

R2P MONITOR

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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.



160,000 +
people killed

6.5 million IDPs

10.8 million
people in need
of assistance

SYRIA

The ongoing civil war in Syria leaves populations facing mass atrocity crimes committed by state security forces and affiliated militias. Some armed opposition groups are also committing war crimes.

BACKGROUND

After more than three years of conflict in Syria over 160,000 people have been killed. There are nearly 2.9 million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries and over 6.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a result of the conflict. Ongoing fighting has left at least 10.8 million Syrians in need of humanitarian assistance, 4.7 million of whom remain in inaccessible areas. On 26 June the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, reiterated that UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2139 of 22 February, which demanded a halt to attacks on civilians and immediate humanitarian access to all areas of the country, was not being implemented.

On 3 June the Syrian government held presidential elections despite the UN Secretary-General's warning that doing so would hamper prospects for a political solution. According to the country's constitutional court, President Bashar al-Assad was reelected with nearly 89 percent of the vote.

The UN has reported that all parties to the conflict have laid sieges, trapping 241,000 people and further impeding access to humanitarian relief. On 7 May an agreement was reached allowing rebels to retreat from Homs in exchange for sieges being lifted on two pro-government Shia towns. On 21 May the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, condemned the "flagrant disregard for international human rights and humanitarian law – both by the Government and some armed groups."

Meanwhile, the government continues its bombardment of opposition-held residential areas. On 19 June the UN Secretary-General condemned the heavy shelling, aerial attacks and use of barrel bombs by the Syrian government, including an 18 June attack on an IDP camp that killed over 50 people.

A UN investigation confirmed that on 21 August 2013 a large-scale sarin attack, delivered by rockets, hit several areas of Ghouta, Damascus, killing an estimated 1,400 people. Between 6 October 2013 and 23 June 2014 a joint UN-Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) mission undertook the process of dismantling Syria's chemical weapons. The OPCW announced on 29 April that it would investigate accusations that the Syrian government used chlorine gas on 17 April in attacks on Kfar Zeita, a village in Hama province.

Government-allied militias have committed large-scale massacres and perpetrated war crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) as a matter of state policy. The UN Human Rights Council-mandated Commission of Inquiry (CoI) has reported that pro-government forces have conducted "widespread attacks on the civilian population, committing murder, torture, rape and enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity." Some opposition groups have also committed war crimes, violated IHL and targeted religious minorities for attack.

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. Significant advances in Iraq by the extremist "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL), now calling itself the Islamic State (IS), have strengthened its influence and military position in Syria. IS now controls a large territory spanning the Syria-Iraq border.

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 continue to provide the Syrian government with critical economic, military and political support. On 26 June President Barack Obama requested \$500 million from the United States Congress to train and equip members of the Syrian opposition.

The conflict poses a growing threat to stability throughout the Middle East. Sectarian violence and armed conflict in Iraq has been exacerbated by the Syrian civil war, while friction between Syria and Turkey also remains high. Lebanon, which hosts over 1.1 million Syrian refugees, has seen sporadic clashes between Lebanese supporters and opponents of the Assad government. Suicide bombings have killed dozens of people during 2014. Hezbollah has directly engaged in fighting against Syrian rebels on both sides of the Syria-Lebanon border and has vowed to remain militarily active inside Syria.

The first two rounds of the “Geneva II” peace conference, aimed at ending the violence in Syria, took place from 22 to 31 January and 10 to 15 February, respectively. Representatives from the Syrian government and opposition, as well as approximately 40 other countries and regional organizations, attended. No progress towards a political solution was made.

The UN-League of Arab States Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, resigned on 31 May, citing limited prospects for a political settlement to the conflict. On 11 July the UN Secretary-General announced Staffan de Mistura as the new UN Special Envoy to Syria.

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 significant military gains in several provinces.

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

External political influence upon the Syrian government via the UN and regional actors remains weak. Sanctions have had limited success as Syria’s few remaining allies continue to provide crucial economic insulation. Long-standing divisions within the UNSC over Syria have allowed the situation to deteriorate to the point where few options for a peaceful political solution exist. Nevertheless, it remains imperative that diplomatic efforts continue.

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

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following the outbreak of violence during March 2011, the international community responded by censuring the regime for its widespread violations of human rights. [For responses prior to February 2014, 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. On 22 February 2014 the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2139, which noted the government’s “primary responsibility to protect.”

On 15 April the UNSC held an informal meeting during which the “Caesar Report” was presented. The report, written by three former war crimes prosecutors, analyzes photos of 11,000 detainees who were allegedly tortured and killed between 2011 and 2013 in Syrian government detention centers. On 22 May Russia and China vetoed a UNSC resolution that would have referred the situation in Syria to the ICC for investigation.

The UN Human Rights Council has adopted 12 resolutions condemning atrocities in Syria. The most recent, passed on 28 March, condemned violations of IHL and international human rights law and demanded that the government uphold its responsibility to protect.

On 19 June the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) opened a field office in Sweida, southern Syria, in an attempt to expand the reach of its humanitarian efforts.

On 14 July the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2165, authorizing the UN to deliver cross-border humanitarian aid through Jordan, Turkey and Iraq without the consent of the Syrian government.

NECESSARY ACTION

Syrian government forces and armed opposition groups must halt the commission of mass atrocity crimes and adhere to IHL. All sides must facilitate immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access to civilian populations trapped or displaced by fighting, in keeping with UNSC Resolutions 2139 and 2165.

