

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (IDIS)**

**REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF INTERNAL  
CONFLICTS IN AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN**

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NAIROBI**

**December, 2018**

**DECLARATION**

I, Habtamu Baye Chekole hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree of masters in any other University.

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor;

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**DEDICATION**

To My Beloved Father

## **ABSTRACT**

The conflict in South Sudan has attracted interests from both regional actors as well as international actors driven by various interests. Presence of ethnic groups jostling for power as well as the resources within the youngest nation on the continent as well as involvement of external actors who have varying interests in the nation, have ensured that the nation remains restive with peace being ever elusive. Besides the immediate manifestation of the impacts of the conflict such as refugees the conflict has had far reaching consequences both within and without the nation. The main objective of this study shall be to focus on the role of refugees in the internationalization of conflict in Africa with South Sudan as a case study. The specific objectives shall form the chapters that shall further interrogate the problem of refugees as agents of internationalization. The study shall also examine the role of actors to the conflict as well as factors that have led to the internationalization of the conflict in South Sudan with an aim of highlighting the impact of the conflict on regional security and stability. The concept of Conflict Internationalization, shall form the conceptual framework of the study. Both primary and secondary data shall form the mode of data collection for purposes of carrying out the study. The findings of the study shall be guided by use of hypotheses. The study also aims to come up with recommendations aimed at influencing policy in order for lasting solutions to be found in regards to the conflict in South Sudan.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**CPA:** Comprehensive Peace Agreement

**ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States

**FAO:** Food and Agricultural Organization

**GERD:** Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

**ICRC:** International Committee of the Red Cross

**IGAD:** Inter-Governmental Authority on Development

**JEM:** Justice and Equality Movement

**LRA:** Lord's Resistance Army

**OAU:** Organization of African Unity

**REC:** Regional Economic Communities

**SPLA:** Sudan People's Liberation Army

**SPLM/IO:** Sudan People's Liberation Movement In Opposition

**SPLM:** Sudan People's Liberation Movement

**UHI:** Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention

**UN:** United Nations

**UNHCR:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**UNISFA:** United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

**UNMISS:** United Nations Mission In South Sudan

**UNOCHA:** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

The unprecedented increase in the number of population movement from time to time has raised serious challenges to the international community. For example, according to the UNHCR report of 2015, out of 65.3 million people displaced worldwide, about 21.3 million persons were refugees.<sup>1</sup> The African continent is not an exception in this regard where Sub-Saharan Africa alone, hosts more than 26 per cent of the world's refugee population. In this region, over 18 million individuals constitute the refugee population according to the UNHCR. By the end of 2015 for instance, South Sudan saw the displacement of about 2 million people who constituted internally displaced persons, refugees or asylum seekers.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of who a refugee is has been widely interrogated in the face of numerous conflicts as well as other factors that lead to the crossing of international borders by individuals. However, the 1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees defines which individuals fall under the category refugees. In addition to describing who refugees are, the convention also summarizes the rights of refugees as well as the responsibilities of states in the protection of refugees in host countries. The UN has also amended the document in its 1967 protocol which widens the geographical scope especially the ratification of the Convention beyond the European Continent.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (2015) Global Trends: Forced Displacement available at <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf> assessed on May 2018

<sup>2</sup> Ibid UNHCR (2015) Global Trends.

Countries which have ratified the convention as well as the protocol are expected to collaborate with the UNHCR in ensuring the rights of refugees are respected and protected.

According to the convention, a refugee is defined as;

“someone who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.”<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations Convention and its protocol, allows other regional organizations such as the African Union to give their own contextual supplementary definition of refugees. As a result, the then Organization of African Unity, (the present day African Union) in its 1969 Convention defined refugees as;

*“every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality.”<sup>4</sup>*

Of course, there are several reasons for migration. However, one of the primary causes for such displacement is conflict. Both inter-state and intra-state conflicts are responsible for the migration of people. Internal conflicts are responsible for causing tremendous suffering to civilians in

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<sup>3</sup> UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951.

<sup>4</sup> OAU Refugee Convention in Africa, 1969

particular.<sup>5</sup> The attendant misery leads to the displacement of tens of thousands persons who flee their home and cross international borders. In most cases, the issues and actors constituting the internal conflict, diffuse across national boundaries and often inform the immediate regional peace and security dynamics. This creates a problem when it comes to differentiating between domestic and international politics.<sup>6</sup>

Forsberg posits that, the influx of refugees fleeing from a state in civil war to a host country may contribute to the spread of conflicts to one or several of the hosting states.<sup>7</sup> Inter-state conflicts can be triggered between the refugees' 'sending' and 'receiving' states. Salehyan & Gleditsch assert that large-scale flows of refugees to the host country, can lead to the spread of civil war and countries that receive refugees from states in conflict for instance, are exposed to an increased likelihood of internal conflict and insecurity.<sup>8</sup> Traditionally the reasoning was, civil wars were considered to be primarily or characteristic of sovereign states. However, there constitutes an international dimension to internal conflicts. In this regard Salehyan & Gleditsch argue that, international factors such as the relationship of a specific country with other states are critical in determining the drivers of internal conflict.<sup>9</sup> The implication is, although internal conflicts take place within the territory of the sovereign states, they have the possibility of diffusing and escalating to neighboring countries and beyond. This can undermine the peace and stability of neighboring countries and the international system at large.

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<sup>5</sup> Brown, M. E. (1996) *"The Causes and Regional Dimensions of Internal Conflict."* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

<sup>6</sup> Grace Atim (2013) 'The Impact of Refugees on Conflicts in Africa' *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* Volume 14, Issue 2. pp 04.

<sup>7</sup> Erika Forsberg (2009) *Refugees and Intrastate Armed Conflict: A Contagion Process Approach*. Paper presented at the 50th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Salehyan, Idean & Kristian S. Gleditsch, (2006) 'Refugees and the Spread of Civil War', *International Organization* 60(2): 335-366.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid* p. 336

In the process of internationalization of an internal conflict, refugees play a critical role in spreading internal conflict to the neighboring countries, to the entire region and even beyond. The conflict in South Sudan has continued to generate tens of thousands of refugees in the past years. The refugees fleeing their homes have crossed international borders into neighboring countries of Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan. According to Catherine, Uganda has hosted 698,000 refugees, Ethiopia has hosted 342,000, 305,000 are in Sudan, 89,000 are in Kenya, 68,000 are in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 4,900 are in the Central African Republic.<sup>10</sup> These refugees have placed immense political, economic, social and security pressure on the respective host countries and further threatened the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa region by internationalizing the South Sudan conflict.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

Conflicts have formed a large part of the history of the African continent. In a majority of the instance the conflicts have caused untold suffering to civilians and produced hundreds of thousands of refugees. The cyclic nature of these conflicts and the flow of refugees to neighboring countries has been a huge security concern to the people of the continent as well as a danger to its stability.<sup>11</sup> The international community driven by various concerns, has also been drawn into the conflict. Adetula argues that, African conflicts and the resultant security challenges continue to be of utmost concern to the international community.<sup>12</sup> It can be said that a majority of African countries have

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<sup>10</sup>Catherine Wachiaya (2017) UNHCR Report available at

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2017/2/589dba9f4/number-refugees-fleeing-south-sudan-tops-15-million.html>  
accessed on May 2018

<sup>11</sup> Darlington M. (2015) 'The Genesis, Dynamics and Effects of the Civil War in South Sudan' *International Journal of African Society Cultures and Traditions* Vol.3, No.1, pp.19

<sup>12</sup> Victor A.O. Adetula (2014), *African Conflicts: Development and Regional Organizations in the Post-Cold War International System*; The Annual Claudeke Memorial Lecture Uppsala

been affected by internal conflicts. Angola, Cote D' Ivoire, Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, South Africa and Zimbabwe are some of the countries which have been affected by civil wars. The causes of the conflicts have ranged from structural, ethnic, political amongst other factors.

Internal conflicts are not mere internal problems or the concern of the affected state alone. Their effects can seep into the neighboring countries. Stedman explains that, African internal conflicts have had extensive regional consequences. They have had peace and stability, political, economic, social and diplomatic consequences. They have also led to the displacement of a huge number of people.<sup>13</sup> Refugees are catalysts for the spread of internal conflicts in Africa. In this connection, Salehyan argues that there is a likelihood of armed conflicts between host and sending states who interact through refugees. For instance, the Rwandan invasion of the former Zaire in 1996, was largely inspired by the intention to clear refugee camps that sheltered militant factions who were involved in the Rwandan Genocide of 1994.<sup>14</sup>

The Horn of Africa region has also been affected by refugee crises and internationalization of conflict. Gebreluel and Tronvoll have identified the Horn of Africa as one of the most conflict-ridden regions in the world.<sup>15</sup> There are many factors that have made the Horn of Africa vulnerable to conflicts. The Horn of Africa region is one of the poorest regions of the continent. Paradoxically, it has a strategic geopolitical advantage that attracts interests from many actors which comes with

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<sup>13</sup> John Stedman (1996), *Conflict and Conciliation in Sub-Saharan Africa*, In M. E. Brown (Ed.), *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

<sup>14</sup> Idean Salehyan (2007) *The Externalities of Civil Strife: Refugees as a Source of International Conflict*, Paper Presented at the conference on “ Migration, International Relations, and the Evolution of World Politics,” Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, March 16-17, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Goitom G. and K. (2014), ‘South Sudan’s Post-Secession Crisis in a Comparative Perspective’: *Yale Journal of International Affairs*

some measure of friction. Weak governments and government structures have also been identified as some of the causes of internal conflicts in the Horn Africa region. Somalia has been a failed state since the end of Siad Barre regime. The situation in South Sudan has progressively taken the trajectory of the situation Somalia. Since independence, South Sudan has undergone crisis after crisis resulting in amongst other challenges, the flow of refugees to various parts of the continent.

The nation of Sudan of which South Sudan was part of, has gone through two devastating civil wars since its independence from British colonial rule in 1956. The Anyanya I war lasted until March 1972, when the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement signed under General Numeiri which granted limited autonomy to the South.<sup>16</sup> Sudan fought its second brutal civil war from 1983 to 2005. Under the leadership of John Garang, the Southerners sought independence from the North spearheaded by the political and military wings of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army(SPLM/A).<sup>17</sup>

The South Sudanese fought for their independence for almost half a century where lots of lives were lost. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that was signed between the Sudan Government and the SPLM/A, ended the second phase of the conflict that was started in 1983. As part of this agreement, the South was granted a six-year period of autonomy to be followed by a referendum to determine its final status. The result of this referendum, held in January 2011, was a vote of 98% in favor of secession and on 9 July 2011, South Sudan gained its independence, joining the community of nations as the youngest nation in Africa and in the world.

