**Forum:** General Assembly 4

**Issue:** Strengthening Peacekeeping and Stabilization Efforts in Disaster-Affected Regions, with a Focus on South Sudan.

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**Introduction**

Strengthening peacekeeping and stabilization efforts in disaster-affected regions, particularly in South Sudan, is one of the pressing challenges before the international community. It has been facing continuous conflict and political instability, along with humanitarian crises, even after gaining independence in 2011, which has been further exacerbated due to natural disasters like floods4. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has been engaged since its inception in supporting the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement by providing good offices, political support, and assistance in areas such as governance, recovery, and development2.

Despite these efforts, the situation in South Sudan has remained fragile, with millions of people displaced and in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Peacekeeping and stabilization indeed need to be strengthened through such multi-faceted approaches like enhancing the capacity of peacekeeping missions, improving coordination among various actors, and addressing the root causes of conflict. Examples include the PSOPs of the Government of Canada, which was conceived to provide timely assistance for fragile and conflict-affected states through conflict prevention, stabilization, and peacebuilding initiatives3. Such a program, combined with innovative approaches in peacekeeping deployment and infrastructure development, is necessary in the realization of effective stabilization efforts in disaster-prone countries like South Sudan.

**Definition of Key Terms**

**Humanitarian Assistance**

Humanitarian assistance is the aid provided to individuals in crisis situations to save lives and alleviate suffering, including essential services such as food, water, shelter, and medical care.

**Peacekeeping**The deployment of national or multinational forces to help control and resolve actual or potential armed conflicts, typically with the consent of the parties involved and in support of ceasefire or peace agreements

**Peacebuilding**An activity aimed at resolving injustice nonviolently and transforming cultural and structural conditions that generate deadly or destructive conflict, focusing on developing constructive relationships across various boundaries

**Peace Operation**An institution deployed bilaterally or multilaterally to a country or region, usually with the host country's consent, to carry out measures to defuse crisis, end violent conflicts, and secure long-term peace

**Peacekeeping Force**A group of soldiers sent to a country experiencing war or fighting to prevent further violence, often composed of troops from multiple countries

**Peace Enforcement**A more robust form of peacekeeping that may involve the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has determined a threat to or breach of peace

**Strategic Peacebuilding**A long-term approach to peacebuilding that works at all levels of society to establish and sustain relationships, connecting grassroots efforts with policymakers and addressing issues beyond just violence

**Multidimensional Peacekeeping**Modern peacekeeping operations that go beyond maintaining peace and security to include facilitating political processes, protecting civilians, assisting in disarmament and reintegration, supporting elections, and promoting human rights and the rule of law

**Background Information**

**Historical context of peacekeeping in South Sudan**

 The history of peacekeeping efforts in South Sudan is deeply rooted in a complex narrative of prolonged conflict and international intervention. After decades of civil war within Sudan, the newest nation in the world, South Sudan, was born on July 9, 2011, following a referendum in which an overwhelming number supported independence. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan was thus immediately established to assist the nascent state in consolidating peace and encouraging the longer-term processes of state building and economic development. In the run-up to independence, the region had endured two protracted civil wars pitting the predominantly Muslim north against the Christian and animist south and resulting in more than two million deaths alongside massive displacement.

The CPA in 2005 marked a turning point that not only ended the Second Sudanese Civil War but also paved the way for possible separation. The international peacekeeping that went on at this time played a huge role in holding the fragile negotiations together and ushered the transition process forward. The United Nations, among other international organizations, has played critical roles in monitoring ceasefire agreements, facilitating dialogue between parties, and delivering humanitarian assistance. These early interventions provided the foundation for understanding the complex political, ethnic, and resource-based tensions that would further complicate peacekeeping efforts in the region.

**Current challenges facing stabilization efforts**South Sudan continues to face monumental challenges that severely impede peacekeeping and stabilization efforts. The country has been engulfed in a devastating civil war since December 2013, when political tensions between President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar escalated into widespread violence. This conflict has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths, massive population displacement, and a profound humanitarian crisis. The ethnic tensions between, among others, the Dinka and Nuer communities, have been a source of major continuous conflict, thus undermining national unity and making reconciliation processes so complicated.