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.

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 increasing humanitarian assistance to populations trapped or displaced by the civil war.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2139](#), 22 February 2014
- » [Situation of human rights in Syria](#), Human Rights Council, 28 March 2014
- » [Statement by the UN Secretary-General](#), 19 June 2014
- » [Statement by UN Emergency Relief Coordinator to the UNSC](#), 26 June 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Syria](#)



80 percent of
Muslims killed
or displaced

535,000 IDPs

388,500
refugees

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

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

BACKGROUND

Violence against civilians is pervasive throughout the Central African Republic (CAR) despite the deployment of French forces, an African Union (AU) peacekeeping mission (MISCA) and a European Union (EU) military operation.

The Muslim population is being systematically targeted by the predominantly Christian and animist “anti-balaka” militias and mobs of civilians. Formed largely in response to abuses by the Séléka rebel alliance, the predominantly Muslim armed group who overthrew former President Francois Bozizé on 24 March 2013, anti-balaka militias have conducted deadly reprisals against Muslims and other groups and are responsible for the majority of civilian deaths in CAR.

The UNHCR has stated that targeted violence against Muslims constitutes “massive ethno-religious cleansing.” Approximately 80 percent of the country’s Muslim population has been forced to flee or has been killed since September 2013. The UN and humanitarian organizations, with the assistance of French forces and MISCA peacekeepers, have relocated some vulnerable civilians. On 31 May civilians from PK5, the last Muslim residential enclave in Bangui, demanded the UN evacuate them. On 10 June the UN reported that the anti-balaka were besieging the remaining Muslims of Bangui by preventing non-Muslims from delivering goods to the local market. UNHCR estimates that at least 15,000 Muslims in 11 threatened communities remain at “very high risk” of attack.

Fighting has intensified between the anti-balaka and ex-Séléka in northern, central and eastern prefectures, often resulting in targeted attacks against civilians and inter-communal violence. Fighters affiliated with the ex-Séléka attacked the village of

Liwa, near Bambari, Ouaka prefecture, on 10 June. At least 22 people were killed and over 150 houses burned in the attack. An anti-balaka counter attack near Bambari on 23 June left at least 18 Muslim civilians dead. Over 60 people were killed in ensuing reprisal violence in Bambari.

Religious sites, including those where displaced civilians are sheltering, have become targets of attack. On 28 May ex-Séléka fighters killed 17 civilians and wounded 30 others when they opened fire upon IDPs at Notre Dame de Fatima church in Bangui. Following clashes with French forces, on 7 July armed Muslim civilians and ex-Séléka rebels attacked St. Joseph Cathedral in Bambari, where more than 4,000 IDPs were sheltering. According to the Red Cross at least 21 civilians were killed in the attack. On the same day a group of armed men threw a grenade towards a mosque in Paoua, Ouham-Pendé prefecture, leaving 34 wounded.

According to the UN at least 2,400 civilians have been killed since December 2013. Over 388,500 civilians have sought refuge in neighboring countries and there are currently more than 535,000 IDPs in CAR, including at least 111,500 people spread across 43 sites in Bangui.

The transitional government, led by interim President Catherine Samba-Panza, is struggling to adequately respond to the crisis. As extreme levels of violence continue, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned that the permanent “de-facto partition” of the country along ethno-religious lines is a possibility.

ANALYSIS

CAR has suffered decades of poor governance, recurring instability and humanitarian crisis. Since March 2013 the state has effectively ceased to function. The interim government cannot prevent various armed groups and civilian mobs from perpetrating attacks and does not have an effective strategy for the protection and relocation of vulnerable populations, promotion of political dialogue or national reconciliation.

Intensified fighting between anti-balaka, ex-Séléka and other armed groups, as well as between international peacekeepers and these groups, has increased the risks to civilians. Fighting between armed groups has occurred in prefectures that split the country between North and South and East and West. The country is effectively partitioned, with the anti-balaka controlling territory in western CAR and the ex-Séléka establishing control in the east. The current violence is occurring as the anti-balaka and ex-Séléka are attempting to re-organize and consolidate their respective movements.

Political and military elites seeking to maintain or gain power, including those linked to the ex-Séléka, anti-balaka and former President Bozizé, are exacerbating the crisis. Religious and ethnic identity has also been manipulated, with communities mobilized against one another. Deadly attacks on civilians are conducted openly and without fear of sanction.

Despite the efforts of French and AU peacekeepers, civilians have not been afforded adequate protection from mass atrocity crimes. MISCA continues to face critical operational gaps.

Accelerating the political transition and preparing to hold elections without significant improvements in security, accountability and reconciliation amongst communities will only increase the risk of further mass atrocity crimes being perpetrated.

CAR's interim government is currently unable to uphold its Responsibility to Protect and requires sustained international assistance.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Following the deadly surge of violence during late 2013, the international community intensified its response to the crisis in CAR, including passing three UNSC resolutions between October 2013 and January 2014 that emphasized the interim government's responsibility to protect the civilian population. [For responses prior to April 2014, [see GCR2P's Timeline of the International Response to the Situation in CAR.](#)]

France currently has 2,000 troops deployed in CAR under the aegis of Operation Sangaris, while the AU has deployed 5,800 MISCA peacekeepers. Three French and twenty-six AU peacekeepers have been killed since 5 December.