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<sup>16</sup> Debay Tadesse (2012), *Post-Independence South Sudan: The Challenges Ahead*; SIPRI Working paper.

<sup>17</sup>Op Cit. Darlington Mutanda (2015),

Unfortunately, the country descended into civil conflict shortly after its independence. It has had numerous political, economic and military implications on the region and the international system as well. Refugees from South Sudan have been to a large extent responsible for spreading the conflict beyond the nation and have created tension in the region. Members of the international community have been drawn into the conflict where they have intervened in the form of humanitarian intervention. As a result, regional and international actors have continued to be part of the conflict resolution process informed by on their own interests that may complement or complicate the efforts of the regional actors.

Fig. 1: Political Map of the Republic of South Sudan and its neighbors.



Source <http://www.mapsofworld.com/south-sudan/map.html> Accessed on 06 of May 2017.



Description:- As the above map indicates, the Republic of South Sudan is bordered by the Sudan to the north, Ethiopia to the East, Kenya Uganda and DRC Congo to south and Central African Republic to the west. Moreover, the border between South Sudan and the Sudan is not demarcated. The South Sudan conflict has spilled over to the neighboring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda. Beyond the IGAD member countries, it has also attracted the interest of nations such as Egypt.<sup>18</sup> The major concern by these has been the peace and security challenges posed by the conflict in South Sudan. In this regard, Chinyanganya & Mhlanga have identified that, the conflict has continued to affect the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member countries who have been hosting refugees fleeing the conflict and countries such as Uganda and Kenya have suffered internal strife in part, as a result of the growing refugee crisis.<sup>19</sup>

### **1.3 Statement of the Research Problem**

The ongoing conflict in South Sudan has impacted on the region and beyond through interrelated factors, issues and actions of various actors involved with refugees as being one of the effects of the conflict. Destruction of property, disruption in the provision of services, loss of lives, and most manifest the surge of refugee to other nations have been the main features of the conflict. This study examines the role of refugees in spreading an internal civil war across national borders and its implications for regional and international peace and stability. Conflict internationalization particularly through refugee flows in Africa, is the focus of this study. The South Sudan conflict and the resultant refugee crisis poses serious threats to the region and international community in

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<sup>18</sup> ICG (2016) *South Sudan's Risky Political Impasse* available online at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan/south-sudan-risky-political-impasse>

<sup>19</sup> John M. Chinyanganya & Johns Mhlanga (2015) 'The South Sudan Conflict: Continental and International Implications' *Journal of International Studies* Vol. 11, pp.118

the areas of peace and security. For a large part, refugees have been seen as a burden on the receiving countries especially having economic, social, political, and military as well as peace and stability implications to the specific countries and to the region at large. Regional peace and stability is a major challenge to the Horn of Africa region and has affected its development.

As noted elsewhere, nations such as Eritrea and Egypt which do not share borders with South Sudan have been drawn in to the conflict. In terms of actors, in addition to the neighboring countries of South Sudan, the conflict has also attracted the interest of countries which are not neighbors to South Sudan. Regional organizations have also been actively involved in the mediation process. Regional organizations such as IGAD and AU have been instrumental promoting peace and stability in the region. Given historical tensions in the region as well as inherent vulnerabilities, the South Sudan conflict has a potential to derail regional development since peace and development go hand in hand.

The international actors have both economic and political interests in South Sudan. The ongoing crisis in South Sudan threatened their national interests. Competing national, regional and international interests have in part served to affect efforts towards achieving a lasting solution to the crisis. To maintain their interests, the external actors (the international powers) are being forced to intervene in to the conflict. The interaction between the neighboring countries, regional actors and international players further internationalizes the conflict and has complicated the situation in the Horn of Africa region by undermining peace and stability of the region and beyond.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to demonstrate how refugees internationalize conflicts. The specific objectives are:

1.4.1 To discuss the role of actors and factors that have internationalized the conflict in South Sudan.

1.4.2 To examine the nexus between refugees and the internationalization of the conflict in South Sudan.

1.4.3 To examine the implication of the conflict in South Sudan on regional security and stability.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

5.1.1 What are the roles of actors and factors that have internationalized the conflict in South Sudan?

5.1.3 What is the nexus between refugees and the internationalization of the conflict in South Sudan?

5.1.2 What is the implication of the conflict in South Sudan on regional security and stability?

## **1.6 Literature Review**

### **1.6.1 The Concept of Conflict Internationalization**

The concept of internationalization has formed the basis of intense scholarly discourse. Several scholars interrogated the concept of conflict internationalization. Sandra defines internationalization as the process by which an explicit and conscious decision is made to involve international external actors in a domestic conflict.<sup>20</sup> Mwangiri posits that, internationalization is the process by which domestic affairs develop international characteristics.<sup>21</sup> In analyzing the

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<sup>20</sup> Sandra P. Borda, (2009) *The Internationalization of Domestic Conflicts: A Comparative Study of Colombia, El Salvador, and Guatemala*, PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota,

<sup>21</sup> Mwangiri Makumi., (2006) *Conflict in Africa, Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, Nairobi: CCR Publications.

different theoretical approaches to the process of conflict internationalization, Carment also adopts that the direct involvement of external actors in an internal ethnic conflict constitutes internationalization.<sup>22</sup> Though there is no agreement on the definition and no consensus on the concept, conflict internationalization is still one of the focus areas in the study of conflict and its management.

There are many factors which contribute to the spread of an internal conflict where it diffuses into the neighboring countries, as well as beyond. Carment approaches the process of conflict internationalization in three ways. Carment approaches conflict internationalization first as an extension of conflict. According to Carment, conflict extension is the direct involvement of external actors in an internal ethnic conflict based on the 'outside' actors' self-interests in an internal conflict. Secondly, he adopts the conflict interaction and human needs approach which deals with the process of ethnic conflict internationalization where internal warring parties look for outside support that internationalizes an ongoing conflict. Thirdly, is the aspect of conflict transformation which takes place when a weak government cannot cope with internal problems and the conflict ends up spilling over on to the international space.

Conflict internationalization can be driven by either domestic parties to the conflict or external actors. The external actors could be neighboring countries, international organizations or non-governmental organizations. As Sandra argues, the action of the process of internationalization is a two way traffic. That means either parties to the conflict for instance domestic actors, may decide to invite external actors or international external actors themselves may decide to participate in an

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<sup>22</sup> David Carment (1994), "The Ethnic Dimension in World Politics: Theory, Policy and Early Warning," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 15 No. 4 pp. 551.

internal conflict. In the second case, it is up to the interest of the domestic parties to choose either to accept or refuse the participation of the external parties.<sup>23</sup>

Internal armed conflicts are common occurrences in the contemporary world. Though there has been a significant reduction in the number of internal conflicts, Harbon and Wellenstein note that since the end of the Second World War, there have been 228 armed conflicts carried out in 148 locations throughout the world.<sup>24</sup> Africa has been one of the continents that have suffered immensely from civil strife. Civil war and instability have been characteristic of the continents history. In particular Sub-Saharan Africa has been plagued by a fair share of the global conflict. Stedman argues that, Africa was in chaos between the years 1991 to 1994 and conflicts in Angola, Burundi, Liberia and Rwanda claimed the lives of millions of people.<sup>25</sup> Traditionally, the assumption on internal conflict has been that wars usually originate from within the confines of the state. However, internal armed conflicts do not entirely originate from within the bounds of the state. Gleditsch and Salehyan note that, a multiplicity of issues and actors are responsible in determining the behavior of internal conflicts.<sup>26</sup> Internal conflicts can be influenced by external factors and at the same time internal conflicts can spill-over and impact neighboring countries in several ways. External actors are important elements in determining the spread of internal conflicts. There are situations where internal conflicts attract the involvement of external actors. Harbon and Wallenstein point out that the involvement of external actors is not a new phenomenon and argue that;

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<sup>23</sup> Op Cit .Sandra P. Borda, (2009)

<sup>24</sup> Harbom L. & Wallenstein P., (2005 'Armed Conflict and Its International Dimensions, 1946–2004\*' *Journal of Peace Research* vol. 42 No.5.pp. 623

<sup>25</sup>Op Cit. John Stedman (1996)

<sup>26</sup> Op Cit. Salehyan, Idean & Kristian S. Gleditsch, 2006.

The events following 11 September 2001 highlighted the phenomenon of international involvement in internal conflicts. Numerous countries were drawn into the conflicts of other states. Countries as diverse as Norway, El Salvador, and Tonga have sent regular troops to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. Others have provided logistic support or opened up their territories for land transportation or overflights.<sup>27</sup>

The intervention of external actors in an internal conflict is complex and comprises numerous actions which can range from diplomatic, economic as well as military. As Sandra argues, whatever means the external actors use to intervene in an internal conflict, their involvement could play a very important role in the duration and outcome of the civil war and internationalizes the conflict.

Every single conflict involves the interests of external actors or affects others and has often-regional consequences. External actors play several roles in the process of internalization of an internal conflict. The external actors can be either neighboring countries or distant powers and by intervening they dictate the trajectory of the conflict. Harbom and Wallensteen note that of the 165 internal armed conflicts carried out since the end of World War II, 36 (or about one-fifth) have involved troops from an external state.<sup>28</sup> They further added that, a peak with nine internationalized conflicts was reached in 1979, including the interventions in Afghanistan and Angola.

Brown argues that the regional dimensions of internal conflicts are hermetically sealed and the vast majorities of internal conflicts affect or involve neighboring countries in one way or another.<sup>29</sup>

The fact that regions are inter-connected and interdependent increases the impact of an internal

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<sup>27</sup> Op Cit Harbom L. & Wallensteen P., (2005)

<sup>28</sup>Op. Cit. Harbom L. & Wallensteen P., (2005)

<sup>29</sup>Op. Cit. Brown, M. E., (1996)

conflict on the neighboring countries. The neighboring countries of South Sudan are interconnected and inter-dependent one another in many ways. They share the same border, interact through trade as well as a host of other linkages. Therefore, what happens in South Sudan affects the neighbors directly or indirectly. This increases the linkage of the internal conflict in South Sudan to the neighboring countries. Brown strengthens this argument by stating that 'internal conflicts almost always have implications for regional stability.'

