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## **South Sudan: You Can Lead a Horse to Water, but You Cannot Make It Drink**

Erwin James Wunderlich

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the United States Naval War College Newport, RI in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Security and Transnational Threats in Africa Course.

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## **Abstract**

### *South Sudan: You Can Lead a Horse to Water, but You Cannot Make It Drink*

With the splintering of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO), the South Sudanese civil war is becoming worse, not better. The paper examines the socio-economic root causes of the civil war in South Sudan and identifies two: strong familial ties and a proclivity for violence as the best means for security. The central argument of this paper is that President Kiir's government needs to change its counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy from being enemy-centric to population-centric. In support of this strategy shift, this paper proposes that the US government influence the government of South Sudan (GoSS) using a whole of government (D-I-M-E model) approach.

## INTRODUCTION

South Sudan is the world's newest state but also its most failed state.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, the government's opposition forces, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) splintered into multiple factions.<sup>2</sup> In January 2018, General Paul Malong, who had previously served as South Sudan's army chief of staff, escaped into Sudan after a quarrel with President Kiir. Reportedly, Malong along with several of his loyalists have joined the SPLM-IO resistance.<sup>3</sup> Compounding the problem is the expectation that in 2018 South Sudan will have almost 7 million people (over half the population) will need humanitarian aid to include 1.9 million internally displaced personnel, approximately 85% of whom are women and children.<sup>4</sup> South Sudan is a complete mess. Nonetheless, the splintering of the SPLM-IO represents a critical tipping point—the fragmentation of an insurgency can be either a blessing or a curse for the counterinsurgent. Unfortunately, for the Kiir administration, it is a curse. The US government should use a whole of government (D-I-M-E model) approach that will encourage Kiir to adopt a counterinsurgency strategy that is population-centric and that addresses the root causes of the conflict.

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<sup>1</sup> The Fund for Peace, *2017 Fragile States Index*, Fragile States Index, accessed 10 January 2018, [fundforpeace.org/fsi/](http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/).

<sup>2</sup> Meressa K. Dessu, "Can South Sudan's Peace Agreement Be Revitalized?" *Institute for Security Studies*, 8 December 2017, accessed 3 February 2018, [https://issafrica.org/iss-today/can-south-sudans-peace-agreement-be-revitalised?utm\\_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm\\_campaign=ISS\\_Today&utm\\_medium=email](https://issafrica.org/iss-today/can-south-sudans-peace-agreement-be-revitalised?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=ISS_Today&utm_medium=email); David Lewis, "Splintering of South Sudan War Makes Peace More Elusive: United Nations," *Reuters*, 20 June 2017, accessed 3 February 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southsudan-unrest/splintering-of-south-sudan-war-makes-peace-more-elusive-united-nations-idUSKBN19B0AB>.

<sup>3</sup> "South Sudan Declares Former Army Chief a Rebel, Accuses Him of Attacks," *Reuters*, 8 January 2018, accessed 3 February 2018, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2018-01-08-south-sudan-declares-former-army-chief---a-rebel-accuses-him-of-attacks/>.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *2018 Humanitarian Response Plan*, (December 2017), 3-4, accessed 3 February 2018, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS\\_2018\\_HumanitarianResponsePlan.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_2018_HumanitarianResponsePlan.pdf).

## MAIN BODY

### Author's Perspective

This paper will approach South Sudan's civil war from a military perspective as based on two COIN doctrine principles derived from Iraq and Afghanistan lessons learned. The first is disaggregation, the technical term for splintering an insurgency. According to joint doctrine, disaggregation is a viable COIN strategy, where "disaggregation is used to divide and conquer the groups fomenting insurgency, including any element of transnational terrorists, and cutting any external support." Almost as if the authors had South Sudan in mind when they wrote it, the authors also caution that "the cost of disaggregation is that it makes a negotiated settlement more difficult since there is no one leader or small group of leaders who exercise control over the various components of the insurgency network." For the GoSS, the disaggregation of the SPLM-IO has impeded the government's ability to reach a negotiated settlement. The second principle from doctrine is the mandate for the counterinsurgent to "understand the root causes [of an insurgency] and be prepared to support the comprehensive approach to address them." Often, these root causes become drivers of the resistance movement, providing insurgents with legitimacy and support from the local population.<sup>5</sup> As the US military experienced first-hand in Iraq and Afghanistan, governments conducting counterinsurgency campaigns often fail to understand the root causes of an insurgency, assuming that a combined political and military solution will simply alleviate the problem. To be successful, government officials first need to understand an insurgency's root causes, which are typically socio-cultural in origin.