The EU formally launched its military operation (EUFOR-RCA) on 1 April and has approximately 700 troops on the ground. The mission is responsible for security at Bangui M'Poko airport and is also charged with protecting civilians in the 3rd and 5th districts of Bangui.

On 10 April the UNSC passed Resolution 2149, emphasizing the CAR authorities' primary responsibility to protect their population. The resolution authorized the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation, MINUSCA, which is expected to consist of 10,000 troops and 1,800 police. MINUSCA is mandated to protect civilians, support the political transition, facilitate humanitarian assistance and promote human rights. It will assume authority from MISCA on 15 September.

The UNSC strongly condemned violence in Bangui in a 30 May Press Statement and reiterated the CAR authorities' primary responsibility to protect civilians.

On 5 June the UN Commission of Inquiry released its preliminary report on the CAR crisis, which concluded that ample evidence exists that individuals from both sides of the conflict have committed violations of international humanitarian and human rights law since 1 January 2013. The commission's report suggested that "acts of genocide" and ethnic cleansing may have been perpetrated by the anti-balaka against the Muslim population of CAR.

On 12 June the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC noted that the intervention of the Court is now "essential," following a formal request by the transitional authorities to open an investigation into crimes committed in CAR since August 2012.

The International Contact Group for CAR met for the fifth time on 7 July and committed to convene a Forum for National Reconciliation and Political Dialogue between 21 and 23 July.

NECESSARY ACTION

The interim government must publicly condemn all attacks on civilians, especially against the Muslim minority. It is essential that perpetrators responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of human rights be brought to justice.

Local efforts to ease tensions between communities should be supported by international mediators and should be part of a broader strategy of working with CAR's authorities on national reconciliation. There is an urgent need for regional and international interlocutors to support the transitional government in efforts to promote disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups.

French, AU and EU forces must disarm all armed groups who threaten civilians. Vulnerable civilians, especially those in IDP encampments and besieged areas, must be robustly protected and provided adequate access to humanitarian relief. Enhanced protection must also be provided during evacuation and relocation operations.

Additional troops, including formed police units, should be expeditiously deployed. Logistical support to MISCA must be increased. There is an urgent need to increase funding for humanitarian assistance.

Re-hatted troops that will participate in MINUSCA must be strenuously vetted and trained to strictly abide by the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MINUSCA Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2149](#), 10 April 2014
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11423](#), 30 May 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Central African Republic](#)



390,100 people displaced
in Darfur in 2014

1.2 million people
displaced in 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 in Darfur are also at risk of mass atrocities due to escalating inter-communal violence and attacks by government-sponsored forces.

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.

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.

On 14 April Sudan's Defence Minister declared the start of a summer military offensive, aimed at ending the rebellion, which has expanded to include new areas in South Kordofan. The SAF, alongside the government-sponsored Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a mixed force of SAF and various militias, recaptured the Daldako area on 18 May. The SAF indiscriminately shelled civilian areas in Delami County between 12 and 27 April. The SPLM-N launched a counter-offensive on 28 May by indiscriminately shelling Kadugli, in direct violation of IHL.

Indiscriminate aerial bombardments by the SAF have increased since April, displacing 25,900 civilians. These attacks include airstrikes on a medical facility in Gidel on 1 and 2 May as well as the repeated bombing of civilian areas in Kauda during late May. Another hospital was bombed in Farandalla on 16 June.

The ongoing conflict has led to the internal displacement of over 1.2 million civilians while more than 243,500 have fled to South Sudan and Ethiopia. The upsurge in violence since April has resulted in over 116,000 new IDPs.

The government continues to block UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations 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 operations in Sudan, with severe consequences for the population in areas affected by armed conflict. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network forecasted that 40 percent of IDPs in SPLM-N controlled areas of South Kordofan will face emergency levels of food insecurity until September.

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

Direct negotiations between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N were held on 13 February, 28 February and 22 April under the auspices of the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan. The talks collapsed due to the failure of both sides to agree upon a framework agreement for negotiations.

The security situation in Darfur has also deteriorated as a result of escalating inter-communal violence and renewed SAF ground and air operations. Intensified fighting between the SAF and rebel groups has contributed to the displacement of more than 390,100 people so far this year. The SAF launched a bombing campaign on East Jebel Marra on 18 March, resulting in the displacement of over 15,000 people.

Since late February the RSF has targeted villages in South Darfur resulting in civilian fatalities, destruction of property and displacement of over 45,000 people. The RSF has also attacked civilians in South Darfur and North Darfur, including in Kutum on 26 March.

The AU-UN hybrid peacekeeping force in Darfur (UNAMID) has criticized the government for restricting its ability to uphold its civilian protection mandate. A peacekeeper was killed in North Darfur on 24 May.

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 three years. Both the government and the SPLM-N have continued attacks against civilian areas despite negotiations.

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. The intensification of bombing during the planting season, combined with the refusal to allow humanitarian access, may demonstrate a deliberate strategy of denying food supplies to vulnerable civilian populations.

More than two years since the adoption of Resolution 2046, which called for a negotiated settlement to the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, the UNSC and AU have failed to push the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N to honor agreements to cease hostilities and allow the delivery of humanitarian aid. The government of Sudan has prohibited access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile and is systematically preventing aid from reaching populations that are now at risk of starvation.

Despite the presence of UNAMID, the security situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate. Recent inter-communal violence and the expanded operations of the SAF and RSF contribute 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 directly 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. The ICC issued a warrant for President Bashir in 2010 for perpetrating genocide in Darfur. The UNSC has adopted 55 resolutions on Sudan since 2004, most of which have not been fully implemented. [For responses prior to March 2014, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States](#).]