Apart from the neighboring countries, the internal conflict in South Sudan attracts also distant international powers. The involvement of external international powers in the South Sudan conflict is not new. Since the time of CPA, international powers have been playing a significant role in the process of peaceful settlement of the conflict between the two Sudanese. Even after independence, various actors have been involved in the internal conflict of South Sudan that erupted in December 2013. These external actors can be characterized as major powers such as the US and China, multilateral organizations like the UN, regional actors such as AU and EU and sub-regional actors like IGAD. As a regional block, IGAD played a very important role in mediating between the conflicting parties in South Sudan. Garang notes that 'IGAD as one of the East African Regional Economic Communities (REC) of which the Republic of South Sudan (RSS) is a member took a lead in mediating the conflict in the country as a continuation of its previous peace process that ended on 2005.'<sup>30</sup> According to Vaudran, though the role China is playing in peace keeping is new to the African continent, out of the 11,000 troops of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), China contributed 700 troops. China is also involved in the

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<sup>30</sup> Garang A., (2015) *The Impact of External Actors on the Prospects of a Mediated Settlement in South Sudan*, (Paper presented at the Academic Conference on International Mediation, University of Pretoria, 2-4 June, Pretoria, South Africa.)

mediation efforts in South Sudan. Vaudran further argues that China's mediation efforts in South Sudan could be seen as an example of great powers stepping in to the crisis.<sup>31</sup>

The involvement of the US in the South Sudan conflict is also notable. Blanchard argues that US was very instrumental in facilitating the CPA and the birth of the nation.<sup>32</sup> Blanchard further notes that, the role of the US in the current crisis is mainly inclined to hard diplomacy (targeted sanctions), financial contributions to the UNMISS and humanitarian aid. As a regional and at the same time a continental actor, the African Union (AU) has played a role in the South Sudan Conflict. Garang notes that the AU's involvement in the South Sudan conflict was to provide guidance on how to manage the conflict and it took a lead in investigating the alleged atrocities and human rights violations. The involvement of the European Union was also mainly limited to partnership and financial support.

### **1.6.2 Refugees and the Spread of Internal Conflict**

According to Salehyan and Gleditsch, the onset of civil war in one country may involve ethnic groups of the other state when ethnic groups in one state support their ethnic brethren in the country of conflict. On the other hand, civil wars can spread from the country in conflict to the neighboring countries leading to conflict externalities. In this case, civil wars may disrupt the whole regional economic, political and security activities that consequently increases the chance of engulfing the neighboring states in to regional conflict.

Refugees determine the behavior of internal conflicts and the spread of it to the neighboring states and even further beyond. Civil wars displace hundreds of thousands of people from their original

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<sup>31</sup> Vaudran Liesl , (2015) China's role in South Sudan A Learning Curve, *Institute for Security Studies (ISS)*, Available at <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/chinas-role-in-south-sudan-a-learning-curve>oted that

<sup>32</sup> Blanchard L., (2016) Conflict in South Sudan and the Challenges Ahead, (unpublished).



homelands. When these people flee their homes to escape from the violence and in search of safe places, they cross international borders and the out flow of refugees internationalize the internal conflict as they ‘export’ the challenges to the host country.<sup>33</sup> This may create instability to the immediate neighboring countries as well as to the countries far from the civil war. That means, refugees can play very significant roles in spreading an internal conflict across the region. In this regard Gleditsch and Salehyan note:

Refugees can change the ethnic composition of the host state; exacerbate economic competition; bring with them arms, combatants, and ideologies that are conducive to violence; and mobilize opposition directed at their country of origin as well as their host country.<sup>34</sup>

In explaining the ways through which the regional spread of violence through refugees takes place, Nadine notes that refugees can align themselves with militarized elements. There is also a possibility for combatants to take part in war activities. To mitigate this risk, the country of origin from which the refugees come from, may intervene in the host country and sometimes neighboring countries also intervene in the country in conflict aiming to stop the ongoing conflict. This intervention further intensifies the conflict in the region.<sup>35</sup>

There is also the possibility of the spread of diseases which compromises the health of various actors in the region. More importantly he notes that the flow of refugees is one important contributing factor for the spread of internal civil conflicts to the neighboring countries and further internationalizes the conflict. The ongoing South Sudan conflict has become a regional conflict

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<sup>33</sup> Op Cit. Mwangi Makumi., (2006)

<sup>34</sup> Op Cit. Salehyan, Idean & Kristian S. Gleditsch, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Ansorg Nadine (2014) ‘Wars Without Borders: Conditions for the development of regional conflict systems in sub-Saharan Africa’ *International Area Studies Review*, Vol. 17 No. 3 pp. 30 0

and even a global concern because of refugee negative externalities. In this regard, Chinyanganya & Mhlanga note that the current conflict in South Sudan is gradually developing in to regional conflict.<sup>36</sup>

### **1.6.3 Refugees and Conflict Internationalization**

Refugees are identified as a result of international conflict. Once refugees cross international boundaries into neighboring countries, they affect in various ways the dynamics within the host states in many ways. Large influxes of refugees into neighboring countries can trigger different responses. According to Salehyan, refugees are not simply the results of internal conflicts rather they may aggravate tension between the country in conflict- producing large number of refugees and the refugee recipient states.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, Salehyan and Gleditsch argue that civil wars are no more domestic and independent occurrences which are simply driven by internal actors. Many times, these issues and actors in civil wars are diverse. When these issues and actors cross national boundaries they develop as part of a regional security dynamics. Large number of refugee inflows motivate inter-state conflicts by instigating inter-state disputes as a result of violence diffusion caused by refugees crossing international borders. There are also cases where receiving states may use refugees as a proxy to support one side in internal or international conflicts.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, in discussing how refugee flows cause the contagion of civil conflict from one conflict country to another country, Forsberg indicated that, the incoming of rebel groups, weapons and ideologies together with refugees, the support given from the host country to ethnic brethren or any other connections, ethnic power imbalance as a result of influx or some tribes from the country

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<sup>36</sup> Op Cit. John M. Chinyanganya & Johns Mhlanga (2015)

<sup>37</sup> Op. Cit . Idean Salehyan (2007)

<sup>38</sup> Stephen Allen (2010), 'Harboring or Protecting? Militarized Refugees, State Responsibility, and the Evolution of Self-Defense', *The Fletcher Journal of Human Security*, vol. xxv,(2010) pp..6

of conflict and heavy economic burdens caused by the arrival of refugees are important factors that could help internal conflicts to internationalize.<sup>39</sup>

The issue of security has also become one of the most important factors that relates to refugees and conflict internationalization. From a security perspective, the Horn of Africa region is one of the fragile regions of the world. Since the region is a conflict prone area, the issue of refugees and attendant challenges is prominent in the region. The ongoing conflict in South Sudan and the resultant influx of refugees into the neighboring countries directly affected the security and stability of the host countries mainly of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. For example, in Ethiopia, the influx of South Sudanese refugees threatened the security and stability of the country's western region where the region's ethnic groups (Anuak & Nuer) fight for supremacy in the regions politics.

The ever increasing inflow of Nuer ethnic groups from South Sudan exacerbated the tension between the two ethnic groups as they showed sympathy to their ethnic kin (Ethiopian Nuers) and disrupt the ethnic balance between the Anuak and the Nure.<sup>40</sup>

In Uganda, refugee induced insecurity is also a threat to the country's stability. Sjöberg notes that in Uganda, historically refugee camps and IDP camps have been highly militarized and have even served as bases for armed groups to launch attacks into neighboring countries.<sup>41</sup> Linet identifies that, the South Sudanese refugees are accused of causing security challenges through the movement of small arms. Therefore, refugee militarization has been a threat for the country's

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<sup>39</sup> Erika Forsberg (2009) Op cit.

<sup>40</sup> Dereje Feyissa (2015) The Adverse Impact of South Sudanese Civil War on Ethiopia - Some Preliminary Notes, *International Law and Policy Institute*, May, 2017

<sup>41</sup> Isa L. Sjöberg (2008), *The prevention of militarization of future refugee camps in the Great Lakes Region, "Safety first" – the right approach?*, Master Thesis, Lund University

security as a result of the mass influx of refugees from South Sudan. This posed a threat to the government where the risk of possible militarized South Sudanese refugees entering the country threatened the country's security and stability.

In addition to political and economic pressure, the arrival of refugees brings to the neighboring countries, refugee induced social tension and conflict militarization is also a major challenge to the host country. The social tension and conflict militarization play a significant role in the spread and internationalization of the violence. This is mainly because international borders are highly porous as well as poorly guarded. Accordingly, Salehyan notes that in most cases refugees flee to the nearest countries proximate to their own. In instances where the neighboring countries borders are not well protected and controlled, refugees may enter while accompanied by hostile elements such as insurgents and rebel groups. This violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states that host the refugees. This could ignite conflict between the refugee sending and receiving countries. On the other hand, refugees can also be mobilized in to insurgent organizations in the refugee camps as the camps serve a safe haven for refugee warriors. In this case, host countries can give support to the rebel groups of the refugee sending country and the conflict crosses international boundaries and internationalizes further. Therefore, refugees are very important agents when it comes to appreciating the internationalization of internal conflicts.

As far as internal conflicts are concerned, many studies have been conducted. However, the regional aspects of internal conflicts have not been understood well. The existing studies are very limited in highlighting the negative externalities of civil wars especially where refugees are involved in the internationalization of internal conflicts. Studies are also limited in providing linkages as to how internal conflicts involve the neighboring countries and the regional dynamics. This study identifies these gaps in the literature and seeks to advance the understanding of how the

influx of refugees negatively affects the neighboring countries and further threatens the regional peace and stability and the role of refugees in the process of internationalization of internal conflicts.

## **1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study**

### **1.7.1 Academic Justification**

For purposes of academic justification this study aims to fill the gap in the literature on refugees and their role in conflict internationalization by analyzing the dynamics surrounding the South Sudan conflict as a case study. By studying the effect of conflicts, the concept of internationalization will be better understood for purposes of enriching the academic field. Given the nature and pattern of conflicts on the continent and beyond, this study seeks to enhance discourse on the subject and concept of internationalization in order for better mitigation of the negative effects of future conflicts. This study is also important in the sense that it will form the basis for further studies in the area of refugees and conflict internationalization.

