR and SADC must continue to lead international efforts to halt the operation of armed groups in the eastern DRC. Together with the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, these organizations must ensure that the signatories to the Framework Agreement fulfill their commitments. Neighboring countries must halt support for rebel groups operating in the DRC.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MONUSCO Website](#)
- » [ICC Situation Page: DRC](#)
- » [UNSC Presidential Statement S/PRST/2013/11](#), 25 July 2013
- » [AU Communiqué](#), 19 August 2013
- » [ICGLR Communiqué](#), 5 September 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: DRC](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY WATCH

Kenya:

On 10 September the ICC began the trial of Kenyan Vice President William Ruto, accused of crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 2007-2008 post-election violence. On the same day, the AU requested that the ICC halt all ongoing cases regarding Kenya and review an application to hold domestic trials for Ruto and President Uhuru Kenyatta. During the previous week Kenya's parliament passed a motion calling for Kenya to "suspend any links, cooperation and assistance" with the ICC.

Libya:

On 31 July a Libyan court sentenced to death Ahmed Ibrahim, former Minister of Education under Muammar al-Qaddafi, for crimes committed during the civil war, including kidnapping, murder, inciting violence against rebels and plotting the killing of civilians. Despite the 18 July rejection by the ICC of a Libyan petition to suspend the surrender of Saif al-Islam al-Qaddafi, Libyan general prosecutor Abdel-Qader Radwan said that the domestic trials of Qaddafi and Abdullah al-Senoussi will begin on 19 September.

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.



BURMA/MYANMAR

Despite political reforms implemented by the government, ethnic and religious minorities in Burma/Myanmar continue to face an imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

Anti-Muslim violence has been increasing in Burma/Myanmar during the last year, putting minority populations at imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes. On 25 August Buddhist rioters burned down dozens of Muslim-owned homes and shops in Kanbalu, Sagaing Division. This follows numerous incidents of inter-communal violence beginning on 20 March between Buddhists and Muslims. During two days of clashes, which engulfed the town of Meikhtila in the Mandalay region, an estimated 40 people were killed and 12,000 displaced. Local reports described mobs of Buddhist extremists attacking Muslim homes, businesses and mosques. On 28 May anti-Muslim violence also broke out in Lashio, Shan state. At least 1,400 Muslims were displaced.

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 security forces tasked with restoring order committed killings and other abuses themselves. State media published anti-Rohingya accounts of the events, encouraging further persecution. On 17 June 2013 the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar reported that 140,000 people remained displaced as a result of this violence.

Ethnic Rohingya Muslims continue to face discriminatory state policies, including the denial of citizenship and a

two-child limit for families. On 9 August security forces clashed with displaced Rohingya Muslims in Arakan/Rakhine state, killing one person and injuring ten. During June 2012 President Thein Sein asserted that Burma/Myanmar will not take responsibility for Rohingya because they are “not our ethnicity.” Buddhist monk organizations have called for their deportation and have attempted to block the delivery of aid to displaced Rohingya in Arakan/Rakhine state.

On 29 April the government-appointed Rakhine State Conflicts Investigation Commission released its report on the 2012 violence, calling upon the government to increase support to IDP camps and ensure that the rights of all groups are protected. However, the Commission also referred to the Rohingya as “Bengalis,” reinforcing the prejudice that they are ethnic outsiders. Following a visit from 11 to 21 August, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana expressed concern over the “increasingly permanent” segregation of communities in Arakan/Rakhine state, with many Muslims confined to IDP camps and denied fundamental human rights.

Government security forces have failed to adequately protect Muslims during outbreaks of violence and in some cases have been complicit in attacks. Police failed to intervene to protect victims during a 21 March massacre of over 30 Muslim students and teachers in Meikhtila. A border security force, known as Nasaka, has previously committed grave human rights violations against Rohingya, including extrajudicial killings, torture and arbitrary arrest. In a positive development, President Thein Sein announced the disbandment of the Nasaka on 14 July. One week later the government lifted the state of emergency in Meikhtila.

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. During 2012 the UN recorded violations committed by the government’s armed forces (Tatmadaw) 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

Anti-Muslim violence has now spread to several parts of the country and is evidence of a dangerous communal fracture that the government is failing to adequately address. While the government has been credited with introducing extensive democratic reforms, widespread abuses against several of Burma/Myanmar's minorities continue.

In particular, the government has taken little action towards improving the plight of the Rohingya. The government's refusal to grant them citizenship enables ongoing violation of their human rights and failure to condemn incitement and deadly violence against Rohingya is tacit endorsement of ethnic cleansing.

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 must undertake immediate measures to uphold its Responsibility to Protect.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following decades of political isolation, 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.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Inter-Parliamentary Caucus and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have made several statements condemning discrimination and violence against Rohingya.