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

The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, issued statements on 10 and 11 March, respectively, expressing concern regarding the deteriorating situation in South Darfur and calling for the government to protect civilians. On 27 March the UN Resident

and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan and the deputy head of UNAMID issued a joint statement expressing concern over escalating violence in Darfur.

The UNSC issued a Press Statement on 17 March calling upon the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N to cease hostilities and reach a comprehensive settlement to the conflicts in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, in accordance with Resolution 2046. It also called upon both parties to refrain from attacking civilians. The UNSC released a Press Statement on 24 May condemning the deadly attack against UNAMID.

On 18 June the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan issued a statement expressing concern over the aerial bombardment of medical facilities in South Kordofan.

NECESSARY ACTION

The government of Sudan and the SPLM-N, in accordance with UNSC Resolution 2046, 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 the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to populations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, as stipulated in the 2011 Framework Agreement and 2012 cooperation agreements. States with major investments in Sudan, including China, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, should press the government to fulfill its commitments.

UNAMID must robustly protect civilians facing an imminent threat of violence, in line with its mandate, and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Mediation efforts should be renewed between the government of Sudan and armed groups operating in Darfur. The government of Sudan must stop deliberately obstructing UNAMID.

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.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNISFA Website](#)
- » [UNAMID Website](#)
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11321](#), 17 March 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Sudan](#)



2,050+ people
killed since
January 2014

650,000+ IDPs

320+ civilians
abducted by
Boko Haram

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 facing crimes against humanity in Nigeria.

BACKGROUND

The extremist group Boko Haram, which has been perpetrating attacks against civilians since 2009, is committed to overthrowing Nigeria's secular government and establishing an Islamic state. Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, has vowed to kill all Muslims who "follow democracy" and has said that Boko Haram is at war "against Christians and democracy and their constitution."

Despite the ongoing military state of emergency, which was declared by President Goodluck Jonathan for Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in May 2013, Boko Haram attacks have escalated during the first half of 2014. According to Human Rights Watch more than 2,050 civilians have been killed by Boko Haram since January. On 23 June the UNHCR announced that there are currently nearly 650,000 IDPs in northeast Nigeria.

Boko Haram considers secular education "un-Islamic" and often attacks schools, killing students and staff. According to the Nigerian National Union of Teachers, 173 teachers have been killed by Boko Haram in the past five years. On 14 April Boko Haram abducted more than 230 girls from a boarding school in Chibok, Borno state. More than 200 are still being held captive. An additional 118 people, mostly women and children, were abducted following attacks during May and June.

Nigerian security forces have been consistently accused of failing to provide protection to civilians from Boko Haram. Recurring abductions and attacks often take place without adequate response by the security forces. The security forces have also been accused of committing grave human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, when they do confront Boko Haram.

Boko Haram continues to expand its activity outside the area under the state of emergency. An explosion on 25 June at a shopping plaza in Abuja killed at least 24 people, the third major bomb attack on the capital in three months. Another explosion on 28 June killed 11 people when a brothel was attacked in the capital of Bauchi state.

ANALYSIS

Civilians in Nigeria are at a high risk of mass atrocity crimes as the frequency and geographical spread of attacks have increased during 2014. As Boko Haram continues to target Christians, moderate Muslims, government officials, pro-government vigilantes, students and teachers, there has also been a growing pattern of indiscriminate attacks against civilians.

Boko Haram attacks also exacerbate existing local tensions, heightening the possibility of inter-communal violence, particularly in the volatile "Middle Belt" region.

The government has so far been unable to adequately protect populations from the threat posed by Boko Haram or to prevent recurring inter-communal violence in central Nigeria. The security forces' alleged acts of arbitrary detention and extra-judicial killing of suspected Boko Haram members may violate international human rights law.

While the lack of adequate military protection for vulnerable populations needs to be urgently addressed, social initiatives and political reforms remain crucial to confronting the root causes of conflict in northern and central Nigeria. Conflict in Nigeria stems from a number of sources, including poor governance, widespread corruption, disputes over land and water rights and unemployment. Without seriously addressing these issues, the chances of ending Boko Haram's insurgency and preventing future conflict are slim.

General elections scheduled for 2015 may further exacerbate tensions if politicians manipulate ongoing instability as well as religious and ethnic identities to serve political interests.

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

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls has drawn unprecedented international attention to the threat posed by Boko Haram. The abduction was strongly condemned by numerous governments as well as the UN Secretary-General and the UN Children's Fund. On 6 May the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights warned perpetrators that acts related to sexual slavery can constitute crimes against humanity. President Jonathan accepted offers from the United States, United Kingdom, France and China to provide assistance in finding and freeing the Chibok schoolgirls.

On 17 May President François Hollande of France hosted a summit on Boko Haram, bringing together President Jonathan, his regional counterparts from Benin, Cameroon, Niger and Chad, as well as representatives from the United Kingdom, United States and EU. Participants agreed to coordinate action against Boko Haram. During June these governments established an External Intelligence Response Unit to share security information on terrorist threats in West Africa.

On 12 June the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary, William Hague, hosted a meeting aimed at further improving international and regional efforts to defeat Boko Haram. The United Kingdom announced increased military and educational aid.