### **1.7.2 Policy Justification**

Conflicts as appreciated have numerous externalities, and as a consequence the effects of conflict need to be prioritized by policy makers in order for better responses to be crafted. It is at the policy making level where tangible interventions can be made and implemented. This may be in terms of the resources to be allocated, the human resource to be deployed amongst other interventions that go towards conflict resolution. By use of recommendations at the end of this study, the objective of enhancing as well as influencing the quality of policy on matters of refugees and mitigation of the attendant risks forms a key basis as to why this study is being carried out. Therefore, this study is very important in providing specific country level, regional and international mechanisms and

policy formulations that could address the current conflict in South Sudan and the regional instability at large.

## **1.8 Conceptual Framework**

The concept of ‘Conflict Internationalization’ shall form the conceptual framework of the study. Several scholars have posited that, ‘Conflict Internationalization’ has become an important instrument in the study of conflicts and their impacts.<sup>42</sup> Mwangiru identifies that, ‘Conflict Internationalization’ is the process by which domestic affairs develop international characteristics.<sup>43</sup> There is a growing concern on the internationalization of internal conflicts in the world. However, there lacks consensus on the process of ‘Conflict Internationalization’. David Carment approaches the process of conflict internationalization in three ways and these include conflict extension, conflict interaction and conflict transformation.<sup>44</sup>

Conflict extension is the process where there is a direct involvement of outside actors in the internal ethnic conflict based on the outside actor’s self-interest in the conflict. Secondly, conflict interaction is the process by which an ethnic conflict internationalizes when internal actors, seek outside support of human right and self–determination. Last but not least, conflict transformation is a process based on the assumption that, conflicts spill-over to the international level when weak governments cannot cope with internal ethnic, economic, social and political problems.<sup>45</sup> Mwangiru notes that there are political, diplomatic and economic elements of domestic politics that spill-over and influence the international sphere.<sup>46</sup> Regarding the processes of internationalization, he also

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<sup>42</sup> Tatyana Amoriko.,(2001) ‘The Internationalization of Conflict in the Trans Caucasus and the former Yugoslavia’ in Schnabel A. (ed), Southeast European Security: Threats, Responses, Challenges Nova Science Publisher, Inc. pp. 105-116

<sup>43</sup> Op Cit. Mwangiru Makumi., (2006)

<sup>44</sup> Op Cit. David Carment (1994).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid pp. 561-568

<sup>46</sup>Op Cit. Mwangiru. M. (2006).

notes that interdependence, human rights, the idea that international conflict have domestic sources and ethnicity, refugees and media act as agents of internationalization of an internal conflict.

As far as interdependence is concerned, Mwangi argues that internal and external actors are interlinked through many transactions and relationships involved, when a conflict develops. The relationship may be between the internal parties themselves, between each party and its constituents, between the constituents of each of the parties, between each of the parties and external actors and the relationship between the external supporters. It is this pattern of relationships that crosses international borders and spills on to the international territory and internationalizes the conflict by connecting various actors. With regards to domestic sources of international conflict, Mwangi identifies that, internal and international affairs are intertwined and international conflict has domestic sources. He further argues that, the international human rights system is the most important internationalizing agent when it comes to analysing how internal conflicts attract external actors in the international system.

After the end of the Cold war, the concept of sovereignty has continued to be confronted by many challenges. Traditionally, sovereignty was understood as the freewill that states possessed when it came to managing the affairs within their territory. Sovereign states have traditionally handled their own domestic internal affairs without any outside intervention. However, after the end of the Second World War, the concept of sovereignty has continuously been challenged as a result of the killings of millions of people in civil wars in Europe and Africa. The main concern has been whether the violation of human rights in a sovereign state is an internal issue or is it also an issue concerning the international community at large.<sup>47</sup> As a result, international human right laws such

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<sup>47</sup> K.M. Fierke (2005) *Diplomatic Interventions, Conflict and Change in a Globalizing World*, Palgrave Macmillan.

as the Genocide Convention, the Geneva Convention and the Convention on the status of Refugees came in to existence and were underscored by the emergence of the universalization of human rights. This gave both the window of opportunity and responsibility for external actors to intervene in the internal affairs of sovereign states in instances of massive violation of human rights.

Humanitarian intervention, takes many forms. Although there has been a debate on the approval of the United Nations Security for Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention (UHI), it is still believed that humanitarian intervention is one of the channels through which external actors to involve themselves in a civil war.<sup>48</sup> The involvement of external actors in the name of humanitarian assistance could either be undertaken through external powers, regional actors or individual neighboring countries depending of the interest of the interveners.

While analyzing ethnicity and ethnic relations as an agent of conflict internationalization, Mwagiru emphasizes that, this is especially relevant in Africa where an international border cuts across the same ethnic communities and an internal conflict internationalizes through contagion. In the current globalized world, the media has played a very critical role in the process of internationalization of conflict. The out flow of refugees, which is the main focus of this study, is also important as an agent of conflict internationalization. When refugees cross international borders and interact with the local host communities, they can create friction especially when they put pressure on the use of natural resources and this internationalizes the internal conflict. Naturally after crossing the border of their country the issue of refugees attracts the involvement of international actors such as the UNHCR, ICRC and other humanitarian agencies which further internationalize the conflict.

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<sup>48</sup> Ryan Goodma (2006) Humanitarian Intervention and Pretexts for War, *The American Journal of International Law* Vol. 100:107



Therefore, the concept of ‘Conflict Internationalization’ best explains the conflict in South Sudan and its internationalization process through refugees. Hence, it is applicable to study on how refugees fleeing a nation in conflict such as South Sudan can spread insecurities to neighboring countries based on the concept of Conflict Internationalization.

## **1.9 Hypotheses**

The study tested the following hypotheses;

1.9.1 There is likelihood for a conflict to acquire regional attributes in countries that experience an influx of refugees from a conflict country.

1.9.2 The greater the vested interests of the neighboring countries in a conflict, the more it becomes internationalized.

## **1.10 Methodology**

### **1.10.1 Case Study**

The South Sudan conflict for the basis of the case study of the conflict. A case study in social sciences, allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It is a robust research method particularly when a general, detailed investigation is necessary. In elaborating the advantages of a case study, Ziadah notes that a case study enables the researcher to examine data contextually. It is also advantageous because the variations allow for both qualitative and quantitative data analysis and it helps to define the data in real-life situations and explains complicated situations.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Zaidah Zainal (2007) *Case Study as a Research Method*, Jurnal Kemanusiaan No.9 Malaysia

### **1.10.2 Data Collection**

This study shall make use of both primary and secondary data. Primary data shall be collected through questionnaires. Interviews shall involve the key players in the South Sudan conflict such as Embassies of the neighboring countries, the Troika, individual diplomats and South Sudan citizens residing in Nairobi, Kenya and international institutions which deal with issues of refugees such as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Secondary data shall entail reviewing both published and unpublished materials such as, books, journals, academic papers, reports and conference papers.

### **1.10.3 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data analysis shall be done by use of descriptive data analysis method. Data collected, shall also be analyzed by use of qualitative methods based on the information collected through interviews and questionnaires. The data will be presented and characterized in a manner that will explain how South Sudanese refugees internationalize the internal conflict. Data shall be presented in a descriptive narrative form.

## **1.11 Chapter Outline**

This study shall be divided into five chapters.

Chapter one introduces the topic of the study by setting the broad context of the research problem. The introduction presents detailed information on the background to the study, statement of the problem, conceptualization of conflict internationalization and area of interest in this thesis by providing a concise history of the South Sudan conflict and the current refugee situation. This chapter also highlights the significance of this study on the issues of refugees, their role in the spreading of civil wars and internationalization of internal conflict and its implication to peace and stability of the region and beyond.

Chapter two shall discuss the role of external actors and factors that internationalizes the South Sudan conflict. The involvement of external actors and their role in the internationalization of the South Sudan conflict form the basis of discussion. State actors, international organizations and non-governmental organizations as external actors in the process of intervention shall also be discussed.

Chapter three shall focus on the link between refugees and the internationalization of the South Sudan conflict. The dynamics behind the influx of South Sudan refugees to neighboring countries and how that has contributed to the spread of the conflict in the region shall also be discussed in detail.

Chapter four shall discuss the regional security and instability implications of the South Sudan conflict. The effects of the South Sudan conflict on the neighboring countries and the region at large shall also be discussed. The peace and security implications of the South Sudan conflict to

the specific neighboring countries mainly of Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan, and Uganda shall also be discussed in detail.

Chapter five shall form the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study by proposing areas for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ACTORS AND FACTORS THAT INTERNATIONALIZE THE SOUTH SUDAN CONFLICT

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the role of actors, factors and issues that internationalize the South Sudan conflict. Specifically it will look at the domestic actors, external actors (both regional and international), non-state actors as well as specific issues which project the international aspects of the South Sudan conflict.

#### 2.1 Actors of the South Sudan Conflict

Internationalized internal conflicts have many actors. The actors could be categorized as domestic and foreign actors. Foreign actors are further divided into regional, international, state and non-state actors. Like any other internationalized internal conflicts, the South Sudan conflict has attracted many actors ranging from the domestic actors, individual neighboring countries, regional actors, international powers and other non-governmental organizations.

##### 2.1.1 Domestic Actors

As the current conflict broke out as a result of tension within the country's ruling party (SPLM) and its military wing (SPLA), the primary domestic actors in the South Sudan conflict are the government of South Sudan led by President Salva Kiir and his rival the former Vice President turned rebel leader Riek Machar. There have been deep rooted political wrangles within the South Sudan's ruling party (SPLM) since its formation in 1983 over the leadership of the party.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> International Crisis Group (2014), *South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name*. African Report. No. 217, 10<sup>th</sup> April

However, there were other domestic actors who aligned themselves with the major actors depending on their own interests and affiliations.

#### **2.1.1.1 SPLM/A-Juba**

This group of actors includes the political party (SPLM) led by President Salva Kiir which controls the government of South Sudan and the SPLA army loyal to the president.<sup>51</sup> This group has also incorporated important politicians such as James Wani Iga, former vice president, Koul Manyang, Daniel Awet and Nhial Deng.<sup>52</sup> These actors are the main players in the South Sudan conflict. Even though they are not part of South Sudan, Maxwell and Donnelley, also include the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) which is based in Darfur and the SPLM North as internal actors who fight alongside these groups of actors. These actors draw some external support from the neighboring countries, the region and the international community. The external supporters have either been invited by the actors or intervened unilaterally as is the case with Uganda to protect their own interests. For instance, the JEM which is an external actor aligned itself with the domestic actors in the ongoing conflict in South Sudan attracted the interest of both the Sudan and the opposition groups which gave an international dimension to the conflict by bringing together two sovereign states of Sudan and South Sudan. On the other hand the government as the main actor allowed the Ugandan government as an external actor to intervene militarily in South Sudan. This brings together the interest of the SPLM, the government of Sudan, the government of Uganda and the main opposition actor which once again complicated the situation and further internationalized the South Sudan conflict.