United States President Barack Obama met with President Thein Sein on 20 May during the first visit to the United States by a leader of Burma/Myanmar in nearly 50 years. During June 2013, President Thein Sein traveled to France and the United Kingdom for meetings with President Francois Hollande and Prime Minister David Cameron.

On 19 June UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay urged the government to halt ongoing human rights violations and discrimination against the Rohingya as well as the spread of anti-Muslim sentiment.

On 1 July Malaysia urged Burma/Myanmar to take stronger action to prevent the persecution of Muslims. On 11 July Indonesia urged the government to address the citizenship status of Rohingya so they can obtain the same legal rights as "the rest of their countrymen."

The ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights said in a 27 August statement that the government of Burma/Myanmar

is not doing enough to reduce inter-communal tensions and prevent anti-Muslim violence.

NECESSARY ACTION

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

The government must end endemic discrimination against Rohingya, including the denial of citizenship. It must investigate and hold accountable those who commit abuses, including those who incite 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.

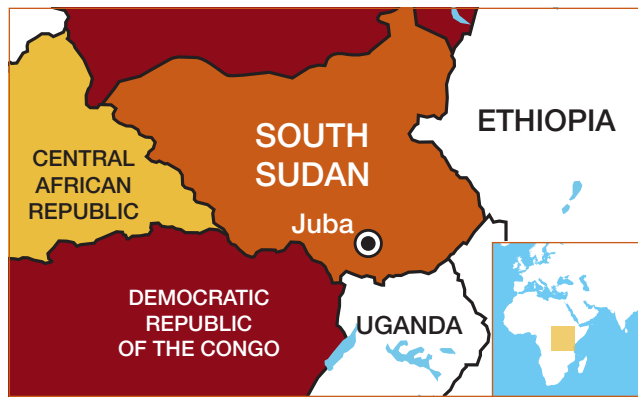
The government must allow unhindered humanitarian access to those affected by violence in Arakan/Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states.

The international community must press 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 developing an independent judiciary as a means of safeguarding human rights and tackling the culture of impunity regarding mass atrocity crimes.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [Myanmar: UN expert greets abolition of notorious border security force in Rakhine State and calls for accountability](#), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 16 July 2013
- » [UNHCR appeals for dialogue following IDP violence in Myanmar](#), UNHCR, 13 August 2013
- » [Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar](#), 21 August 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Burma/Myanmar](#)



SOUTH SUDAN

Inter-communal violence in South Sudan leaves populations, particularly those in Jonglei state, at imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

Renewed ethnic violence between rival groups from the Lou Nuer, Dinka and Murle communities in remote Pibor county was reported between 10 and 11 July, threatening the already precarious security situation in Jonglei state. Armed groups of up to 4,000 Lou Nuer youth attacked Murle communities, resulting in an unknown number of casualties and the displacement of tens of thousands of civilians. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and aid agencies have been unable to provide details on the number of fatalities. There have been reports of retaliatory raids by the Murle.

According to the UN, as of 23 August over 100,000 civilians remained displaced and six major population centres in Pibor county were largely abandoned as a result of inter-communal clashes, SPLA abuses against civilians and fighting between the government and armed groups. Many Murle are reportedly reluctant to return home due to fear of SPLA reprisals.

In the midst of the Jonglei crisis, President Salva Kiir dissolved his cabinet on 23 July. After reducing the number of ministries from 29 to 18, President Kiir announced a new cabinet on 31 July. Responding to international condemnation of SPLA abuses, on 20 August President Kiir ordered the arrest of James Otong, the general who was responsible for the SPLA's offensive against rebel groups operating in Jonglei. He has reportedly ordered several other generals be investigated for alleged human rights abuses against civilians in Jonglei.

Inter-communal violence in Jonglei state has previously followed a seasonal and cyclical pattern with cattle raids and competition for natural resources. However, due in part to the proliferation of small arms, populations are now subjected to violence of increasing scale, duration

and intensity, including the deliberate targeting of women and children.

In addition, since August 2012 fighting between the SPLA and forces loyal to David Yau Yau, a rebel leader who is allegedly armed by the government of Sudan, has heightened the risk to civilians in Jonglei state. Yau Yau's forces have regularly attacked the military, killing over 100 SPLA soldiers and several UN peacekeepers during the past year. Yau Yau has reportedly armed approximately 6,000 Murle youth, contributing to a proliferation of small arms in Jonglei state.

In late March the SPLA launched a major counter-insurgency operation against Yau Yau's forces in Pibor county. Tens of thousands of civilians reportedly fled as a result of the fighting. While President Kiir reiterated an amnesty offer to all rebel groups on 25 April, Yau Yau rejected the proposal. His forces partially occupied Boma between 8 and 19 May.