On 30 June the UN Secretary-General strongly condemned attacks on civilians and "reiterate[d] the readiness of the United Nations to support Nigeria as it responds to this challenge in a manner consistent with its international human rights obligations."

NECESSARY ACTION

Nigerian security forces must enhance protection of vulnerable communities, especially in the northeast of the country. 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.

Authorities should complement their security response by also implementing the government's declared "soft approach," aimed at addressing underlying causes of conflict and undermining the Boko Haram insurgency. Reforms undertaken as part of the "soft approach" should be expanded to central and northwestern states where recurring inter-communal conflict also threatens safety and security.

The UN, AU and Economic Community of West African States, along with states with significant bilateral ties to Nigeria, such as the United States and United Kingdom, should continue to assist the government in upholding 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 prepares 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

- » ["Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on recent attacks in Nigeria,"](#) 21 May 2014
- » ["Curbing Violence in Nigeria \(II\): The Boko Haram Insurgency,"](#) International Crisis Group, 3 April 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Nigeria](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY WATCH

African Union:

At the 23rd AU Summit, held from 20 to 27 June, the Assembly adopted an amendment to the Statute of the African Court on Justice and Human Rights, which gives the Court criminal jurisdiction over genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, but bars the Court from prosecuting sitting heads of state and other high-level government officials. Immunity for heads of state violates norms on international criminal justice and contravenes some African states' constitutions.

Côte d'Ivoire:

On 22 March Côte d'Ivoire surrendered Charles Blé Goudé, Minister of Youth under former President Laurent Gbagbo, to the ICC. The ICC unsealed a warrant for Blé Goudé's arrest on 30 September 2013 for alleged responsibility for crimes against humanity perpetrated between December 2010 and April 2011. The court is scheduled to open his confirmation of charges hearing on 18 August. On 12 June the ICC confirmed charges relating to four counts of crimes against humanity against former President Laurent Gbagbo and committed him to trial.

Sri Lanka:

On 25 June the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights named three expert advisors to the Investigation Team tasked with probing alleged war crimes and grave human rights violations committed during Sri Lanka's civil war. In March 2014 the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 25/1, mandating the investigation, which will operate until mid-April 2015. On 18 June Sri Lanka's parliament voted to reject the UN probe, saying it was "detrimental to the process of reconciliation and peace and that it erodes the sovereignty, dignity and stature of Sri Lanka."

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

On 25 June former Congolese militia leader Germain Katanga discontinued his appeal against a 7 March judgment of the ICC that found him guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes. In a 23 June letter he apologized for his acts and accepted his sentence of 12 years imprisonment.

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.



1,503 civilians killed during June [excluding Anbar Province]

1.2 million people displaced since January

IRAQ

Armed conflict between the Iraqi Security Forces and the extremist armed group the Islamic State, as well as increasing sectarian violence, leaves civilians at an imminent risk of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

The security situation in Iraq has dramatically deteriorated as a result of widespread fighting between the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and armed extremist groups, particularly the Islamic State, which operates on both sides of the Iraq-Syria border. The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) reported that 1,503 civilians were killed during June, excluding deaths in Anbar province.

On 10 June IS forces overran the country's second-largest city, Mosul, seizing control of government buildings and a large amount of military equipment. The UN reported that over 1,300 people were killed and another 1,250 injured, while 650,000 people were displaced from Mosul. In the following days IS and allied militias captured several more towns as its forces advanced towards Baghdad. Iraqi Kurdish forces also took control of the northern city of Kirkuk after ISF troops abandoned their posts.

On 15 June IS publicly declared it had carried out the mass execution of an estimated 1,700 ISF soldiers in Tikrit. Human Rights Watch investigators reported at least 160 executions. The UN Secretary-General has condemned the upsurge in violence and called upon all Iraqi leaders to ensure their followers avoid sectarian reprisals. On 13 June the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, warned of the "acute vulnerability" of Iraqi civilians and expressed alarm at reports of extrajudicial killings carried out by IS.

On 30 April Iraq held its first parliamentary elections since United States occupation troops left in 2011. Parliament has so far been unable to reach agreement on nominations for the positions of the country's President, Vice President and Prime Minister. Incumbent Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki called upon Iraq's parliament to declare a state of emergency and, along with the country's most senior Shia cleric, urged citizens to take up arms in defense of the country. Parliament failed to vote on Prime Minister Maliki's request. On 25 June he rejected calls from the United States and other countries to urgently form a religiously and ethnically inclusive government to tackle the threat posed by IS.

The ISF has also been widely accused of committing serious human rights abuses, including unlawful use of force against peaceful protesters, illegal detention and systematic use of torture. Prior to the recent IS offensive, violence had already increased this year in Anbar province after IS fighters seized control of Fallujah and parts of Ramadi on 1 January. On 27 May Human Rights Watch reported that the ISF had dropped barrel bombs on residential neighborhoods of Fallujah. The UNHCR reported on 6 June that violence in Anbar has displaced nearly 500,000 civilians since January. Large numbers of civilians remain trapped in Fallujah by intense fighting between the ISF and IS.

Prior to the fall of Mosul discontent had 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, which the government characterized as a terrorist movement aimed at the sectarian and territorial division of the country. IS has been able to exploit widespread Sunni disaffection with the government.

Growing armed violence and sectarian terrorist attacks killed over 7,818 civilians in Iraq during 2013, the highest 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. Some Shia militias have carried out retaliatory attacks and religious minorities have also been victims of sectarian killings.