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<sup>51</sup> Daniel Maxwell and Phoebe Donnelley (2015), *The Violence in South Sudan, December 2013 to Present*

<sup>52</sup> The Sudd Institute (2014) *South Sudan's Crisis: Its Drivers, Key Players, and Post-conflict Prospects*, Special Report, August 3, 2014 Juba, South Sudan.

### 2.1.1.2 SPLM/IO

This group is led by the main opposition leader and former Vice President Riek Machar. Following failure to reach an agreement and continuous violation of cessation of hostilities between the warring parties, the main opposition leader fled the country and found asylum in another country. This paved the way for connecting the actors of the South Sudan conflict and the countries which gave shelter to the former Vice President. The support given to Riek Machar and the involvement of the countries which sheltered him, in the mediation between the warring parties internationalized the conflict in South Sudan. According to the The Sudd Institute, the key players in this group are the Nasir faction which is led by the former Vice President commonly called SPLM in Opposition. Prominent personalities in this group are Machar himself, former governor of unity state and currently the Vice President of South Sudan Taban Deng Gai and former national minister for environment by the side of Riek Machar and his rebel groups.<sup>53</sup> As the name implies this comprises the main opposition groups who challenge the legitimacy of the government of President Kiir.

There is also an armed opposition group called the White Army. According to ICG, this group defected from SPLA and is said to be highly organized. However, it is not well trained militarily and not loyal and respective of the chains of command of the SPLM In Opposition.<sup>54</sup> This group of actors also has linkages with external elements. For example, at the beginning of the conflict, Sudan was in support of this opposition group as Uganda supported the government. The attraction by the opposition actors of the interests of the outside actors on one hand and the interaction with

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<sup>53</sup>Op Cit. The Sudd Institute (2014)

<sup>54</sup> Op Cit. ICG (2014)

the major actors of conflicting interests contributed to the international characteristic of the internal conflict and as a consequence internationalized the conflict in South Sudan.

### **2.1.1.3 The G-10 or Former Detainees**

This faction group is also called the ‘Garang Boys’ or consists of former detainees. Most of them were arrested by the president after violence erupted in South Sudan. Rebecca Garang, Pagan Amum, and Deng Alor were among others key personalities in this group. This group is in a disadvantaged position compared to the main actors led by Riek Machar and Salva Korr. However, Maxwell and Donnelley argue that, though this group is not armed and fighting, they still have an important role in the ongoing South Sudan conflict and in the process of searching lasting peace in South Sudan.<sup>55</sup> Particularly, this group played a very important role in internationalizing the South Sudan conflict.

Immediately after they were released from prison, the former detainees left for Kenya and settled in Nairobi.<sup>56</sup> President Kenyatta played a crucial role in the repatriation of these personalities back to Juba to be part of the peace talk. Some of the groups went back to Juba and took were appointed to political posts in the government. On the other hand, some of the actors like former Secretary General of the SPLM Pagan Amum had strong connections with the government of the United States and other influential lobby groups and attracted the attention of other international actors. The group also toured the world to mobilize resources and influence the diaspora. This interaction between the former detainees, the neighboring countries the regional actors and the international actors contributed to the internationalization of the conflict in South Sudan. As a result of the

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<sup>55</sup> Op Cit. Maxwell and Donnelley (2015),

<sup>56</sup> Voice of America, *Seven South Sudan Political Detainees Released*, Africa, January 29, 2014 6:00 PM available at <https://www.voanews.com/a/south-sudan-seven-political-detainees-released/1840403.html> accessed on 29 June 2018



involvement of both regional actors and international actors to mediate on behalf of the former detainees and the government of South Sudan and other opposition groups gave an international perspective to the conflict in South Sudan.

#### **2.1.1.4 Other Actors**

In addition to the above discussed actors, the current crisis has also attracted other important stakeholders. According to Maxwell and Donnelley these stockholders include the Jieng Council of Elders, the refugees sheltered in the neighbouring countries and the South Sudanese diaspora. The Jieng Council Elders for instance was very instrumental in influencing the Government of South Sudan to reject the peace proposal initiated by IGAD in 2015. They cited the possibility of bias as these groups are dominated by the Dinak ethnic group which is the dominant ethnic group in the government. On the other hand the South Sudanese refugees particularly those in Kenya and Uganda serve as an external anchor of the actors within South Sudan. The diaspora has also played an important role in fuelling the conflict and were responsible for the revenge killings between the antagonistic ethnic groups.<sup>57</sup>

These groups of actors are found outside the South Sudan territory but they have been critical in influencing both the process and the outcome of the conflict and the mediation efforts. As they reside in other countries outside South Sudan, they have influenced the major warring parties and impacted upon the respective interests of the country of residence. This gave the conflict more regional dimension and further internationalizes it as a result of complex interactions between domestic and external actors.

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<sup>57</sup>Op Cit. ICG (2016)

## **2.2.2 External Actors**

Internal conflicts involve external/foreign actors. These are actors who are not directly fighting in the field but have a very important role in the conflict. Harbom and Wallensteen categorized external actors into three groupings. They are major powers and their allies, neighboring countries and troops of nations engaged in an internal conflict each of which overlaps in some instances. In the case of South Sudan these groups of actors can be categorized into neighboring states, regional/continental organizations, and international actors which again can be divided into two (state and non-state actors).

### **2.2.2.1 Neighboring Countries**

The conflict in South Sudan has impacted upon the neighboring countries in a fundamental way. However, this study focuses only on the countries which have been playing significant role in the conflict. The roles of Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Kenya in the IGAD region countries and Egypt shall be given emphasis in this regard. Brown argues that almost all internal conflicts involve neighboring countries. Many factors can be considered as motivations for neighboring countries to intervene in an internal conflict. He categorized these factors as humanitarian, defensive, protective, opportunistic interventions and opportunistic wars.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand Sandra notes that, external actors can support rebel groups to weaken their rivals in order to bring about change in the government or to protect their ethnic kin.<sup>59</sup>

In the case of South Sudan, each of the neighboring states have their own political, economic and security interests. The involvement of the neighboring countries contributed to the shape and process of internationalization of the conflict. According to Mesfin, South Sudan has become a

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<sup>58</sup>Op Cit. Brown, M. E. (1996).

<sup>59</sup>Op Cit. Sandra P. Borda (2009).

battle ground where neighboring countries fight for regional dominance and geopolitical interests are at the center of the interventions by the neighboring countries.<sup>60</sup>

The 2014 ICG report also indicated that the South Sudan conflict played an important role in linking these neighboring countries in terms of the regional economy by attracting investment and employment from the neighboring countries. When the war erupted in December 2013 in Juba, it brought about economic loss, oil production reduced, refugees flooded the neighboring countries. This affected the interests of all the neighboring countries and undermined the peace and stability of the region at large. Consequently, the countries resorted to both unilateral and collective actions in the South Sudan conflict looking to pursue their respective individual and collective interests.

#### **2.2.2.1.1 Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is one of the important players in the South Sudan conflict. The involvement of Ethiopia in South Sudan dates back to the liberation struggle. Since its foundation, SPLM/A has been getting significant military and logistical support during its struggle with the North Sudan.<sup>61</sup> Ethiopia was also one of the key players along with Kenya in the process of mediating the warring factions in Sudan that culminated with the signing of the CPA. After independence, Ethiopia has continued to support the process of implementation of the post-independence agenda commonly known, as post-independence unresolved CPA issues which includes the non-demarcated border between South Sudan and Sudan, the status of Abyei and the two areas (Blue Nile & South Kordofan) in order to improve the relationship between Sudan and South Sudan. Abyei is the most disputed area between Sudan and South Sudan with the fate of this oil rich region yet to be

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<sup>60</sup> Berouk Mesfin (2015), East African Report, The Regionalization of The South Sudan Crisis, *Institute For Security Studies* No. 4

<sup>61</sup> Guarak Mawut (2011), *Integration and Fragmentation of the Sudan: An African Renaissance*, Author House pp. 252-253

determined. Ethiopia is among the troop contributing nations for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) mandated to maintain peace and stability where the two nations continue to contest. While the current conflict erupted in Juba in December 2013, Ethiopia as the chair of the regional organ IGAD immediately intervened. Ethiopia alongside its neighbors Kenya and Sudan each nominated an envoy to mediate between the warring parties by shuttling between Addis Ababa and Juba.

Apart from its mediation efforts, the country also has its own interests in the South Sudan conflict. Ethiopia's interests in South Sudan conflict are mostly political and security especially where it constantly faces a security threat that spills over from South Sudan. The first security threat is connected with the influx of refugees from South Sudan to its western region called Gambella and the second security threat is proxy in nature from its foe Eritrea. According to Berouk, as the civil war continues in South Sudan, Ethiopia has a legitimate security concern that emanates from its neighbor Eritrea. The concern of Ethiopia is that elements within South Sudan could be used by Eritrea to arm or support Ethiopian rebel factions.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, Ethiopia, because of the abovementioned reasons intervened in the South Sudan conflict directly or indirectly. This consequently internationalized the conflict involving the three sovereign states Ethiopia and South Sudan in one hand and Ethiopia and Eritrea on the other hand.

#### **2.2.2.1.2 Kenya**

Kenya has a long history of diplomatic support to SPLM/A. According Berouk, Kenya played a significant role in the CPA mediation process that was signed in its capital, between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A in 2005 that ended the long running civil war in the region.

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<sup>62</sup> Op Cit .Berouk Mesfin (2015).

Kenya is also one of the key players in the current South Sudan conflict and like Ethiopia, it has provided an IGAD mediator to seek lasting peace between the two warring parties.<sup>63</sup> The country has also supported the South Sudan government in many arenas and is a troop contributor for UNMISS.