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<sup>5</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-24 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 23 November 2013), III-24, 25.

## The Civil War's Root Causes

Several scholars have attempted to analyze South Sudan's civil war, but their analysis falls short because they focus on the political solution without understanding the socio-economic roots behind the conflict. For example, international politics professor Steven Roach recommended that the US government prod the GoSS toward a political solution of increased "democratic accountability."<sup>6</sup> Closer to the mark, but still off, Paul Williams argues that the source of the conflict is due to infighting amongst the political elites; therefore, he proposes a power-sharing agreement between the key political actors. He cites as evidence the fact that ethnicity is not a concern because ethnic groups fight on both sides of the conflict.<sup>7</sup> Even though Williams' proposed political solution is the same one that this paper will recommend, a solution that narrowly emphasizes the political element and does not attempt to counter the insurgents' narrative will prove unsuccessful in the long term. The US government made a similar mistake in Iraq during 2003 by installing a democratic government without first addressing the underlying socio-economic grievances.

In contrast, however, two other scholars analyzed South Sudan's civil war, and each has identified an underlying root cause of the conflict. The first is Alex de Waal, a professor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. De Waal argues that South Sudan has a culture of endemic corruption where older relatives co-opt young men to join the SPLM-IO. Thus, de Waal identifies strong familial bonds as a socio-cultural factor that has given rise to the conflict. Based on this analysis, he concludes that South Sudan's government would be most stable under a "level two" patronage system where the national leader (Kiir) uses the state's financial resources to "deliver political pressure to constrain the

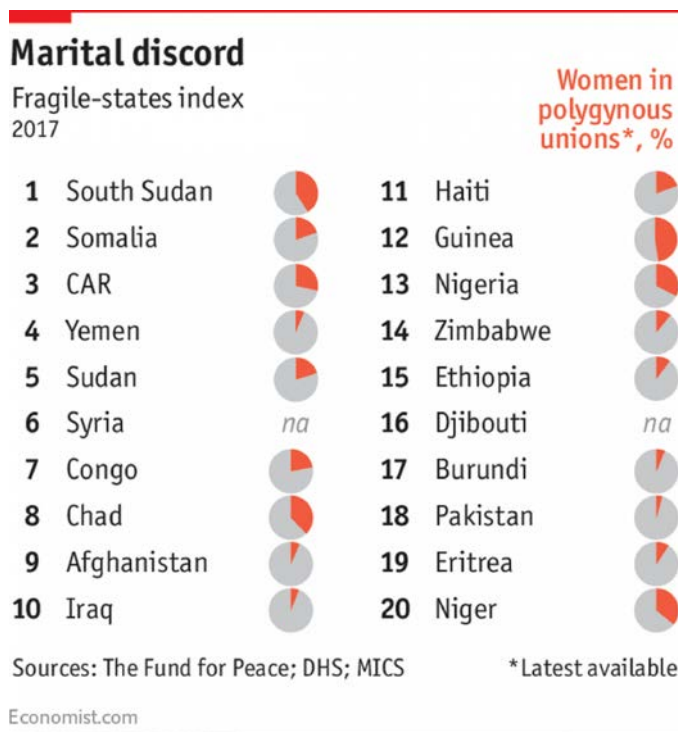
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<sup>6</sup> Steven C. Roach, "South Sudan: A Volatile Dynamic of Accountability and Peace," *International Affairs* 92, no. 6 (November 2016): 1343-1359, accessed 4 February 2018, EBSCO.

<sup>7</sup> Paul D. Williams, *War and Conflict in Africa, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016), 157-159.

national-level actors.”<sup>8</sup> Kiir had a level two patronage system in place up until he shut down the oil pipelines in 2012, and he lost the tax revenue to ensure his patrons’ loyalty. As a result, the political system broke down leading to civil war.