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has increased military patrols around Pibor and Gumuruk to protect civilians, ensure the safe return of displaced persons and provide access for humanitarian organizations.

ANALYSIS

The rapid escalation of inter-communal violence across Pibor county during July indicates that the root causes of conflict between the Murle and Lou Nuer have not been adequately addressed. The failure to prosecute perpetrators responsible for past attacks deepens the enmity between communities and perpetuates cycles of violence. Yau Yau continues to provoke ethnic tensions and his insurgency leaves civilians at ongoing risk due to fighting between his forces and the SPLA.

Reprisal attacks by the Murle against Lou Nuer communities may take place in response to recent attacks. Following a previous large-scale attack by armed Lou Nuer youth on Murle communities during December 2011, retaliatory attacks that continued until March 2012 resulted in at least 276 civilian deaths as well as numerous abductions and the widespread destruction of civilian property.

President Kiir's decision to dissolve the cabinet and the reported abolition of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs has undermined the ability of the government to protect civilians. The stability and security of South Sudan continues to be hampered by weak government and ongoing border tensions with Sudan. Allegations of serious human rights violations by the SPLA demonstrate the need for sustained security sector reform.

Chronic capacity issues have also been highlighted by the SPLA's inability to intervene to prevent or halt recent clashes. UNMISS has stated that it also lacks the logistical capacity to protect civilians affected by

the Yau Yau insurgency and inter-communal violence. The SPLA and UNMISS' ability to respond will now be further impeded by the rainy season, which renders most travel routes impassable.

The government of South Sudan requires ongoing international assistance to ensure security throughout the country and uphold its Responsibility to Protect.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on 14 June expressing concern regarding ongoing inter-communal violence and calling upon South Sudan to implement binding international and regional human rights instruments.

The UNSC renewed the mandate of UNMISS on 11 July. The resolution expressed "grave concern at the continuing human rights violations" in Jonglei state and called upon the government of South Sudan to "take greater responsibility for the protection of its civilians."

The United States government, a key ally of South Sudan, announced on 31 July that it will provide an additional \$5 million to assist in contracting helicopters to transport emergency relief supplies to displaced communities in Pibor county.

On 14 August the UN Central Emergency Response Fund allocated \$6 million to assist civilians affected by fighting in Pibor County.

The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 23 August, expressing concern over the increased violence in Jonglei state and noting that the government of South Sudan has the primary responsibility to protect civilians.

NECESSARY ACTION

The government of South Sudan must rededicate itself to comprehensively resolving the country's various internal and external conflicts. Urgent security sector reform is essential to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the SPLA.

The government must deploy adequate SPLA forces to curtail widespread inter-communal violence in Pibor county. It is critical that the ethnic composition of troops deployed in Jonglei does not compromise their ability to exercise their duties. The SPLA must also ensure the adequate protection of civilians while conducting operations against Yau Yau's insurgency. It should facilitate the unfettered access of UN and humanitarian agencies to populations affected by the fighting.

The government must break the culture of impunity regarding inter-communal violence in Jonglei.

The international community should assist UNMISS and the SPLA in upholding their protection responsibilities by providing adequate riverine and helicopter assets.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNMISS Website](#)
- » [Technical assistance and capacity-building for South Sudan in the field of human rights, A/HRC/RES/23/24](#), Human Rights Council, 27 June 2013
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2109](#), 11 July 2013
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11103](#), 23 August 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: South Sudan](#)



EGYPT

Populations in Egypt face an imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes due to ongoing political unrest and violence against civilians committed by the Egyptian security forces.

BACKGROUND

After weeks of political turmoil following a military coup against President Mohammed Morsi, on 14 August the Egyptian security forces used reckless and deadly force to remove pro-Morsi demonstrators in Cairo. More than 375 people were killed by the security forces as they cleared sit-in sites outside the Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque and at Nahda Square. The Health Ministry later stated that at least 638 people had been killed in violence across the country, including 43 police. The Muslim Brotherhood claimed that more than a thousand people had been killed.

As protests and riots broke out across the country in response to the Cairo killings, interim President Adly Mansour declared a state of emergency. Meanwhile, supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood attacked Coptic Christian businesses and burned down churches in the cities of Assiut, Dilga, Luxor, Menya and Sohag. Since 14 August more than 49 churches have been attacked, with at least 7 Christians killed.

President Morsi was deposed by the Egyptian military on 3 July and put under house arrest along with other senior members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The constitution was suspended and the military mobilized across the country. On 4 July Mansour was sworn in as interim president. Millions of Egyptian civilians have since participated in rival pro- and anti-Morsi protests.

On 8 July the Egyptian army fired live ammunition at a pro-Morsi sit-in at the Cairo headquarters of the Republican Guard, killing at least 51 civilians and injuring more than 300. A second massacre occurred on 27 July when at least 72 Muslim Brotherhood supporters were shot dead by police in Nasr City, Cairo. Since July ongoing clashes between the security forces and supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood have killed over 900 people and injured more than 6,000.