With regards to its national interests, like many other neighboring countries of South Sudan, Kenya has strong economic interests in South Sudan. After independence, Kenya invested in South Sudan in the financial sector such as banking, insurance and other sectors like construction, transport and Information Communication Technology. To pursue its economic interests, Kenya intervened in South Sudan diplomatically through the regional bloc IGAD or individually to bring peace and stability in South Sudan. This intervention in support of the government internationalized the conflict.<sup>64</sup>

The country has also been affected by the inflow of refugees fleeing the south Sudan conflict and suffered from the burdens hosting refugees. Immediately after the outbreak of the current conflict, the country played important role in mediating the South Sudan conflict. Particularly at the beginning of the conflict, Kenya under the initiative of President Uhuru Kenyatta, played significant role in releasing the former political detainees who were arrested by President Salva Kiir. These parties had been detained in connection with alleged failed coup seeking to oust him from power and were released in order for them to join the South Sudan actors in the process of

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<sup>63</sup> ICG (2014), South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name, African Report No. 217 10 April 2014.

<sup>64</sup> Akuey D. (2018), South Sudan and the Emerging Security Implications for East Africa, *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, Vol.6. No.2 pp. 218

negotiation aiming to bringing lasting peace for the country. Kenya also hosted the former political detainees after release.<sup>65</sup>

### **2.2.2.1.3 Uganda**

Uganda has vested economic, political and security interests in South Sudan. According to Akuey, South Sudan is considered by Uganda as an important trading ally. Nicolaisen and others note that, before the outbreak of the current conflict in the South Sudan, more than one million Ugandans resided in South Sudan undertaking various business ventures. South Sudan has been a major market for Ugandan goods and services. There were many small scale traders and entrepreneurs in Juba and other towns of in South Sudan selling foodstuffs and other daily utilities. Uganda also has big investments in South Sudan when compared to Ethiopia and Kenya.<sup>66</sup>

In terms of security, an unstable South Sudan serves as a fighting ground for Uganda with its historical rival Sudan and the country's insurgent groups. Uganda provided support to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) during its struggle to liberate South Sudan from the Sudan. On the other hand, Sudan supported Uganda's rebel fighters called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Uganda is also the highest recipient of refugees from South Sudan.

In the current conflict, both countries showed a great support to the Salva Kiir's government. To protect its economic and security interests, Uganda deployed its troops to South Sudan in the name of safeguarding basic installations including the Juba Airport. In January 2014, the Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir visited South Sudan and extended his support to Kiir's government to

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<sup>65</sup> Ty McCormick (2015), Foreign Policy Dispatch, Kenya Wades Into the South Sudan Morass, Available online at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/01/kenya-wades-into-the-south-sudan-morass-famine/> Accessed on May 01/2018

<sup>66</sup> Fanny Nicolaisen et al (2015), *The Cost of Peace, South Sudan-Uganda Relations*, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) Conflict Trends Report No. 4, 23 December 2015

maintain Sudan's dominance in South Sudan and to safeguard its interests particularly oil hence resisted the intervention of Uganda. This competition of the two countries over South Sudan and their historical rivalry further complicated the South Sudanese conflict endangering the mediation efforts of the regional institution (IGAD) and fuelled the conflict further.

#### **2.2.2.1.4 Eritrea**

Eritrea is not a direct neighbor country to South Sudan as the two countries do not share a border. However, Eritrea has played a significant role in the South Sudan conflict. According to ICG, Eritrea had strong relations with SPLA. However, after the country fought with Ethiopia, the relationship changed and its relationship with South Sudan deteriorated. During the CPA period Eritrea supplied different military and logistic support to armed groups in South Sudan. In the current South Sudan crisis, Eritrea has been extending support for the opposition groups in South Sudan.

#### **2.2.2.1.5 Egypt**

Like Eritrea, Egypt shares no border with South Sudan and indeed, the country is not a member of the Horn of Africa region. However, Egypt has a stake in South Sudan. Though Egypt is not a member of the Horn of Africa region, it has a key interest in the region. According to Crisis Group report, Egypt is in dispute with Ethiopia over the construction of the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam on the Nile River.<sup>67</sup> Water from the Nile lies at the center of Egypt's interest hence it sought to enjoin itself in the Horn of African politics. To secure its water flows from the Nile, Egypt sought to engage Ethiopia with in South Sudan and indirectly got involved in the conflict. In 2014, Egypt signed a military cooperation agreement with South Sudan seeking a security alliance with

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<sup>67</sup> ICG (2016) South Sudan's Risky Political Impasse available online at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/south-sudan/south-sudan-risky-political-impasse>

South Sudan with an aim of minimizing Ethiopia's influence in the region. This is action by Ethiopia could lead the current crisis in South Sudan to internationalize beyond the region.

The conflicting interests appreciated above by neighboring countries and the subsequent competition to protect their national interests in South Sudan have given a regional dimension to the conflict by dragging the neighboring countries into to the internal conflict. Moreover, disagreements among the member countries of IGAD in seeking a lasting solution caused the fragile mediation process to become exposed further leading to a failure to reach an agreement. The relation between the Horn of African countries has been tense with the conflict in South Sudan already affecting the relationship between the member states. As the conflict continues, it has attracted more regional countries to support the warring parties and further involve to them in the internal political affairs of South Sudan. This involvement of the neighboring countries for political, military and economic competition has led to a regionalization of the conflict.<sup>68</sup>

#### **2.2.2.2 Regional and Continental Organizations**

In addition to the individual countries of the Horn of Africa, regional organizations have also participated in the ongoing South Sudan conflict in search of lasting peace to the crisis. The major regional actor in the South Sudan conflict are the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) with active member countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya Uganda and Sudan and the African Union which has been also considered as a regional actor which has played a role in the South Sudan conflict.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Op. Cit. Berouk Mesfin (2015).

<sup>69</sup> Op. Cit . The Sudd Institute (2014)



As a result of continued fighting and humanitarian suffering regional actors intervened to stop the violence. Sponsored by the region's actor IGAD, the warring parties negotiated for peaceful resolution of the conflict and a deal on Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) in January 2014 and in May 2014 was agreed to in order to form a transitional government. However, the parties failed to meet their commitments as they violated the agreement and were unable to agree on the composition and responsibilities of the transitional government. This further attracted the international community who threatened the two major actors and led to the signing another agreement in August 2015.<sup>70</sup>

The agreement helped to avert major clashes between the president and his former vice president. However, armed conflict continued between the government forces and the rebels violating the cease fire agreement. In April 2016, the two parties reached a new agreement to form a Transitional Government of National Unity. Based on this agreement the main opposition leader returned to Juba to take over his new post as First Vice President and to establish a new cabinet according to the power sharing agreement. However, the parties failed to demilitarize the capital Juba.<sup>71</sup> Even though several agreements have been reached between the warring parties, so far no agreement has been implemented in full and the conflict continues. This inability of the major actors to the conflict to resolve their differences agreeably made them seek outside support that eventually internationalized the South Sudan conflict.

IGAD mainly played an active role in mediating between the warring parties. The authority assigned three mediators from three countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan. Garang notes that immediately after the outbreak of conflict in South Sudan in December 2013, IGAD tried to

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<sup>70</sup> Jeremy A. Brown (2014), *South Sudan's Slide in to Conflict: Revisiting the Past and Reassessing Partnerships*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs

<sup>71</sup>Op. Cit. Maxwell and Donnelley (2015).

contain the violence through preventive diplomacy by sending the Foreign Ministers of the IGAD member countries to mediate between the warring parties though its efforts were not successful.<sup>72</sup>

There are several reasons for the failure of the IGAD mediation efforts to bring peace and stability in South Sudan. The International Crisis Group (ICG) report points out that, regional divisions and the struggle for regional influence, centralized decision making and absence of institutionalism in the regional block and elite mediation are responsible factors for the failure. This failure forced the authority to expand its mediation mandate to (IGAD Plus) to include international external actors such as China, United States of America, United Kingdom and regional actors like the AU, UN, European Union, Norway and the IGAD Partner Forum.

Although its mediation role has been very limited, The African Union (AU), as one of the continental regional actors has been engaged in the South Sudan conflict mediation process since the conflict erupted in 2013. In this regard, Garang notes that the role of the African Union in the current conflict is limited to investigation of assumed atrocities and human rights violations and supporting IGAD's mediation efforts.<sup>73</sup> The involvement of the two regional organizations in South Sudan conflict has served to internationalize the conflict.

### **2.2.2.3 International Players /Extra-Regional Actors**

The western world particularly the United States and its allies are engaged in the war on terror in spaces such as the Horn of Africa region. The United States and China have also competing interests in the oil resources in South Sudan. As a result, the ongoing South Sudan conflict, has attracted the interests of international state and non-state actors outside the neighboring countries and regional actors.

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<sup>72</sup>Op. Cit. Garang A. (2015)

<sup>73</sup> Op. Cit . Garang A. (2015).

### **2.2.2.3.1 International State Actors**

In this category, at the country level, the United States of America and China are important international players as they are the super powers. The United States of America, as a superpower has its own vested political and economic interests in South Sudan. According to Garang the newly independent country of South Sudan is considered to be the result of foreign policy accomplishment of United States of America. As a result, the USA has both political and economic interests in South Sudan. Economically, the USA has an interest in the oil sector. It has sought to check the forays of China in the Horn of Africa region aiming to secure its fair share of oil in South Sudan.

However, the involvement of the USA in the South Sudan conflict is not limited as an individual actor. In addition to its unilateral role United States, has played a collective role along with Great Britain and Norway a group identified as Troika. The Troika in which the US is a key player, has provided invaluable support for the IGAD mediation process. According to Ajongo, Troika has been an in important actor in South Sudan since the time of CPA in technical and financial support for South Sudan.<sup>74</sup>

In 2015, the regional block IGAD failed to mediate the warring parties of the South Sudan conflict. As a result of this failure, IGAD expanded its mandate to IGAD Plus and included other external actors under the partnership of Troika that includes (USA, United Kingdom and Norway).<sup>75</sup>

On the other hand, China, as an emerging superpower, also has competing interests in South Sudan. Garang notes that China has major interests in both South Sudan and Sudan and has tried to maintain a balanced relationship with both countries. China has been involved in the South Sudan

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<sup>74</sup> Chol Ajongo, Ambassador of the Republic of South Sudan to the Republic of Kenya, interview February 2018

<sup>75</sup>Op. Cit. ICG (2015)

conflict mainly in diplomatic and peace keeping activities by contributing troops to the United Nations Mission for South Sudan (UNMISS).<sup>76</sup> Like the USA, China has an interest in oil and other sectors. To pursue its national interests, China continues supporting the South Sudan government both financially and militarily. Francis stated that China has been supporting militarily the Government of South Sudan (GoS) long before its independence in pursuit of its oil interest.<sup>77</sup> As a result, South Sudan has become a battle ground for international influence between the USA and its partners on one hand and China on the other hand.