A recent article analysis on polygamy in South Sudan dovetails well with de Waal’s analysis that suggests familial bonds are a significant socio-cultural factor in the South Sudan Civil War. The authors of the article—Lahore and Wau Cairo—correlate polygamy with the failed state index rankings and found a potential relationship between the two, as the following table illustrates:



The authors postulate that the reason why South Sudan may be at the top of the fragile state index is because 40% of the state's marriages are polygamous. Because the ratio of females to males is relatively fixed and because the dowry price for marriage ranges from 30 and 300

<sup>8</sup> Alex de Waal, “South Sudan 2017: A Political Marketplace Analysis,” *World Peace Foundation*, 5 February 2017, accessed 4 February 2018, [http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~media/Fletcher/Microsites/World%20Peace%20Foundation/Publications/Political-Market%20Analysis\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~media/Fletcher/Microsites/World%20Peace%20Foundation/Publications/Political-Market%20Analysis_South_Sudan.pdf), 8.

cows, having multiple wives is a status symbol. According to the article, General Paul Malong, the former army chief of staff who escaped into Sudan in January, has over 100 wives. Because of this trend, South Sudan has a significant number of young, repressed men who make for willing recruits to join militia forces which promise them a woman to marry in exchange. The authors interview one lady from South Sudan who, when she was 19 years old, fled her home because she was promised to a 65-year-old friend of her father's. She felt guilty years later though and lamented the decision because, as she noted, "in my culture, your parents are your earthly gods."<sup>9</sup> What the de Waal article and the Lahore article have in common is the recognition that South Sudan's strong familial ties may be at the root of the conflict in South Sudan. Therefore, a counterinsurgency strategy must account for this cultural norm, which de Waal's proposed patronage system takes into account.

Another scholar, John Ashworth, a consultant for Catholic Relief Services and advisor to the Sudan Catholic Bishop's Conference, has identified a second socio-cultural root cause of the conflict. He suggests that after sixty years of conflict, violence has become a cultural norm. As he notes, "the lesson has been well learned that in South Sudan, if you want a share of power you must take up arms." Ashworth proposes that the GoSS partner with the church to promote a policy of non-violence in the population.<sup>10</sup> Although Ashworth's suggestion is admirable, changing a country's culture is a monumental task. Nonetheless, as was seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, often, NGOs have the best insight into what is actually taking place in a host nation's population. If after sixty years violence has

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<sup>9</sup> Lahore and Wau Cairo, "The Perils of Polygamy: The Link between Polygamy and War," *The Economist*, 19 December 2017, accessed 4 February 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/christmas-specials/21732695-plural-marriage-bred-inequality-begets-violence-link-between-polygamy-and-war>.

<sup>10</sup> John Ashworth, "The Church and Peace in South Sudan," *Sudan Studies for South Sudan and Sudan*, no. 56 (October 2017), accessed at [http://www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SS\\_56\\_Ashworth.pdf](http://www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SS_56_Ashworth.pdf), 11,21.



become a societal norm, then it is likely to continue for at least for another generation (approximately twenty-five years). Insurgencies are typically protracted, drawn-out wars and the South Sudan Civil War is no exception. Furthermore, Ashworth's analysis suggests that recent efforts to restrict arms sales in South Sudan might have some effect.

### Assessment of South Sudan's Counterinsurgency Campaign

Both de Waal's and Ashworth's analysis helps to explain why the SPLM-IO is splintering. Based on the factor identified by de Waal of familial ties, the rebels are dividing into different factions because of loyalties to their families and clans. Primarily motivated by power competition between families, the SPLM-IO factions resemble the dynastic politics of neighboring Kenya. Additionally, Ashworth's factor of societal violence explains why the South Sudanese are taking up of arms. They see violence as a means not to overthrow the government but to provide for their security. Like the Wild, Wild West, the ability to impose force and the will to use of it are the "best" tool to preserve power in South Sudan; thus, internal groups within the SPLM-IO have resorted to violence as they jockey for position.