The new military-led government has continued to repress the Muslim Brotherhood. On 4 August it was announced that three top officials of the Muslim Brotherhood would go on trial for allegedly inciting members to kill anti-Morsi protestors during demonstrations that led to the 3 July coup. On 1 September Egypt's top prosecutor announced that deposed President Morsi would stand trial on charges of inciting the killing of opponents protesting outside his palace while he was in office. A day later an Egyptian judicial panel advised a court to dissolve the Muslim Brotherhood as a legally registered organization.

On 19 August a Cairo court ordered the release of former President Hosni Mubarak. He is currently being held under house arrest while facing a retrial on charges of complicity in the killing of protesters during the 2011 democratic uprising.

On 12 September the state of emergency was extended for an additional two months.

ANALYSIS

By committing three separate large-scale killings of civilian demonstrators the military-led government has shown its unwillingness to abide by international human rights law. At the root of the recent violence is a conflict between supporters and opponents of the Muslim Brotherhood. In response to the military's violent crackdown, some Morsi-supporters have advocated violent resistance. There have also been a growing number of attacks on religious minorities, including Shias and Christians, who are perceived as being supportive of the military's 3 July coup.

The United States government, which provides the Egyptian military with \$1.3 billion in aid each year, has condemned the killing of civilians but has been unable to influence the military's conduct. Emissaries from the AU, EU and other key allies of Egypt have called for restraint, but have been similarly unable to influence the military-led government's

behavior. Saudi Arabia has promised it will increase its financial support to the Egyptian government if the United States or other significant donors cut aid.

Egypt's military-led government is unable to uphold its Responsibility to Protect as it fails to control or condemn the killing of civilians by its security forces.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay have both released statements calling upon Egyptian authorities to respect international human rights standards. High Commissioner Pillay has also called for an independent investigation into recent large-scale killings by security forces.

Numerous governments around the world quickly condemned the killings of 14 August, which the United States described as running "directly counter to the pledges by the interim government to pursue reconciliation." Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, urged the UN and League of Arab States to take immediate action against Egypt's military-led government.

By contrast, the United Arab Emirates, which offered the interim government \$3 billion of financial aid after the 3 July coup, reaffirmed its "understanding of the sovereign measures taken by the Egyptian government after having exercised maximum self-control."

On 15 August United States President Barack Obama cancelled joint military exercises with the Egyptian Army. He also condemned violence and arbitrary arrests while calling for the military-led government to lift the state of emergency.

The UN Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect released a joint statement on 15 August. The Special Advisers highlighted the targeting of religious minorities and institutions, particularly Christian communities, and urged Egyptians to refrain from using violence to express their grievances.

UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman arrived in Egypt on 21 August to hold talks on how the UN can best support peace and reconciliation in Egypt.

On 21 August the EU suspended export licenses for any equipment that "might be used for internal repression" in Egypt.

NECESSARY ACTION

Egypt's military-led government should end the state of emergency, respect the right to peacefully protest and

uphold its Responsibility to Protect all Egyptians from violence, regardless of their political affiliation.

The government should authorize an independent investigation into recent large-scale killings. If it is determined that the security forces used unnecessary deadly force, then those responsible must be held accountable. Protesters who incite or participate in violence should also face justice in accordance with acceptable international legal standards.

The Muslim Brotherhood must condemn all acts of violence against religious minorities and actively combat incitement by its supporters. The government must protect religious minorities from mob violence.

Key allies of Egypt must cut all ties with the security forces pending a full and independent investigation of the mass killings of 8 July, 27 July and 14 August.

MORE INFORMATION

- » "Egypt: 'An Escalating and Deeply Worry Human Rights Crisis' – UN Experts Urge Restraint and Dialogue," Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 16 August 2013
- » "Egypt: Security Forces Used Excessive Lethal Force," Human Rights Watch, 19 August 2013
- » GCR2P Populations at Risk: Egypt

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.



NIGERIA

Attacks by Boko Haram, excessive use of force by the security forces and inter-communal violence are creating a deadly dynamic that puts populations at risk of crimes against humanity in Nigeria.

BACKGROUND

More than 2,000 people have died since 2009 in bombings and gun attacks carried out by Boko Haram, an extremist Islamist group that is committed to overthrowing Nigeria's secular government. These attacks exacerbate existing ethnic and religious tensions and increase the risk of widespread inter-communal violence.

As part of Boko Haram's terrorist campaign, Christians have been singled out for attack and church bombings have

become a regular occurrence. Over the past year these attacks have sometimes triggered violent reprisals against Muslims. Boko Haram has also targeted Muslims critical of the group's actions or with connection to the government, including clerics and civil servants.

