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The war between the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/SPLA) government and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) that began in Juba in December and spread to the three Greater Upper Nile states (Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity) is in danger of escalation, including more atrocities and famine. As Crisis Group warned in April, conflict has broken out in Greater Bahr el Ghazal, and rising tensions threaten to drag in the relatively peaceful Equatorial states. The Security Council, in emergency session, should instruct the UN mission (UNMISS) to use its good offices to prevent further cessation of hostilities violations and violence against civilians; establish an international contact group and arms embargo; and better delineate roles between UNMISS and humanitarians on the ground. Concurrently, the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) must better link its stuttering peace process with communal dialogues inside South Sudan and reach out to excluded constituencies. The dynamics that need urgent attention include:

Growing tensions between the national government and the leaderships of the three Equatorial states. Fuelled by deliberate rumour-mongering, these have Juba on high alert. The Equatorians and the SPLM/A-IO insist on federalism to break the perceived "Dinka-dominated" central government's wealth and power monopoly. Though local mediation is underway to stem escalation, worrying aspects include reported clashes (denied by both parties) between the Central Equatoria governor's (ethnic) Mundari bodyguards and the Presidential Guard; the governor's statements that Equatorians in the security forces have been disarmed; news of mobilisation of armed civilians within and around Juba; reported weapons shipments into the Equatorial states; a minor clash related to mobilisation of Equatorians in Maridi; and a government curfew in Juba.

Outbreak of conflict in Greater Bahr el Ghazal. SPLA defectors from Wau in Western Bahr el Ghazal, now operating as separate armed units, have prompted abuses by loyal SPLA on local non-Dinka believed to support these units. The latest high-profile defector, 6th Division commander General Dau Aturjong (Dinka), is recruiting in and around Northern Bahr el Ghazal to broaden the armed opposition and open new war fronts.

Challenges to governing coalition unity. Frustration with Juba's failure to win the war has led Uganda to reassess its relationship with the Kiir government. In light of this and other challenges, there are private conversations about the transfer of power within the leadership, particularly among the president's home Bahr el Ghazal communities.

Instability in Lakes state. Many communities want to sit out the war; some have a deal with neighbouring southern Unity state Nuer. Many youth in Lakes have taken to the bush to avoid forced recruitment; some threaten to fight the unpopular governor.

Senior SPLA-IO defiance of the 9 May cessation of hostilities. Powerful field commanders, particularly General Peter Gadet Yak in Unity, refuse to respect the Addis agreement. IGAD mediators have little engagement with them or the allied Nuer youth "White Army". Disaffected commanders point to the government/Ugandan offensive in Ayod and President Kiir's statement that he will not step down in a transitional government as justification for the rainy season offensive.

Three cessation of hostilities agreements have failed to halt the war, and time is of the essence to expand the current process to address existing and future challenges. The government is borrowing heavily against oil futures to fund the war, its troops are often unpaid, and thousands have deserted. Any transitional government will inherit a bankrupt state. It remains unclear who is funding and arming the opposition and how this outside support may be undermining mediation efforts.

Pursuant to UNMISS' mandate approved in May, a regional force is deploying under its command, focused on protecting civilians, cessation of hostilities monitors in key towns and oil-installation workers, but it will be overwhelmed if war continues to expand. UNMISS, which is still not acting under its protection of civilians mandate to address this, should work with the IGAD monitors to prevent further escalation of violence but step back from efforts to be a substitute for humanitarians and to negotiate their access. Both government and SPLA-IO have asked to discuss these issues with unarmed, non-political humanitarians rather than UNMISS, whose attempt to represent humanitarians has already backfired and has limited access for humanitarians in some famine-prone areas. UNMISS should assist humanitarians only on request and refocus its efforts toward its core mandated tasks, such as protection of civilians.

Peace talks have stalled; the 10 August deadline for a transitional government to be in place is increasingly unrealistic. IGAD must expand its efforts for an inclusive process in Addis by including community leaders and armed groups and launch multiple dialogues in South Sudan. The cessation of hostilities Monitoring and Verification (MVM) Teams, protected by UNMISS, should investigate the reports of violations in Greater Bahr el Ghazal and Equatorias.

Many recommendations Crisis Group made in its December 2013 Open Letter to the UN Secretary-General and its April report, *A Civil War by Any Other Name*, remain relevant to averting further escalation. In the face of faltering peace talks, more aggressive South Sudanese demands for political reform and fractures within the ruling coalition, the UN Security Council should hold an emergency session to do the following:

instruct UNMISS to take decisive action, coordinated with IGAD, under its protection of civilians mandate to prevent further cessation of hostilities violations and violence against civilians, including by using of its good offices;

institute an arms embargo for South Sudan to prevent further escalation and identify the government's and opposition's sources of weapons;

task regional troops to provide force protection so the MVM teams can launch investigations in the Equatorias and Greater Bahr el Ghazal;

clarify that to prevent counter-productive conflation of UNMISS and humanitarians, UNMISS is not to represent humanitarians and is only to assist them on request and;

establish a Contact Group that includes IGAD, the AU, UN, Troika (U.S., UK, Norway), EU, China and South Africa to facilitate coordination and discussion on the way forward.

To stop further intensification of the war, IGAD should take the following steps:

task the MVM teams with investigating reports of cessation of hostilities violations in the Equatorias and Greater Bahr el Ghazal;

increase its political presence on the ground in South Sudan;

open four separate negotiation tracks, both in Addis and South Sudan, sequenced and pursued so as to contribute to the broader national political dialogue and focused on: 1) the SPLM (supported by South Africa's ANC party and Ethiopia's EPRDF party); 2) a re-activated Political Parties Forum; 3) armed groups; and 4) communal conflict;

address the questions surrounding inclusivity in the peace process by ensuring selection of representatives is transparent, their numbers are increased, and there are clear mechanisms for civil society or community leaders not part of the official process to contribute to the dialogue in Addis and South Sudan; and

start dialogue with all armed groups and militarised communities; failure to do so is inadvertently making spoilers of those who could be constructively engaged. Much of the dialogue and work with community representatives, armed groups and militarised communities should take place in South Sudan, not in Addis.

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