### **2.2.2.3.2 International Non-State Actors**

In addition to state actors, the South Sudan conflict has also attracted the attention of major international non-state actors. In this regard, Micheni notes that the conflict in South Sudan has attracted a number of international governmental and non-governmental actors such as the United Nations and the European Union (EU).<sup>78</sup> The Sudd Institute in its findings notes that the UN has been accused of being impartial in the conflict by supporting one of the conflicting parties.

According to Blanchard, the UN through its peace keeping mission the UNMISS, established in 2011 mandated to assist the Government of the Republic of South Sudan has played an important role in internationalizing the conflict. Since fighting broke out in South Sudan, UN peace keeping soldiers and other staff have been killed by both the government and opposition forces and the movement of the peace keepers has been limited.<sup>79</sup> Garang also argues that, even though its role

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<sup>76</sup> Ian M. Micheni (2017), *Revisiting the Role of International and Regional Actors in the South Sudan Conflict*, International Institute for Strategic Studies , available at <http://horninstitute.org/revisiting-the-role-of-international-and-regional-actors-in-the-south-sudan-conflict/>

<sup>77</sup> Caroline Francis et al (2012), *China and the Sudan-South Sudan Oil Fee Impasse: Implications of Chinese Foreign Aid, Diplomacy, and Military Relations*

<sup>78</sup> Ian M. Micheni (2017), Op cit

<sup>79</sup> Blanchard L.,(2016) Op cit.

is limited to financial support and technical assistance for the peace process under the IGAD partners' platform, the EU still continues to be an important actor in the South Sudan conflict.

### **2.2.2.3.3 International Humanitarian Organizations**

The conflict in South Sudan has resulted in enormous humanitarian suffering. Many people have lost their lives, with becoming many displaced internally and others forced to flee South Sudan. According to reports from OCHA, since the conflict began in December 2013, 1.9 million people have been internally displaced, and 1.6 million refugees have fled to neighboring countries.<sup>80</sup> Since the outbreak of the conflict, an estimated number 50,000 to 300,000 number of people have been killed.<sup>81</sup> This has seen the country classified as one of the greatest humanitarian emergencies in the world next to Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.<sup>82</sup> This huge humanitarian crisis consequently attracted many international humanitarian organizations to intervene in the name of humanitarian assistance.

Since the outbreak of the conflict, international humanitarian organizations such as Food and Agricultural Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Committee of the Red Cross, United Nations Children's Fund and World Food Program have responded in many ways to the deteriorating humanitarian situation. However, the ongoing conflict in South Sudan is not conducive for the full operation of these humanitarian organizations. Blanchard notes that there have been frequent lootings of aid agencies stocks which has limited

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<sup>80</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2017), South Sudan Humanitarian Bulletin No. 5 28 March 2017 accessed on 07 July 2017 and available [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/SouthSudan/2017\\_SouthSudan/170328\\_OCHA\\_SouthSudan\\_Humanitarian\\_Bulletin\\_5.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/SouthSudan/2017_SouthSudan/170328_OCHA_SouthSudan_Humanitarian_Bulletin_5.pdf)

<sup>81</sup> Kelley J., 'Volunteers in effort to count number of South Sudan War Dead' Daily Nation (Nairobi) 05 January 2018.

<sup>82</sup>Op. Cit. Blanchard L., (2016)

the role of these humanitarian organizations in supplying relief to save the lives of the affected people.

In addition to the disruption of the operation of the humanitarian agencies, the aid workers have been also targeted in killings, sexual violence and incidences of rape. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in its bulletin reported that ‘at least 79 aid workers have been killed in South Sudan since the beginning of the December 2013 crisis, including 12 killed in 2017, and at least eight humanitarian convoys have been attacked already in the same year.’<sup>83</sup> What complicated the matter is that, both the government and the rebel factions were involved in these attacks. Humanitarian intervention has become an important part in the process of peace building for countries which are troubled by conflicts or emerging from conflicts.<sup>84</sup>

However, recent research has been critical of the efficacy of humanitarian intervention in bringing lasting peace to conflict zones. Stedman notes that, when a civil war takes place in a country where natural resources are limited, the warring factions may compete for aid assistance to secure their share and this increases the tension between the groups. There are also situations where humanitarian relief stocks looted by either of the warring groups are traded for arm and this further fuels the conflict.<sup>85</sup> It has been noted that both the government soldiers and the rebel forces have

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<sup>83</sup>Op. Cit. OCHA (2017).

<sup>84</sup>Jérémie Labbé (2012), *Rethinking Humanitarianism: Adapting to 21 st Century Challenges*, New York: International Peace Institute, November 2012, available at [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ipi\\_pub\\_rethinking\\_humanitarianism.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ipi_pub_rethinking_humanitarianism.pdf) accessed on 03 May 2018

<sup>85</sup>Op. Cit. John Stedman (1999).

been involved in the looting of humanitarian aid stocks. This has impacted on delivery of the humanitarian relief and further internationalized the South Sudan conflict.

### **2.3 Factors Responsible for the Internationalization of the Conflict in South Sudan**

There are many factors responsible for a conflict which is the result of a combination of political, economic and social factors. Hence, it can be said that an internal conflict is contextual, has multiple factors and at the same time it has many dimensions. As far as the South Sudan conflict is concerned, there are many causes behind the outbreak of the current conflict. However, this study focuses on the major factors responsible for the internationalization of current South Sudan crisis.

Competition for political power, access to economic development and ethnicity are the major factors which contributed for the outbreak of the conflict between the major actors and at the same time involved other external actors which further internationalizes the conflict. Koos and Gutschke note that the reason for the current crisis in South Sudan is political power struggle. The conflict was initiated as a result of President Salva Kiir's political decision to dissolve the country's cabinet and sack the Vice President Riek Machar. This decision was deliberately taken by the President to curtail the Vice President's ambition to become president in the country's election that was to be held in 2015.<sup>86</sup> The struggle for power and its consequences was not limited to the South Sudan major actors. Instead, it attracted the interest of the immediate neighboring states particularly Uganda and Sudan.

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<sup>86</sup> Carlo Koos and Thea Gutschke (2014), South Sudan's Newest War: When Two Old Men Divide a Nation, *German Institute of Global and Area Studies No.2*

A weak South Sudan is seen as a threat to Uganda since it creates a safe ground for the free movement of Uganda's insurgent group called the Lord's Resistance Army in South Sudan. Hence, immediately the war broke out in South Sudan, Uganda intervened to support the Kiir administration in the name of protection of basic installations.<sup>87</sup> On the other hand, Sudan and Uganda have a tense relationship. When Uganda intervened militarily in South Sudan, Sudan supported the rebel groups. Hence, power politics brought together the three sovereign countries of Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan into the equation. This gave a regional dimension to the conflict

With regards to negative ethnicity as an element of the South Sudan conflict, Bayeh argues that, the current South Sudan conflict is the result of negative ethnicity that has influenced the power struggle between the leaders of the country's major ethnic groups Dinka of Salva Kiir and Nuer of Riek Machar.<sup>88</sup> The struggle for political power between the President and his opponent former Vice President has directly involved the respective tribes of Dinka to which the President belong and Nuer to which the Vice President belong and which are the major ethnic groups in the country. This has given the conflict an ethnic character.

According to Bayeh, there is a historical enmity between the two ethnic groups traced to the struggle for liberation against the northern Arab dominated Sudan. There was a struggle for power even during the liberation war when the South Sudanese fought against the North between the Dinkas led by the late John Garang leader of the SPLM/A and Nuers led by the vice leader Riek Machar. This difference between the SPLM/A leaders led the killing of the Dinkas in Bor in the

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<sup>87</sup> ICG(2016), South Sudan: Rearranging the Cheeseboard, Africa Report, No.243, 20 December 2016

<sup>88</sup> Endalcachew Bayeh (2014), Republic of South Sudan: From North South to Nuer-Dinka Conflict, *International Journal of Research (IJR)* Vol-1, Issue-11



‘Bor Massacar’ by the Nuers, affiliated to (Riek Machar) and further complicated the relationship between the two largest ethnic groups and further informs the current crisis. The issue of ethnicity has drawn in the neighboring countries of South Sudan. A case in point is the tension created between Ethiopian Nuers and Anwaks in Gambella. The inflow of refugees from South Sudan especially of the ethnic Nuers to the western region of Ethiopia disrupted the ethnic balance between these two communities leading to tension and violence.<sup>89</sup>

Economic interests are also one of the key factors which have driven the South Sudan conflict. Koos and Gutschke posit that, in addition to ethnicity, access to economic resources (oil) is a cause for the current crisis.<sup>90</sup> Control of the oil resources, lies at the heart of the conflict. Moreover, as a newly independent nation, South Sudan has many economic opportunities. The country is among the oil producing countries in the Horn of Africa region. South Sudan also has a huge fertile and arable land which is an opportunity for agricultural investment. This has attracted the interests of both regional and international actors to pursue their own economic interests in the country.

According to Garang, China for instance gets about 6% of its oil needs from South Sudan. The fact that after independence South Sudan preferred working with the Chinese oil companies, underscored China’s influence in the newly independent country. China has also invested in South Sudan in the areas of infrastructure, petroleum and telecommunication. Apart from economic

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<sup>89</sup> Dereje Feyissa (2015) *The Adverse Impact of South Sudanese Civil War on Ethiopia - Some Preliminary Notes*, *International Law and Policy Institute*, May, 2017

<sup>90</sup> Op. Cit Carlo K. and Thea G. (2014).

interest, China has also made economic interventions in South Sudan in order to compete for regional supremacy with the US.<sup>91</sup>

The presence of China in Africa as one of the super powers is increasing from time to time. This is worrisome to the United States of America and its allies.. In the case of South Sudan, the US has sought to minimize the role of China in South Sudan. Garang asserted this by stating that ‘the United States’ other interests are based on containment of China’s ambitions in the region. Therefore, scramble for the resource is an important issue which has contributed for the South Sudan conflict and its internationalization.

## **2.4 Summary**

From the above, it is clear that South Sudan’s internal conflict is no longer purely internal. External actors have also played significant roles in the South Sudan internal conflict. The involvement of these external actors has exacerbated the ongoing conflict in South Sudan intentionally or unintentionally.

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<sup>91</sup> Garang A.(2015), Op cit.