Therefore, the splintering of the SPLM-IO is the result of underlying socio-cultural factors and not because of any actions taken by the GoSS; rather, the government's COIN strategy is counterproductive because the strategy is flawed. On 21 December 2017, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)-sponsored high-level revitalization forum reached a cease-fire agreement intended to end South Sudan's civil war.<sup>11</sup> But several days earlier, on 17 December, South Sudanese troops overtook the SPLM-IO headquarters at

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<sup>11</sup> "South Sudan to Implement Cease-Fire Saturday," *Voice of America*, 21 December 2017, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/south-sudan-implement-cess-fire-saturday/4173979.html>.

Lasu, located on South Sudan's southwest border in the Central Equatoria.<sup>12</sup> In the wake of the attack, hundreds of South Sudanese refugees fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>13</sup> As one might expect, the attack on the SPLM-IO's headquarters spurred counter-attacks elsewhere in Central Equatoria, first on 25 December at the town of Kasuk and then just outside the capital of Juba on 4 January 2018.<sup>14</sup> One can almost sympathize with Kiir. He made a last-minute power grab to weaken the SPLM-IO, which gave him the upper hand at the peace table. But he grossly miscalculated the second-order effects. As a result of the attack at Lasu, Kiir inadvertently nullified the peace agreement.

Consequently, the international community is pulling out all the sticks it can to force all parties to cooperate. On 2 February 2018, our US ambassador to the UN, Niki Haley, declared that the United States would impose an arms embargo on South Sudan and that Kiir was an "unfit partner."<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, the African Union Chief, Moussa Faki Mahamat, voiced his support for Haley's embargo and added that "the time has come to sanction those who are blocking peace."<sup>16</sup> Wasting no time, the European Union did just that on 2 February

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<sup>12</sup> Jason Patinkin and Jina Moore, "South Sudan Army Makes Push Against Rebels as Peace Talks Begin," *The New York Times*, 19 December 2017, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/19/world/africa/south-sudan-army-rebels-peace-talks.html>.

<sup>13</sup> "Fighting Pushes More South Sudanese into Congo," *Voice of America*, 20 December 2017, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/fighting-pushes-more-south-sudanese-congo/4171860.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Okech Francis, "South Sudan Fighting Leaves at Least 20 Dead after Cease-Fire," *Bloomberg*, 27 December 2017, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-27/south-sudan-fighting-leaves-at-least-20-dead-after-cess-fire>; Sam Mednick, "New Fighting near South Sudan Capital, Violating Cease-Fire," *Associated Press*, 5 January 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/fighting-near-south-sudan-capital-violating-cess-fire-153632038.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Gardiner Harris, "U.S. Imposes Arms Ban on South Sudan as Civil War Grinds On," *New York Times*, 2 February 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/02/world/africa/us-arms-ban-on-south-sudan-.html>; Edith M. Lederer, "US after Supporting South Sudan's Leader Calls Him 'Unfit,'" *Associated Press*, 24 January 2018, accessed 7 February 2018, <https://ph.news.yahoo.com/us-supporting-south-sudans-leader-calls-him-unfit-234656600.html>.

<sup>16</sup> "AU Chief Says Time Ripe for South Sudan Sanctions," *Agence France Presse*, 28 January 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/AU-chief-urges-South-Sudan-sanctions/2558-4282422-q9keys/index.html>.

2018, imposing sanctions on two GoSS officials as well as General Paul Malong, the former army chief of staff, now living in Sudan on the side of the SPLM-IO.<sup>17</sup> In response, Kiir recalled South Sudan's ambassador to the United States.<sup>18</sup> Considering how the US government has invested a total of \$11 billion in South Sudan since 2011, this diplomatic spat has placed Kiir in a precarious position. As Ashworth notes, South Sudan's economy is broken, and the only sector of the economy that keeps South Sudan afloat is its aid industry.<sup>19</sup> Kiir is not a position to be uncooperative, and his intransigence reveals that what Haley said of his administration is also true of him—that he is unfit for office.