On 14 May President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in the northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe and deployed troops to deal with the deteriorating security situation. On 17 May the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated that Nigerian extremist groups could face crimes against humanity charges if "judged to have committed widespread or systematic attacks against a civilian population – including on grounds such as religion or ethnicity."

Despite these efforts, Boko Haram continues to launch attacks against civilians. At least 28 people were killed on 29 July when deadly explosions hit a predominantly Christian neighborhood in Kano city. Boko Haram also killed at least 44 worshippers at a mosque in the town of Konduga, Borno state on 11 August. Suspected Boko Haram members killed at least 54 people between 25 and 30 August, in what appears to be reprisal attacks against vigilantes cooperating with the government. At least 20 people were killed following attacks on 4 and 5 September in Borno state.

Inter-communal conflict also continues. According to OHCHR, between 1999 and 2010 more than 13,500 Nigerians were killed in inter-communal violence, while the Council on Foreign Relations estimates that since May 2011 more

than 2,532 people have been killed in inter-communal violence as compared to 1,942 killed by Boko Haram. Clashes between Muslim and Christian communities in Plateau and Taraba states have resulted in more than 170 deaths so far this year.

ANALYSIS

Inter-communal violence in Nigeria stems from a number of sources including poverty, corruption and the manipulation of religious and ethnic identities to serve political and economic interests. Boko Haram has exploited these tensions. While Boko Haram uses terrorism as a tactic, the resulting inter-communal violence means the group's threat should be understood through the lens of the Responsibility to Protect.

Boko Haram is linked with transnational armed Islamist groups and has been viewed internationally as part of the "war on terror." As such, the effort to militarily defeat Boko Haram has elicited a stronger response from the international community and the Nigerian government than the need to address the root causes of persistent ethnic and sectarian conflict.

As fighting escalates between the security forces and Boko Haram, the indiscriminate use of force by both sides has heightened the risk of mass atrocity crimes perpetrated against civilians. Moreover, the government currently lacks the material resources necessary to adequately protect populations from the scale of the combined threat posed by terrorist attacks and inter-communal violence.

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

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The UNSC last issued a Press Statement on Nigeria during January 2012, focusing on terrorist attacks by Boko Haram.

During a meeting with President Jonathan on 26 May, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underlined the importance of protecting civilians and expressed hope for a quick end to the state of emergency. On 13 August the Secretary-General strongly condemned the 11 August attacks and called on "all parties to resolve their differences through dialogue and other peaceful means."

On 5 August the ICC Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, reported that crimes against humanity may have been committed by Boko Haram.

NECESSARY ACTION

Security forces deployed to the northern states under the state of emergency 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.

Those who incite or perpetrate inter-communal violence must be held accountable.

The AU, Economic Community of West African States, UN and states with significant ties to Nigeria, should assist the government as it deals with the threat posed by Boko Haram. These actors should urge the authorities to address the underlying causes of inter-communal violence and strengthen the rule of law.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [Report on Preliminary Examination Activities 2012](#), ICC, November 2012
- » ["Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Forces Abuses in Nigeria,"](#) Human Rights Watch, 11 October 2012
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Nigeria](#)



CENTRAL AFRICA The Lord's Resistance Army

Populations in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain at risk of attack by the Lord's Resistance Army, which has perpetrated crimes against humanity.

BACKGROUND

Started by Joseph Kony in northern Uganda during 1987 as a religiously-inspired militia group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has perpetrated crimes against humanity across central Africa. The UN Secretary-General released a report on 20 May asserting that between 1987 and 2012 the LRA was "responsible for more than 100,000 deaths, that from 60,000 to 100,000 children are believed to have been abducted by the rebel group and that 2.5 million civilians have been displaced as a result of its incursions."

No attacks have been reported in Uganda since 2006 or in South Sudan since 2011, but the group remains an active threat to civilians in the DRC and the Central African Republic (CAR). The organization The Resolve has utilized satellite imagery to demonstrate that the LRA established camps within the Kafia Kingi enclave in Sudan with Sudanese government support from 2009 until March 2013.

OCHA reported that between 1 January and 31 June 2013 the LRA carried out 104 attacks, resulting in 54 deaths and 154 abductions. According to OCHA, 30 of these attacks occurred in the DRC during March, the largest spike in LRA activity since January 2012.

ANALYSIS

Although its numbers are estimated at fewer than 250 combatants, the LRA remains a serious concern for populations as it operates across remote regions that lack a significant presence of security personnel. The lack of early warning capabilities undermines attempts to protect civilians in such a vast region since the LRA can attack and flee before local authorities respond.

CAR and the DRC are burdened by other internal conflicts and protecting civilians from the LRA is often a low priority. The recent coup in CAR resulted in several actors, including the United States, Uganda and the AU, suspending their anti-LRA activities in that country. This leaves populations in CAR at elevated risk of attack by the LRA and may allow the group to widen its operations.