ANALYSIS

The rising threat posed by Sunni militant groups, especially IS, imperils not only the stability of the government, but the lives of countless civilians.

The civil war in neighboring Syria has facilitated the growth of IS and exacerbated domestic conflict. Many Sunni and Shia radicals have joined armed groups fighting in Syria.

Despite a November 2010 power-sharing agreement between political parties representing Shias, Sunnis and Kurds, many Sunnis feel they have been marginalized by the Maliki government. The government's response to the Sunni protest movement and the rise of IS 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. With heightened ethnic and sectarian tensions, the outcome of recent parliamentary elections and IS' offensive threaten to increase political fragmentation. Prime Minister Maliki's encouragement of Shia militias and the arming of civilians increase the threat of renewed sectarian civil war.

Human rights violations are routinely perpetrated by the ISF, who often commit abuses in the name of counter-terrorism. There are grave fears for the fate of civilians trapped by fighting between IS and the ISF in Fallujah and elsewhere. IS has consistently failed to protect civilians in areas under its control.

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

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

In the wake of IS' takeover of Mosul, Iran and the United States have offered political and military support to the Iraqi government. The UN Secretary-General, UNHCR and High Commissioner for Human Rights have condemned rising sectarian violence and called upon Iraq's leaders and the ISF to exercise restraint in their military operations.

On 11 June the UNSC issued a Press Statement deploring events in Mosul, expressing concern for the hundreds of thousands of civilians who fled the violence and reminding the

Iraqi government that it must comply with international human rights and humanitarian obligations.

On 18 June the UN Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect condemned attacks against civilians, including those by IS, which may amount to war crimes.

The United States announced on 19 June that it would deploy up to 300 military advisers to Iraq and would consider military action in support of the Iraqi government.

NECESSARY ACTION

While confronting the security threat posed by IS and other armed groups, the government must protect civilians and address the underlying sources of conflict between Sunnis, Shias and Kurds in Iraq. The government must actively prevent reprisals against Sunni communities by ISF and Shia militias.

The government and its international supporters, especially the United States, must ensure that the ISF complies with its obligations under international human rights law. Sunni, Shia and Kurdish political leaders must work to address issues of regional autonomy and perceptions of sectarian discrimination.

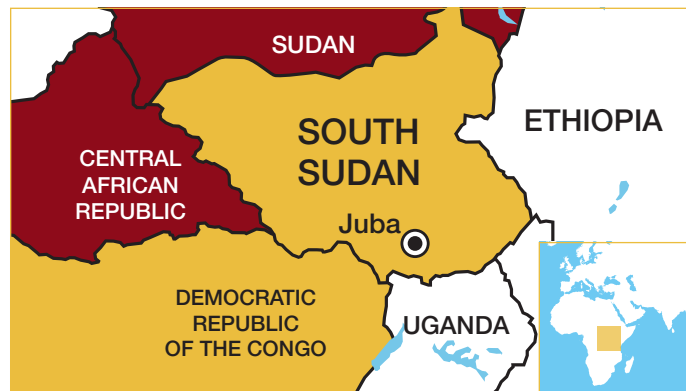
Politicians should refrain from incendiary sectarian speech and work towards national reconciliation, including equal treatment and representation for all communities.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [UNAMI Website](#)
- » [UNSC Press Statement SC/11437](#), 11 June 2014
- » [Statement by the UN Secretary-General](#), 15 June 2014
- » [Statement by the UN Special Advisers for the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect](#), 18 June 2014
- » [UN Casualty Figures for June](#), 1 July 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Iraq](#)

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.



10,000+ people
killed since 15
December

101,333 civilians
sheltering in 10
UN bases

1.5 million
IDPs since 15
December

SOUTH SUDAN

Political divisions within South Sudan have resulted in heavy fighting and mass atrocities committed by both government and rebel forces, plunging the country into civil war. Ethnic mobilization threatens wider inter-communal violence.

BACKGROUND

Civilians in South Sudan continue to be threatened despite three peace agreements signed by President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the former Vice President. While the onset of the rainy season has decreased fighting between government and rebel forces, violent clashes have continued in Unity and Upper Nile states resulting in large-scale civilian displacement.

The ongoing civil war is the result of a conflict that started between Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers from rival political and ethnic groups. Over 10,000 people have been killed and 1.5 million displaced since 15 December, including 101,333 people who have sought refuge in ten designated sites within UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) bases across the country. The fighting began after President Kiir accused Machar, who was removed from office during July 2013, of an attempted coup.

Both sides violated a 23 January Cessation of Hostilities (COH) agreement almost immediately after it was signed. Following direct negotiations, President Kiir and Machar signed a subsequent 9 May peace agreement, which called for "an immediate cessation of hostilities within 24 hours." On 10 June President Kiir and Machar formally agreed to the creation of a transitional government of national unity within 60 days and recommitted to the COH. An effort to restart peace talks

under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) collapsed on 23 June.

The worst fighting continues to be between ethnic Dinka and Nuer 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. In a report released on 8 May UNMISS documented human rights violations, which it argues provide "reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed during the conflict by both Government and opposition forces."

The UNSC adopted Resolution 2132 on 24 December, temporarily enlarging UNMISS by an additional 5,500 troops and 440 police. On 27 May the UNSC authorized UNMISS to use "all necessary means" to protect civilians. Despite the new mandate, UNMISS has yet to reach full force strength.