But despite Kiir's faults, the GoSS can turn things around if it adopts a population-centric vice enemy-centric counterinsurgency strategy. To date, Kiir's administration has focused on the elimination and marginalization of the SPLM-IO. Despite the suggestion at the December peace negotiations that his government incorporate the SPLM-IO into a two-army system, Kiir refused.<sup>20</sup> Evident from his army's attack at Lasu, Kiir's focus is on the SPLM-IO, not the people of South Sudan. The US military learned this lesson the hard way

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<sup>17</sup> John Tanza, "EU Sanctions 2 Current, 1 Former South Sudan Officials," *Voice of America*, 2 February 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, [https://www.voanews.com/a/eu-sanctions-two-current-one-former-south-sudan-officials/4236850.html?utm\\_source=Media+Review+for+February+5%2C+2018&utm\\_campaign=Media+Review+for+February+3%2C+2018&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.voanews.com/a/eu-sanctions-two-current-one-former-south-sudan-officials/4236850.html?utm_source=Media+Review+for+February+5%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+February+3%2C+2018&utm_medium=email).

<sup>18</sup> Mu Xuequan, "South Sudan Regrets 'Outrageous' U.S. Statement on President Kiir," *Xinhua.net*, 25 January 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/25/c\\_136924981.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/25/c_136924981.htm); Joseph Oduha, "South Sudan Recalls Envoy from US," *Agence France Presse*, 5 February 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, [https://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/South-Sudan-recalls-envoy-from-US-/1066-4291696-8ablgd/index.html?utm\\_source=Media+Review+for+February+5%2C+2018&utm\\_campaign=Media+Review+for+February+3%2C+2018&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/South-Sudan-recalls-envoy-from-US-/1066-4291696-8ablgd/index.html?utm_source=Media+Review+for+February+5%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+February+3%2C+2018&utm_medium=email).

<sup>19</sup> John Ashworth, "The Church and Peace in South Sudan," *Sudan Studies for South Sudan and Sudan*, no. 56 (October 2017), accessed at [http://www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SS\\_56\\_Ashworth.pdf](http://www.millhillmissionaries.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SS_56_Ashworth.pdf), 12.

<sup>20</sup> "South Sudan President Rejects Two Army System during Interim Period," *Sudan Tribune*, 31 January 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, [www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64613&utm\\_source=Media+Review+for+January+31%2C+2018&utm\\_campaign=Media+Review+for+January+31%2C+2018&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64613&utm_source=Media+Review+for+January+31%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+January+31%2C+2018&utm_medium=email).

in Iraq. After Saddam fell, the focus of the US military was enemy-centric, killing enemy insurgents. These deaths, however, only fed the legitimacy of the insurgency. Eventually, the US military adopted a population-centric strategy, which led to the al-Anbar awakening and improvement in Iraq's security situation. But Kiir has yet to come around to this realization. On 2 February, the United Nations declared that South Sudan is likely to become the worst refugee crisis since Rwanda's 1994 genocide.<sup>21</sup> South Sudan is on the brink of becoming the worst humanitarian crisis in decades, yet Kiir is driving his government towards increased isolation from the international community. As Princeton Lyman, past US special envoy to South Sudan, noted, "South Sudan's SPLM leadership may well risk not only economic but political suicide in part because it is still thinking more like a liberation army—one that can go back to the bush and fight from there while the population feeds for itself—rather than a government that has different responsibilities and difference expectations from its people."<sup>22</sup> Eventually, Kiir has to come around; the alternative is suicide. When he does, the following grand strategy should help influence Kiir into fundamentally changing his strategy into one that is more population-centric.

#### Proposed US Government New Grand Strategy, South Sudan

The US government should seek to persuade the GoSS into adopting a population-centric counterinsurgency strategy. According to US military doctrine, "in COIN operations, employment of a whole-of-government approach is key to supporting [host nation] HN

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<sup>21</sup> Sam Mednick, "South Sudan Rebels Vow 'Guerrilla War' if Peace Talks Fail," *Associated Press*, 1 February 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/south-sudan-rebels-vow-guerrilla-war-peace-talks-52760669>.

<sup>22</sup> Princeton Lyman, "Sudan: A Fragile 'Peace,'" in *Africa in World Politics*, edited by John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), 252.

efforts to build legitimacy among relevant populations.”<sup>23</sup> In keeping with the joint publication, this paper will use the D-I-M-E (diplomatic, information, military, and economic) model to synchronize lines of effort across the US government.