The cross-border movement of the LRA has hampered attempts to halt its activity. The governments of Uganda and the DRC have failed to form agreements for the movement of troops across borders in pursuit of the LRA, allowing combatants to maintain safe havens within the DRC.

The governments of LRA-affected countries require ongoing international assistance to uphold their Responsibility to Protect.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Over the past two years there has been unprecedented regional and international commitment to defeating the LRA. However, the UN has a limited number of peacekeepers from MONUSCO and UNMISS stationed in LRA-affected areas. MONUSCO has previously enticed some LRA fighters to leave the group through its DDRRR program and announced on 23 May that it has been enhancing this program by broadcasting new "return home" messages from helicopters.

The AU-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA) launched its operational phase during March 2012. Since then, governments from

all four LRA-affected countries have contributed troops towards the initiative's Regional Task Force (RTF).

The UNSC issued Presidential Statements on 29 June and 19 December 2012 and 29 May 2013 supporting the UN's Regional Strategy for the LRA and emphasizing the "primary responsibility of States in LRA-affected regions to protect civilians." The 29 May statement also urged greater regional coordination to stabilize CAR and reinstate counter-LRA initiatives.

NECESSARY ACTION

The AU needs to ensure that troops deployed under the RTF receive adequate training in mass atrocity prevention and IHL. The UN and AU need to ensure that the UN Regional Strategy is fully implemented. This is of particular importance with regard to the protection of civilians, the expansion of DDRRR efforts and the enhancement of the rule of law and human rights in LRA-affected countries.

The UN, AU and donors should ensure that all elements of the RCI-LRA are adequately resourced in order to fulfill their mandate. Donors should also provide further assistance to provide communities with broadcasting capacity and radios so that locals can issue both warning messages of LRA attacks as well as "return home" calls to LRA members.

Anti-LRA initiatives in CAR need to be reinstated as soon as possible and must include an expanded DDRRR component. Sudan must cooperate with the AU and apprehend members of the group.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [ICC Situation Page: LRA](#)
- » [LRA Crisis Tracker](#)
- » ["Getting Back on Track: Implementing the UN Regional Strategy on the Lord's Resistance Army,"](#) 5 December 2012
- » [UNSC Presidential Statement](#), 29 May 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Central Africa \(LRA\)](#)



GUINEA

With a long-delayed election scheduled for 24 September, political instability and inter-communal violence leave Guinea's population at increased risk of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

In November 2010 presidential elections paved the way for Guinea's first civilian government in five decades. However, a full transition to civilian rule has been undermined by the delay of legislative elections that were originally scheduled for 2011 and have been postponed at least four times. Following UN-mediated talks between the government and the opposition in June and early July, elections are now scheduled for 24 September.

Disagreements over the organization and date of the elections have resulted in demonstrators and security forces in Conakry engaging in violent clashes which have killed over 50 people since March 2013. Security forces have been widely accused of using excessive force. The violence has also deepened hostility between Guinea's main ethnic groups, particularly the Malinke and Peuhl, whose members are predominately affiliated with the government and opposition, respectively.

Excessive use of force and ethnically motivated violence is not new to Guinea. In September 2009 government forces opened fire on a peaceful protest in a Conakry stadium while also committing widespread sexual violence. At least 150 civilians died as a result, with the majority of victims being ethnic Peuhl. While several high-level figures have been charged in relation to the massacre, none have been tried so far.

On 15 July 2013 inter-communal violence also broke out between ethnic Guerze and Konianke in the country's southeast. At least 98 people were killed in N'Zérékoré, Guinea's second largest city, and nearby areas during three days of violence. The government deployed troops to restore order.

ANALYSIS

Recent violence is particularly concerning considering the history of political instability and grave human rights abuses in Guinea. Ethnicity and power are closely connected in Guinea, while communal identities are routinely manipulated to serve political interests. Instability is compounded by high rates of youth unemployment and a weakened economy. Recent clashes in Conakry and the country's southeast raise fears of further violence during the 24 September elections.

Excessive use of force on the part of the security forces usually goes unpunished and erodes people's trust in government. The government of Guinea is struggling to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and requires the ongoing assistance of international partners.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following two letters of request from the Guinean government in October 2010 and January 2011, Guinea was placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). On 10 July the PBC welcomed the agreement on an electoral date.

On 2 March the AU issued a Press Release expressing concern over recent violent clashes and calling for calm. The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 29 April deploring election-related violence in Conakry.

Mr. Said Djinnit, appointed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to lead international efforts in Guinea, played an instrumental role in facilitating the agreement on a new election date. On 21 August the AU Chairperson approved the deployment of a Long Term Observer Mission to Guinea for the elections.