ANALYSIS

The rapid descent into civil war highlights the fragility of South Sudan's government as well as the SPLA's political and ethnic divisions, which have allegedly resulted in 70 percent of the SPLA either defecting or deserting. Continued fighting despite three peace agreements reveals a lack of commitment to a political solution as well as inadequate command and control structures on both sides of the conflict. The ethnic dimension to the conflict increases the risk to civilians.

The start of the rainy season in May has hindered UNMISS' ability to protect civilians but has also reduced the capacity of both sides to fight as most roads are now flooded.

The government of South Sudan requires international assistance to reestablish security throughout the country and ensure accountability for mass atrocity crimes. With resource deficits and challenges to their mobility, UNMISS is struggling to support the government in upholding its Responsibility to Protect.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The UNSC adopted Resolution 2155 on 27 May. The resolution extended UNMISS' civilian protection mandate until November 2014 and noted that the government of South Sudan bears "the primary responsibility to protect civilians within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including from potential crimes against humanity and war crimes." [For responses prior to May 2014, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in South Sudan](#).]

The international community pledged more than \$600 million to relief efforts in South Sudan following a conference co-

hosted by Norway and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on 20 May. This pledge falls short of the \$1.8 billion OCHA said would be needed to avert a major humanitarian catastrophe.

The IGAD Heads of State and Government adopted a Communiqué welcoming the 10 June agreement. The AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) adopted a similar Communiqué on 12 June and also threatened targeted sanctions in the event of non-compliance with the COH.

The United States imposed sanctions on Peter Gadet, an army commander loyal to Machar, and Major-General Marial Chanuog, the head of President Kiir's presidential guard, on 6 May. The EU imposed sanctions against Gadet and SPLA commander Santino Deng on 10 July.

NECESSARY ACTION

President Kiir and Machar must 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, especially the United States, should establish a Contact Group and ensure both parties implement the 9 May peace agreement.

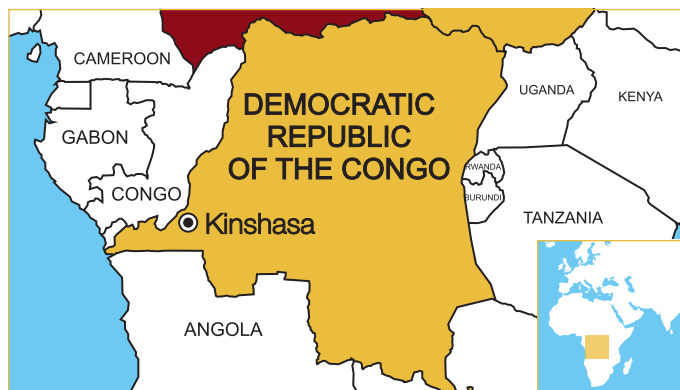
UNMISS must robustly implement its civilian protection mandate. The international community should enhance UNMISS' capabilities through the rapid provision of additional troops.

UNMISS' Human Rights Division and the AU Commission of Inquiry must continue their investigations of extra-judicial killings and possible mass executions. 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.

MORE INFORMATION:

- » [UNMISS Website](#)
- » [UNMISS Report on Human Rights: Crisis in South Sudan](#), 8 May 2014
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2155](#), 27 May 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: South Sudan](#)



2.6 million IDPs

20+ armed groups
still operating in the
eastern DRC

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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

BACKGROUND

Pervasive insecurity in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has allowed armed groups to perpetrate mass atrocity crimes against the civilian population. Armed groups – namely the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and various Mayi-Mayi militias – have been operating in the DRC for more than a decade, but utilized the security vacuum created by the March 23 (M23) rebellion to attack populations with increasing frequency.

Patterns of violence committed by these groups, including killing, abduction and forced recruitment of civilians, were witnessed in North Kivu, South Kivu, Katanga and Oriental Province over the past two years while the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) was redeployed to confront M23. Violent clashes between rebel groups also threaten civilians. The government recorded over 15,000 incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in these four regions during 2013. There are currently more than 2.6 million IDPs in the eastern DRC.

The government has recently launched offensives against armed groups operating in the eastern DRC with assistance from the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), which includes an intervention brigade. In advance of these offensives, the government and MONUSCO encouraged militias to participate in Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programs.

During April leaders of the FDLR announced the group's intention to submit themselves to the DDRRR process, but only an estimated 89 of approximately 1,500 FDLR members surrendered by the 31 May deadline. On 11 and 12 June, amid

ongoing tensions regarding armed groups operating in eastern DRC, FARDC troops and the Rwandan defense forces exchanged fire, resulting in the death of five FARDC soldiers.

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. Only two soldiers have been convicted for these crimes.

ANALYSIS

Despite ongoing military offensives and M23's defeat, the threat posed by other armed groups remains high. Ongoing FARDC and MONUSCO offensives have resulted in further displacement of vulnerable populations.

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 previously lost control of areas to various rebel groups and has historically been incapable of controlling its borders. Refugee flows into northern DRC from conflicts in neighboring 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.

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 to halt atrocities committed by other armed groups, especially the FDLR.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The international community has responded to violence in the eastern DRC by taking diplomatic, political and military measures to confront various armed groups. [For responses prior to January 2014, [see GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation in the DRC.](#)]

On 28 March the UNSC extended the mandate of MONUSCO until 31 March 2015. The renewed mandate emphasized the need for MONUSCO to assist the government with security sector reform and DDRRR, increase accountability for mass atrocity crimes and combat the FDLR. The UNSC currently subjects

10 entities and 31 individuals, including several M23 and FDLR leaders, to the enforcement of travel bans and asset freezes.