Diplomatically, US government officials should continue to use what carrots and sticks they have at their disposal to pressure Kiir into a power-sharing agreement with the SPLM-IO. Because Kiir has already declared publicly that he will not accept militia elements from the SPLM-IO into the army, he may have to concede autonomy to the SPLM-IO, e.g., their militia forces can serve as quasi-law enforcement elements. Based on a similar agreement reached in Iraq with the Shia militias, allowing SPLM-IO militia forces to operate may spread the seeds for future conflict. But the SPLM-IO has shown a willingness to negotiate. For instance, on 28 January 2018, the SPLM-IO handed over fifteen South Sudanese soldiers to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and on 7 February 2018, the SPLM-IO and the South Sudan National liberation Movement released a total of 300 children soldiers from their ranks.<sup>24</sup> The leader of the SPLM-IO, Riek Machar, remains exiled in South Africa, and his return to South Sudan, conditioned on the continued cooperation of the SPLM-IO, is a bargaining chip that Kiir can use to facilitate reconciliation. Unquestionably, the diplomatic solution to ending South Sudan's civil war will be a power-sharing agreement between the GoSS and elements of the SPLM-IO. Once this happens, the more difficult question then will be how to prevent South Sudan's regression into another civil war.

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<sup>23</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-24 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 23 November 2013), A-2.

<sup>24</sup> John Tanza, “South Sudan Rebels Show Peace Gesture,” *Voice of America*, 28 January 2018, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/south-sudan-rebels-show-peace-gesture/4228567.html>; United Nations Children's Fund, “South Sudan: Hundreds of Children Released by Armed Groups,” *AllAfrica*, 7 February 2018, accessed 7 February 2018, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201802070579.html>.

Informationally, the GoSS needs to hold elections as soon as possible, preferably by the end of 2018, to remain legitimate as perceived by the population. As US military doctrine states, “the struggle for legitimacy with the relevant population typically is a central theme of the conflict between the insurgency and the HN government...The key is that legitimacy is ultimately decided in the minds of the populations.”<sup>25</sup> Fundamentally, Kiir’s strategy needs to be less kinetic—“how do I defeat the SPLM-IO?” and more political—“how do I increase the legitimacy of my administration?” With an election looming, Kiir will hopefully focus less on his political rivals and more on the needs of his people. The last time South Sudan held elections was in 2010. An election in 2015 was postponed until 2018 because of South Sudan’s civil war.<sup>26</sup> Thus, elections are due for both the president and legislature this year. The US government should make clear to Kiir that future US assistance will not only depend on his reconciliation with the SPLM-IO but also on holding to elections in 2018.

Militarily, the US government needs to pressure on Uganda’s government to halt the flow of weapons across their border into South Sudan. The Uganda People’s Defense Force (UPDF) has become a key partner for the US military, especially in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) where the UPDF has been instrumental in the war against Al-Shabab. For several years now, the US military has provided military assistance, training soldiers from the UPDF. From 2012 to 2013, this paper’s author was the officer-in-charge of one of these security cooperation missions where US Marines trained UPDF soldiers at the Camp Singo training area just north of Kampala. In 2017 alone, the Office of Security

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<sup>25</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-24 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 23 November 2013), I-6,7.

<sup>26</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, “South Sudan,” *World Factbook*, accessed 7 February 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html>.

Cooperation at the US Embassy in Uganda coordinated training for over 5,000 soldiers from the UPDF.<sup>27</sup> Recently, Richard Downie, the deputy director of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, and Adama Dieng, the special advisor to the UN secretary general for the prevention of genocide, have released statements blaming the government of Uganda for stoking South Sudan's conflict by allowing weapons and ammunition to flow into the country.<sup>28</sup> The US military has developed a close relationship with the UPDF and should make it known that continued cooperation will hinge on Uganda's assistance in ending the conflict not just in Somalia but also in South Sudan. With Secretary Tillerson's upcoming visit to Africa in March, one of the countries likely to be considered by the State Department is Uganda. If the government of Uganda could better police its border, then perhaps Tillerson might be able to meet with Yoweri Museveni, the aging, long-time president of Uganda, whose regime would benefit from a gesture of US government support.

Economically, the US government should encourage cooperation between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan in restoring their mutual oil pipeline, which Kiir needs to sustain his country's economy. In early 2012, Kiir decided to shut down the oil pipeline after a dispute with the government of Sudan. Eventually, an agreement between the governments was reached later that same year, but the pipeline has remained inoperable.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> United States Mission to Uganda, *Report to the Ugandan People*, US Department of State, (Kampala, Uganda: US Embassy Kampala, June 2017), 32.