Following the deadly clashes in Guinea's southeast, the Secretary-General called "for calm and urge[d] Guineans to refrain from all acts likely to undermine peaceful coexistence among communities."

NECESSARY ACTION

The government must urge candidates to engage in responsible campaigning and stress that anyone who incites or perpetrates violence will be held accountable.

The government must end impunity and strengthen the rule of law in Guinea. Those who incite violence on the grounds of ethnicity or political affiliation must be held accountable. The government needs to investigate the deadly election-related clashes between protestors and security forces as well as the ethnic clashes in N'Zérékoré. All perpetrators of grave human rights violations must be brought to justice.

Security sector reform should be rigorously implemented and must include a strong human rights component. The

government must ensure that the security forces exercise restraint when confronting peaceful protests.

The government must develop a long-term strategy to depoliticize ethnic identities. It is crucial that international actors remain engaged with the government and opposition and provide necessary assistance as the country attempts to complete a full transition to civilian rule.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Press Statement on Guinea](#), 29 April 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Guinea](#)



IRAQ

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

BACKGROUND

Growing sectarian violence in Iraq has resulted in nearly 5,000 civilian deaths since the beginning of 2013, with 716 civilians killed during August. Despite a decline in violence and relative stabilization of the security situation since the end of Iraq's 2006-2008 civil war, deep sectarian divisions between Sunnis and Shias has resulted in months of targeted attacks against civilians, including car bombs in residential areas.

The deadliest attacks appear to be perpetrated by Sunni militant groups, including al-Qaeda, intent on killing Shia civilians and toppling the Iraqi government. Some religious minorities have also been the victims of targeted killings. This violence has increasingly taken the form of car bomb attacks or suicide bombings in crowded areas, with various political forces inciting acts of retribution. Some Shia militias have also carried out extra-judicial reprisal killings.

Following the United States-led invasion in 2003, foreign troops left the country in 2011, transferring power to a Shia-dominated central government under Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. Deep sectarian 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.

In particular, 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 persecution and exclusion from the political process, with "de-Baathification" being used as a tool for Sunni marginalization.

A Sunni protest movement that began in December 2012 has turned increasingly violent as the government failed to respond appropriately to its demands. Some Sunnis have also been mobilized by the dynamics of the conflict in neighboring Syria, where Sunnis dominate anti-government armed groups.

According to the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), Iraqi Security Forces have used excessive force in response to protests. On 23 April security forces clashed with largely unarmed demonstrators, killing 45 people and injuring another 110. In its 27 June Report on Human Rights in Iraq, UNAMI reported that in numerous instances demonstrators claimed that they continue to suffer extreme abuse by the security forces.

ANALYSIS

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 cleavage between Sunnis and Shias imperils not only the stability of the government, but the lives of countless civilians who fear a possible return to sectarian civil war.

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.

Cultural identities and transnational loyalties are being manipulated by various political forces and contribute to the government's inability to resolve the security crisis. While confronting the security threat posed by terrorist attacks against civilian populations, the government needs to urgently address the underlying sources of conflict between Sunnis, Shias and Kurds in Iraq.

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

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

On 30 April UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called upon Iraqi security forces to exercise restraint in maintaining law and order. On 11 June he voiced concern over the increasing

sectarian violence and called upon all parties to redouble efforts to support reconciliation.

On 24 July the UNSC extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 July 2014.

NECESSARY ACTION

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.

The Iraqi government and its international donors and supporters must ensure that security forces comply with obligations under international human rights law. The international community should assist the Iraqi government in upholding its Responsibility to Protect.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNAMI Website](#)
- » [Report of the UN Secretary-General on the activities of UNAMI](#), 11 July 2013
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2110](#), 24 July 2013
- » [Iraq: Attacks Amount to Crimes Against Humanity](#), Human Rights Watch, 11 August 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Iraq](#)

Despite these agreements, the Séléka alliance resumed hostilities and overthrew President Francois Bozize on 24 March. Séléka leader Michel Djotodia proclaimed himself president of CAR and on 13 April established a National Transitional Council (NTC). ECCAS adopted the N'Djamena Declaration on 18 April, offering a political solution to the crisis and a new timeline for a transition to an elected government.