Environmental challenges, such as recurring floods and prolonged droughts, have worsened the humanitarian crisis. These have destroyed agricultural infrastructure, disrupted food production, and added more layers of complexity to peacekeeping missions. The COVID-19 pandemic further strained the already limited resources, exposing the fragility of the country's healthcare and governance systems. Economic instability, characterized by hyperinflation, limited infrastructure, and dependence on oil revenues, has created additional challenges for sustainable peace and development.

**Role of international organizations in South Sudan**

Some international bodies have been very instrumental in providing the numerous challenges facing South Sudan on many fronts. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan has remained the main peacekeeping mission with an expansive mandate beyond the traditional military peacekeeping to protection of civilians, monitoring human rights, and support for the implementation of peace agreements. It has deployed roughly 17,000 military personnel, police, and civilian staff to address the highly complicated humanitarian and political landscape.

Regional bodies like the IGAD have played a critical role in the mediation of peace talks and facilitation of diplomatic negotiations between conflicting parties. Equally, the African Union has been actively involved in providing diplomatic support and troops for peacekeeping to stabilize the region. There are a number of international NGOs in South Sudan that provide essential humanitarian aid, support for development, and address critical needs in healthcare, education, and infrastructure reconstruction.

These are further supported by bilateral efforts from donor countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Norway in terms of financial contributions, technical assistance, and diplomatic involvement. The nature of peacekeeping in South Sudan is very complex and requires holistic, multidimensional engagement that secures not only immediate, short-term security concerns but long-term structural issues related to good governance, economic development, and social reconciliation.

**Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

**United States of America (USA)**

The United States plays a key role in humanitarian response in South Sudan, drawing from its commitment to attend to the dire needs of crisis-affected populations in the country. In July 2024, the country announced more than $57 million in additional humanitarian assistance to people affected by years of brutal conflict and displacements. This funding would be availed through numerous programs implemented by the United States. The Agency for International Development (USAID) also provided $3 million for agricultural resilience activities to improve food security among vulnerable populations.

Beyond financial support, the U.S. is also actively engaged in diplomatic involvement to bring about peace and stability in South Sudan. The U.S. has played a key role in supporting the peace negotiations process while imposing targeted sanctions on those individuals who block progress toward peace. Through USAID, the U.S. implements numerous programs aimed at enhancing governance, supporting civil society, and fostering economic growth. The U.S. also undertakes initiatives in the realm of public health by funding programs that address the challenges of diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS. Further capacity-building in the security sector will remain important for reforming the military and police to protect civilians and keep the peace.

**United Nations (UN)**

The United Nations plays a pivotal role in peacekeeping and stabilization efforts in South Sudan through the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. The UNMISS was established in 2011, shortly after the country gained independence, to support the new nation in consolidating peace and fostering development. The mandate of the mission goes beyond traditional military peacekeeping into civilian protection, monitoring of human rights, and facilitation of humanitarian assistance. With approximately 17,000 military personnel, police, and civilian staff deployed, UNMISS addresses the complex humanitarian and political landscape that characterizes South Sudan.

Operating under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, UNMISS is authorized to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and ensure access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The mission has established Protection of Civilian, or PoC, sites that have provided refuge to hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons. Besides, UNMISS has played a significant role in the facilitation of political dialogue between parties in conflict and in supporting the implementation of various peace agreements, including the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS). Through the promotion of governance reforms and economic development initiatives, the UN seeks to address the root causes of conflict and promote long-term stability in South Sudan.

**European Union (EU)**

The European Union is a major humanitarian player in South Sudan, being the largest donor and supporter in efforts committed to alleviating suffering for the attainment of stability. In 2024, the EU allocated €108.6 million for humanitarian actions in response to displacements, violence, and the protracted crisis caused by conflicts in the region. This funding shall support some very critical life-saving priorities that include emergency food assistance, nutrition, cash transfers, and education in emergencies. The commitment by the EU to tackle immediate humanitarian needs is cemented through the support it has given to lifesaving activities in hard-to-reach areas.