<sup>28</sup> Jason Patinkin and Jina Moore, "South Sudan Army Makes Push Against Rebels as Peace Talks Begin," *The New York Times*, 19 December 2017, accessed 6 February 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/19/world/africa/south-sudan-army-rebels-peace-talks.html>; John Tanza, "UN Blames Uganda, Kenya for Fueling Conflict in South Sudan," *Voice of America*, 29 January 2018, accessed 7 February 2018, [https://www.voanews.com/a/un-blames-uganda-kenya-fueling-south-sudan-conflict/4229939.html?utm\\_source=Media+Review+for+January+30%2C+2018&utm\\_campaign=Media+Review+for+January+30%2C+2018&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.voanews.com/a/un-blames-uganda-kenya-fueling-south-sudan-conflict/4229939.html?utm_source=Media+Review+for+January+30%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Media+Review+for+January+30%2C+2018&utm_medium=email).

<sup>29</sup> "South Sudan Owes Sudan \$1.3 Billion from 2012 Oil Deal—Official," *Reuters*, 7 December 2017, accessed 10 January 2018, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/Juba-Khartoum-oil-pipeline-debt/2560-4216912-u7e511z/index.html>.

In December 2017, however, *Bloomberg* published an article that announced the government of Sudan had agreed to provide technicians to South Sudan to assist with the repairs needed for the oil pipeline.<sup>30</sup> As referenced earlier, Alex de Waal's article on South Sudan's economy duly emphasizes the criticality that the oil revenue will bring to Kiir who needs the funding to sustain his political patronage system. If the Kiir administration is successful at ending the civil war, then a secure environment would likely spur financial investments from Chinese, European, and American companies. With over 95% of its land arable and the blessing of abundant resources to include both oil and gold, there is no logical reason to explain South Sudan's dire situation where over half of the population is expected to experience famine in 2018.<sup>31</sup> An oil revenue stimulus to South Sudan's economy would enable the government to wean itself off foreign aid and legitimize the GoSS in the minds of the South Sudanese people.

## CONCLUSION

In keeping with US military counterinsurgency doctrine, the US government should pursue a whole of government approach into pressuring Kiir to adopt a counterinsurgency strategy that is more population-centric and that increases the GoSS's legitimacy. An important consideration which warrants further research is what happens if the GoSS does not reverse course but continues down the self-destructive path it is on of fighting an enemy-centric counterinsurgency strategy against the SPLM-IO. Undoubtedly, if Kiir went down

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<sup>30</sup> Okech Francis, "Oil Deal May Win Back Sudan Some Influence Over Former Enemy," *Bloomberg*, 14 December 2017, accessed 10 January 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-15/oil-deal-may-allow-sudan-to-win-back-influence-over-former-enemy>.

<sup>31</sup> Sam L. Laki, "Agricultural Development Strategies for South Sudan," in *The Road to the Two Sudans*, edited by Souad T. Ali, Stephanie Beswick, Richard Lobban, and Jay Spaulding (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 223.



this road, he would likely be further isolated from the international community. A recent Institute for Security Studies predicts Kiir is unlikely to change his ways and that a permanent impasse between the GoSS and the SPLM-IO will only lead to more economic sanctions.<sup>32</sup> Much hinges on the current peace negotiations ongoing in Addis Ababa. Regardless of the outcome, the ultimate responsibility for the ending the conflict lies with the South Sudanese people and their elites who have the onerous task of overcoming, what Princeton Lyman refers to as, “the lingering memories of societies too long at war.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> “Time for Sanctions against South Sudan,” *Institutes for Securities Studies*, 7 February 2018, accessed 7 February 2018, [https://issafrica.org/pscreport/situation-analysis/time-for-sanctions-against-south-sudan?utm\\_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm\\_campaign=PSC\\_Report&utm\\_medium=email](https://issafrica.org/pscreport/situation-analysis/time-for-sanctions-against-south-sudan?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=PSC_Report&utm_medium=email).

<sup>33</sup> Princeton Lyman, “Sudan: A Fragile ‘Peace,’” in *Africa in World Politics*, edited by John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), 237.

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