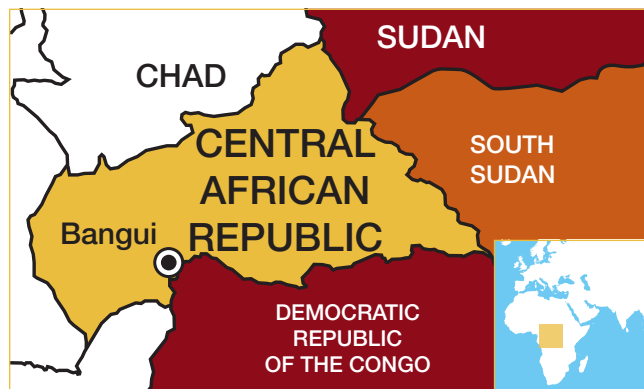
The overthrow of the previous government has resulted in five months of pervasive insecurity. Djotodia was sworn in as interim president on 18 August, but he and the NTC have been unable to bring Séléka fighters under centralized control. During this time the Séléka have committed grave human rights abuses against populations in Bangui and in rural villages throughout the country. Over 63,000 people have sought refuge in neighboring countries while more than 206,000 people have been internally displaced since December 2012.

On 5 August three UN Special Rapporteurs raised alarm over "reported acts of killings, torture, arbitrary detention, gender-based violence, enforced disappearances and 'mob justice.'" Violence perpetrated by Séléka forces has resulted in the death of more than 200 civilians since the coup in March. Their attacks have reportedly taken on a religious dimension with Christian communities reporting violence and homes burnt by armed rebels.

On 20 August at least 10 people were killed in clashes with Séléka forces during a disarmament operation in Bangui. Following these clashes UNHCR reported ten days of arbitrary arrests, violence and attacks on civilians. On 28 August more than 5,000 civilians fled the violence and took refuge in Bangui's airport.

Officials from UNHCR and OCHA visited towns 500-kilometers north of Bangui during the last week of August and found seven villages burnt to the ground by armed men, reportedly in retaliation for clashes between Séléka forces and local self-defense groups.

Fighting between forces loyal to former President Bozize and Séléka engulfed Bouca and Bossangoa on 9 September. The fighting reportedly resulted in at least 100 people killed with both sides perpetrating attacks upon civilians. On 13 September President Djotodia ordered the formal dissolution of the Séléka alliance.



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Populations in the Central African Republic are facing a heightened risk of mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by armed factions of the Séléka alliance.

BACKGROUND

During December 2012 a coalition of four armed rebel groups, the Séléka alliance, launched an offensive against the government of CAR. Following Séléka's occupation of several towns, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) facilitated peace talks between the rebels and the government, resulting in the signing of the "Libreville Agreements."

ANALYSIS

The security situation in CAR remains extremely volatile due to the collapse of credible government and the inability of the Séléka leadership to control their own forces. Populations remain at risk of serious human rights abuses and potential mass atrocity crimes. Civilians have few options for protection and have formed self-defense groups, which Séléka have targeted with extreme

force. Poorly implemented disarmament campaigns have contributed to, rather than reduced, violence.

The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović and the head of the UN's Integrated Peacebuilding Office in CAR (BINUCA), Babacar Gaye, have indicated that the security situation remains precarious.

The NTC is failing to uphold their Responsibility to Protect and urgently needs the international community's assistance.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The UN established BINUCA in 2010. BINUCA released a statement on 19 July calling upon the authorities to immediately investigate grave human rights abuses, identify perpetrators and bring them to justice.

An International Contact Group was formed for CAR during May and held its most recent meeting on 8 July.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, sent a fact-finding mission to CAR from 19 June to 11 July. After reviewing its findings the ICC Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, released a statement on 7 August asserting that the ICC would investigate and prosecute "those most responsible for the commission of serious crimes, if necessary."

ECCAS has a pre-existing regional peace operation in CAR (MICOPAX). On 19 July the AU Peace and Security Council released a Communique authorizing the deployment of an African-led International Support Mission for CAR (AFISM-CAR) to supplement MICOPAX. The transition from MICOPAX to AFISM-CAR was launched on 1 August.

The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 14 August stressing that CAR's authorities "bear the primary responsibility to

protect civilians" and noting that AFISM-CAR represents a "major contribution towards... assuming its responsibility for the protection of its civilians."

Member of ECCAS and the AU Commission held consultations regarding CAR on 2 and 3 September. Following the meeting they issued a joint appeal to the UNSC to authorize financial and logistical support for the deployment of AFISM-CAR.

NECESSARY ACTION

The NTC must condemn acts of violence against civilians and hold perpetrators accountable. The NTC and Séléka should adhere to the transitional road-map and reaffirm their commitment to the Libreville Agreements and N'Djamena Declaration.

The UNSC and donor countries should provide support to the AU for the deployment of the AFISM-CAR peacekeeping mission with a strong protection of civilians mandate.

The NTC and international community must work together to establish a credible security force and ensure that those who have committed grave human rights abuses are not integrated into the military. BINUCA should immediately deploy human rights monitors outside Bangui to report on violations.

The UNSC should adopt targeted sanctions against those responsible for gross human rights violations.

MORE INFORMATION:

- » [BINUCA Website](#)
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11093](#), 14 August 2013
- » [AU Peace and Security Council Communiqué](#), 19 July 2013
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Central African Republic](#)



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