Beyond immediate assistance, the EU is involved in long-term development strategies aimed at achieving stability and resilience in South Sudan. The EU, through its EDF, funds projects on rural development, education, health, and infrastructure upgrading. The EU also plays an important role in supporting peace processes by cooperating with regional organizations like IGAD and the African Union. Further to these operations, it has sent in civilian missions like the one launched under EUAVSEC for Aviation Security at Juba International Airport. This multi-petaled approach shows and enhances the commitment of the EU towards promoting stability to provide an improved living situation in South Sudan.

**Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)**

 The Intergovernmental Authority on Development has been instrumental in the mediation of peace talks and facilitation of diplomatic negotiations between conflicting parties in South Sudan. As a regional organization comprising eight East African countries, IGAD has taken a leading role in supporting peace processes since South Sudan's independence. It has been instrumental in periods of high conflict, especially since the outbreak of civil war in December 2013. The mediation efforts by IGAD resulted in key agreements such as the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, ARCSS, signed in 2015, and its revitalized version, R-ARCSS, signed in 2018.

In addition to brokering peace agreements, IGAD monitors their implementation through mechanisms such as the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM). These efforts are fundamental to ensuring compliance with ceasefire terms and fostering dialogue among the conflicting parties. IGAD collaborates with other regional and international partners, including the African Union and United Nations, for effective coordination in peacekeeping missions. Moreover, IGAD addresses broader regional issues affecting South Sudan by tackling cross-border conflicts and refugee movements while promoting stability through economic cooperation among member states. This comprehensive approach underlines IGAD's commitment to lasting peace and security within South Sudan and its neighboring regions.

**Timeline of Events**

| **Date** | **Description of Event** |
| --- | --- |
| 9 July 2011 | South Sudan gained independence and became the 193rd member of the United Nations and 54th member of the African Union. |
| December 2013 | Civil war breaks out in South Sudan between government forces and opposition factions. |
| August 2018 | Salva Kiir and Riek Machar sign a final cease-fire and power-sharing agreement to end the civil war. |
| February 22, 2020 | Kiir and Machar form a unity government after delays in implementing the peace agreement. |
| May 2024 | UN Security Council renews sanctions on South Sudan until May 31, 2024, including targeted sanctions and an arms embargo. |

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

* Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 9 December 1948 **(A/RES/260)**
* International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966 **(A/RES/2200A)**
* Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 18 December 1979 **(A/RES/34/180)**
* Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 10 December 1984 **(A/RES/39/46)**
* Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989 **(A/RES/44/25)**

**Previous Attempts to solve the Issue**

**Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS)**

Against the background of these deficits, a series of negotiations culminated in the signing, in September 2018, of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, R-ARCSS. The agreement expanded the ARCSS and further developed its power-sharing arrangements and security provisions. These included the August 5, 2018 power-sharing understanding that brought Riek Machar back into the cabinet as First Vice-President under President Salva Kiir. Other important features of the R-ARCSS were the creation of an Independent Boundaries Commission for territorial disputes and expanded representation of women and various rebel components within the transitional government. Although the R-ARCSS went a long way in addressing some of the root causes of the conflict, its implementation has faced challenges, and lasting peace remains elusive in South Sudan.

**Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS)**

It followed the outbreak of civil war in December 2013, when IGAD in January 2014 initiated a peace process, which in August 2015 culminated in the signing of what is called the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, ARCSS. This was an accord aimed at putting an end to the conflict that pitted the government of President Salva Kiir against the opposition forces led by Riek Machar. The agreement provided for a ceasefire, arrangements for power sharing, and the establishment of a transitional government. However, there were still considerable implementation challenges, with sustained acts and incidents of violence, along with political differences over the ARCSS. It would eventually fail to bring lasting peace to South Sudan, leading to further negotiations and subsequent agreements.

**Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)**

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, also known as the Naivasha Agreement, was signed between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the Government of Sudan on January 9, 2005. This agreement marked the end of two decades of civil conflict in Sudan and was facilitated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, supported by the United States, United Kingdom, and Norway. The CPA was to establish democratic governance throughout the country, share oil revenues, and set a timeline for a referendum for the independence of Southern Sudan. While the CPA succeeded in its goal of making South Sudan an independent country in 2011, it did not resolve the underlying issues that would later contribute to renewed conflict within the newly independent nation.

**Possible Solutions**

**Transitional Justice and Reconciliation**

A fully fleshed-out transitional justice mechanism might contribute to the dealing with past human rights abuses and help in national healing. This may include truth and reconciliation commissions, special courts to try war crimes, and reparations programs for victims. This would involve traditional leaders and community-based reconciliation practices in addition to formal justice mechanisms in bridging gaps between communities. International support and expertise would be important in ensuring the credibility and effectiveness of these processes. It should help break the chain of violence and impunity that has persisted since South Sudan attained its independence.

**Decentralization and Power-Sharing**

A more devolved system of governance might help resolve the root causes of conflict in South Sudan. The development would include devolving power and resources at the state and subnational levels, hence ensuring that various ethnic groups are equitably represented within the government institutions. Such a federal system with well-defined divisions of powers between national and subnational governments may ease tensions by making the government more representative and accountable to the people. Additionally, establishing mechanisms for resource-sharing, particularly oil revenues, could mitigate economic grievances that have fueled conflict.

**Comprehensive Security Sector Reform (SSR)**

 In any case, an effective SSR process should lead to more professional security and law enforcement machinery for South Sudan, which means disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants; training; and capacity building for the security forces. Reforms are meant to lead to one unified ethnically diverse, accountable security sector with full respect for human rights and rule of law. International partners could provide technical assistance and oversight to ensure the effectiveness and transparency of the SSR process. This approach would reduce inter-communal violence and build trust between the population and security forces.

**Guiding Questions**

1. How is your delegation affected by the ongoing conflict and instability in South Sudan?
2. What role has your country played in previous peacekeeping or humanitarian efforts in South Sudan, and how might this influence your current position?
3. How does the situation in South Sudan impact regional stability, and what are the potential consequences for neighboring countries?
4. What specific measures does your delegation propose to address the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, particularly regarding internally displaced persons and refugees?
5. How can the international community better support the implementation of existing peace agreements in South Sudan?
6. What strategies does your delegation suggest for promoting sustainable economic development in South Sudan, given the country's reliance on oil revenues?
7. How can the UN and other international organizations more effectively address issues of corruption and mismanagement of resources in South Sudan?

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**Appendix or Appendices**

* *Appendix I: United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)* [*https://unmiss.unmissions.org/*](https://unmiss.unmissions.org/)

*This official website provides comprehensive information on UNMISS mandate, activities, and updates. It is useful for understanding the UN's role in peacekeeping and stabilization efforts in South Sudan.*

* *Appendix II: Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS)* [*https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2112*](https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2112)

*This document contains the full text of the R-ARCSS signed in 2018. It is essential for analyzing the current peace process and power-sharing arrangements in South Sudan.*

* *Appendix III: UNHCR South Sudan Emergency* [*https://www.unhcr.org/south-sudan-emergency.html*](https://www.unhcr.org/south-sudan-emergency.html)

*The UNHCR website provides up-to-date information on the refugee situation in South Sudan. It is valuable for understanding the humanitarian aspects of the conflict and displacement issues.*

* *Appendix IV: International Crisis Group - South Sudan* [*https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan*](https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan)

*This page offers in-depth analysis and reports on the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. It is useful for gaining insights into the complex dynamics of the crisis and potential solutions.*

* *Appendix V: African Union Peace and Security Council* [*https://www.peaceau.org/en/page/38-peace-and-security-council*](https://www.peaceau.org/en/page/38-peace-and-security-council)

*This website provides information on the African Union's role in promoting peace and security in Africa, including its efforts in South Sudan. It is valuable for understanding regional initiatives and interventions.*