On 3 June the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, Mary Robinson, together with the Special Envoys of the United States, EU and AU, initiated a formal review of progress on benchmarks set in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region.

On 9 June the ICC confirmed 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity against Bosco Ntaganda for crimes committed in Ituri during 2003. Prior to his surrender Ntaganda was considered one of the leaders of M23.

On 2 and 3 July the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) held a joint ministerial conference on the situation in the DRC.

NECESSARY ACTION

The DRC government and MONUSCO need to ensure that the protection of civilians remains the primary priority as they address the military threat posed by various armed groups. MONUSCO and FARDC troops must actively respond to warnings of imminent attacks against civilians. MONUSCO should support the DRC government in facilitating local peacebuilding initiatives and encourage civil society to participate in DDRRR initiatives.

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. The government should adopt legislation establishing specialized mixed chambers in the national judicial system to ensure justice for crimes against humanity.

Together with the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, the AU, ICGLR and SADC must continue to ensure that signatories to the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation in the DRC fulfill their commitments.

MORE INFORMATION

- » [MONUSCO Website](#)
- » [UNSC Resolution S/RES/2147](#), 28 March 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: DRC](#)



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

BURMA/MYANMAR

Ethnic and religious minorities in Burma/Myanmar, especially stateless Rohingya and other Muslims, continue to face the threat of mass atrocity crimes.

BACKGROUND

Sporadic ethnic violence in Burma/Myanmar continues to put minority populations, particularly the Rohingya, at risk of mass atrocity crimes. Rohingyas continue to face discriminatory state policies, including the denial of citizenship and a two-child limit for families. Following attacks during January against Rohingyas in Arakan/Rakhine state, the government ordered Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) to cease operations, shutting down the largest provider of healthcare among humanitarian organizations operating there.

Two days of anti-Muslim attacks, during which Muslim-owned shops, homes and a mosque were ransacked, broke out in Mandalay on 1 July. Authorities imposed a curfew, but two people were killed.

On 7 April the former UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, said that the violence is part of “a long history of discrimination and persecution against the Rohingya community which could amount to crimes against humanity.” He warned on 30 May that the government’s failure to address the human rights situation in Arakan/Rakhine state “will ultimately mean the extermination of the Rohingyas.”

From 30 March to 10 April the country undertook its first national census since 1983. Despite assurances from the government that it would allow the self-identification of any ethnicity, just days before the census began it announced it would not recognize “Rohingya.”

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

Sporadic attacks against the broader Muslim community have recurred since June and October 2012, when clashes broke out in Arakan/Rakhine state, killing nearly 200 people. An estimated 138,000 people remain displaced as a result of this violence. Security forces have failed to adequately protect civilians and in some cases have been complicit in attacks on Muslims.

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.

The government’s armed forces (Tatmadaw) have committed violations including extrajudicial killing, torture, 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 affected parts of Kachin and Shan states from access to humanitarian relief.

ANALYSIS

Anti-Rohingya and anti-Muslim violence is evidence of a grave communal fracture that the government is failing to adequately address. The refusal to grant Rohingya access to citizenship or lift discriminatory state policies, as well as its failure to restrict anti-Rohingya hate speech, encourages ongoing violations of their most fundamental human rights. Denying Rohingyas the ability to self-identify on the census constitutes a failure to comply with international human rights standards and reinforces the dangerous perception that Rohingyas are ethnic outsiders.

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 inconsistent. With a pervasive culture of impunity, the military has not been held accountable for previous mass atrocity crimes.

The government of Burma/Myanmar is failing to uphold its primary Responsibility to Protect.

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. Burma/Myanmar holds the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for 2014.

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 March 2014, see [GCR2P's Timeline of International Response to the Situation of the Rohingya and Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma/Myanmar](#).]

On 26 March the UN Human Rights Council unanimously adopted a resolution expressing serious concern about the plight of the Rohingya and requesting an independent investigation into recent violence.

On 25 April the UN Secretary-General convened the first meeting of the Partnership Group on Myanmar, which included Burma/Myanmar's Minister of Immigration and Population Affairs. The Secretary-General and member states called upon the government to take "firm action" to curb incitement of violence and to address the issue of citizenship for Rohingyas.

On 26 June ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights warned that the "precursors to genocide" exist in Burma/Myanmar. The group urged the government to allow all humanitarian organizations to resume full operations and to "carry out its responsibility to protect Rohingyas."

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 institutionalized discrimination against the 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 also 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 all ethnic and religious 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](#), Human Rights Council, 26 March 2014
- » [Myanmar: "Build on achievements and reach for democracy,"](#) Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, 30 May 2014
- » [Statement by ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights](#), 26 June 2014
- » [GCR2P Populations at Risk: Burma/Myanmar](#)



Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies

The CUNY Graduate Center,
365 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5203,
New York, NY 10016, USA.

Phone: (+1) 212.817.2100
www.globalr2p.org
Email: info@globalr2p.org

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Executive Director

Simon Adams

Publications Officer

Jaclyn D. Streitfeld-Hall

Contributors

Evan Cinq-Mars, Ryan X. D'Souza, Casey Karr, Nadira Khudayberdieva, Naomi Kikoler

To subscribe or inquire about the R2P Monitor please contact

jstreitfeld-hall@globalr2p.org
Phone: (+1) 212.817.1944