## CHAPTER THREE

### REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

#### 3.0 Introduction

The South Sudan conflict has displaced many people internally and produced millions of refugees fleeing their homelands to the neighboring countries in search of safety and they have impacted the host countries in many ways. This chapter focuses on refugees in light of the ‘burden’ that they have been perceived to place on administrations of the host states, the principles of burden sharing and their role in conflict internationalization.

#### 3.1 South Sudanese Refugees in the Region and Beyond

According to UNHCR reports, over 2 million South Sudanese are either internally displaced or are refugees.<sup>92</sup> Refugees from South Sudan continue to pose challenges to the neighboring countries which host them refugees and to the wider international community.. The number of refugees and asylums seekers increases from time to time since the outbreak of the conflict in South Sudan in December 2013.

The report further projected the number to reach 3,135,000 by December 2018.<sup>93</sup> The number of the South Sudan refugees showed an increase between January 2017 and October 2017 especially in the neighboring countries of the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. This makes the South Sudan refugee crisis situation one of the highest in the region. The increase in the number of South Sudan’s refugees has created

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<sup>92</sup> UNHCR (2015) Op cit.

<sup>93</sup> UNHCR (2018), South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan January-December 2018 available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/61894> accessed on 04 May 2018

challenges for the countries of the region who host refugees and the international community who intervene in the form of humanitarian assistance.

The number of refugees hosted by the neighboring countries is not evenly distributed. Mfubu and Willie note that the distribution of refugees to the neighboring countries can be determined by geographical nearness and the relative development and stability of the host countries.<sup>94</sup> As a result, these countries shoulder much more responsibilities for refugees fleeing from violence and related violation of human rights from South Sudan than say countries that are not immediately proximate to the challenge.

The UNHCR report indicates that, in the region, Uganda shoulders the bulk of refugees hosting about 1,045,236 refugees. Sudan follows closely by hosting 767,425 refugees with Ethiopia as the third largest host for the South Sudan refugees sheltering 428,928. About 112,439 South Sudanese refugees are also found in Kenya. The DRC and CAR host about 90,003 and 2,187 South Sudan refugees respectively.<sup>95</sup> From these figures, about 63 percent of the South Sudan refugee population is comprised of women, children and youth. This situation has complicated the humanitarian crisis especially in delivering the humanitarian assistance in the region.<sup>96</sup> The huge number of South Sudan refugees in the region has transformed the South Sudan internal conflict into a regional one, because of the burden the refugees have placed on the host countries.

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<sup>94</sup>Op. Cit. Willie and Mfubu (2016)

<sup>95</sup> UNHCR (2018), Regional Update, South Sudan Situation 1-31 January 2018, available at <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20South%20Sudan%20Situation%20Regional%20Update%20-%2031JAN18.pdf> accessed on 04 May 2018

<sup>96</sup> UNHCR (2018), Op cit.

At the global level, South Sudan is one of the largest contributors of refugee population next to Syria and Afghanistan.<sup>97</sup> This indicates that the humanitarian situation created as a result of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan is not limited in the region. Instead it has become the problem of the international community at large.

### **3.2 International and Regional Refugee Regimes and Conflict Internationalization**

The end of the II World War saw the establishment of several international human rights regimes. The suffering of human beings and violation of human rights during the war made it necessary for the international community to establish international instruments to prevent the violation of human rights. As a result in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was declared by the United Nations General Assembly.

Human right violations are one of the reasons that make internal conflicts become internationalized. This is mainly because as opposed to the past human rights issues have become international issues.<sup>98</sup> Mwangi notes that, human right issues are universal in the sense that any country in the international system has the right and duty to prevent the violation of human rights committed in any part of the world. Moreover, any country in the world irrespective of being a signatory is bound by human right treaties.

When there is a mass violation of human rights and a subsequent humanitarian crisis, the international community intervenes to protect innocent civilians.<sup>99</sup> Willie and Mfumu also note that, in addition to the provisions on the prevention of violation of human rights domestically, the

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<sup>97</sup> UNCHR (2016) Global Trends, Forced displacement in 2016 available at <http://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf> accessed on 05 May 2018

<sup>98</sup>Op. Cit. Mwangi Makumi, (2006)

<sup>99</sup> Najafov Z.(2017),Internationalization of Ethnic Conflicts and the Impact on Regional and International Security, *Journal of Political Science & Public Affairs*, Vol.5 No.4. pp. 1

Universal Declaration of Human Rights proposed to guarantee individuals the right to seek asylum in another country when human rights violated in their countries.<sup>100</sup> Article 14(1) of the Declaration stipulates that, everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries, asylum from persecution.<sup>101</sup> This provision by itself, internationalizes the issues of human rights as is the situation in South Sudan. Countries near or far from South Sudan, have the right to intervene in the South Sudan conflict where violations of fundamental human rights of South Sudanese paving the way for the countries to intervene in the internal affairs of South Sudan especially the countries hosting refugees which internationalizes the internal conflict.

Another key international regime that deals with the issues of refugees is UNHCR. Willie and Mfubu state that the provisions within Article 14(1) of the Declaration paved the way for the establishment and adoption of the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.<sup>102</sup> When it comes to refugee protection the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol is the first of its kind established at the international level to protect refugees. In this regard, Feller notes that the 1951 convention is the first regime to explicitly serve as a binding instrument to protect the rights of refugees at the universal level. It laid the foundation for further establishment of other international regimes such as the UNHCR which was tasked to provide international protection for refugees and advance the principles for the international protection of refugees.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ncumisa Willie and Popo Mfubu (2016), "Responsibility Sharing: Towards a Unified Refugee Protection Framework in Africa", *AHMR*, Vol.2 No3, (2016) pp. 544

<sup>101</sup> 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

<sup>102</sup>Op. Cit. Willie and Mfubu (2016)

<sup>103</sup> Erika Feller (2001), "The Evolution of the International Refugee Protection Regime", *Journal of Law & Policy*, vol.5 No. 129 (2001) pp. 123-132

As UNHCR is responsible for the protection of refugees, it has been involved in countries where violence has displaced people internally and more importantly catering for refugees hosted in other states. This intervention creates an interaction of the international community through UNHCR as well as between the country in conflict and refugee host countries..

At the regional level, in Africa, the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa came in to existence in 1969. The Convention not only upheld and addressed the plight of refugees but also necessitated intervention as well.<sup>104</sup> At the sub-regional level, IGAD though initially established as a drought and desertification fighting mechanism, it has a provision regarding refugees in the text treaty. Article 13 A(s) of the authority states that, member countries in their area of cooperation shall agree to ‘facilitate repatriation and reintegration of refugees, returnees and displaced persons and demobilized soldiers in cooperation with relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations in accordance with the existing national, regional and international instruments’<sup>105</sup> This provision serves as a standard for the protection of refugees in the Horn of Africa sub-region.

This encourages member countries to intervene in countries which host refugees thereby linking the interests of more than two sovereign nations. As the countries interact in the name of burden sharing and humanitarian assistance the conflict acquires regional as well as continental attributes. This is true in the case of South Sudan refugee hosting countries where the regional member countries interact through either cooperation or divergence.

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<sup>104</sup> Op. Cit. OAU Convention (1969).

<sup>105</sup> IGAD (1986) Establishment Agreement

### **3.3 Refugees, Burden Sharing and Conflict Internationalization**

Refugees like citizens of the host countries have basic needs and in this manner they put pressure on the host countries. Therefore countries need to cooperate to share the costs of providing for refugees. One of the important principles of international and regional refugee regimes is the principle of burden sharing. The Preamble of the 1951 Convention stipulates that ‘the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries, and that a satisfactory solution of a problem of which the United Nations has recognized the international scope and nature cannot therefore be achieved without international co-operation’<sup>106</sup> The idea of shared responsibility and burden sharing also has got a significant place in the regional regimes. In this context, in Article 2(4) of the 1969 OAU Convention states that:

Where a Member State finds difficulty in continuing to grant asylum to refugees, such a State may appeal directly to other Member States and through the OAU, and other Member States shall in the spirit of African solidarity and international co-operation take appropriate measures to lighten the burden of the Member State granting asylum.

Both the UN and OAU Conventions underlined the importance of cooperation of the international community and neighboring countries to ease the burdens the refugees put on the host countries. This is more so important in providing for the basic needs of refugees and provision of desired protection, based on the principles of burden sharing and protection of refugees. These provisions and the subsequent actions of the refugee receiving countries in the hosting and protecting refugees internationalizes the internal conflict by attracting the involvement of both regional and international actors.

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<sup>106</sup> Op. Cit .UN Convention relating to the Status (1951).



Human right activists and political commentators argue that there is no mandatory obligation for states to share costs related to refugee burdens. However, Milner notes that, even though, there is no binding obligation with regards to sharing the costs of refugees, there has been an important agreement on the principle of burden sharing and responsibility sharing. The principle of burden sharing and responsibility sharing is clearly stipulated in the preamble of the 1951 Convention.<sup>107</sup> The 1969 OAU convention also talks about solidarity and burden sharing. In the case of refugees, burden sharing is addressed in ‘the principle through which the diverse costs of granting asylum assumed by the host state are more equitably divided among a greater number of states’.<sup>108</sup> It is on the basis these principles that the neighboring countries of South Sudan and the wider international community are sharing the responsibilities and burdens of refugees fleeing from South Sudan as the conflict rages on.

### **3.4 South Sudanese Refugees and Economic Burdens on the Neighboring Countries**

The influx of refugees in to other countries places a significant burden to the receiving states. One of the main burdens is economic in nature. Brown argues that refugees put substantial economic pressure on the neighboring and host countries which have very scarce natural resources.<sup>109</sup> These resources could be land, forest, water or services such as health and housing. There also emerges an increased demand for natural resources such as grazing land and firewood.<sup>110</sup> Hosting large

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<sup>107</sup> James Milner (2016), *When Norms Are not Enough Understanding the Principle and Practice of Burden and Responsibility Sharing for Refugees*, Global Leadership and Cooperation for Refugees Series Paper No. 2 — December 2016

<sup>108</sup> Milner, James (2005), “*Burden Sharing.*” In *Immigration and Asylum: From 1900 to the Present*, edited by Matthew Gibney and Randall Hansen, 56-57. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio.

<sup>109</sup> Brown, M. E., (1996) Op cit.

<sup>110</sup> Margarita Gomez and Asger Christensen (2010), *The Impacts of Refugees on Neighboring Countries: A Development Challenge*, World Development Report, July 29, 2010

number of refugees has a big pressure on the economy of refugee receiving states as refugees and local communities compete for the limited resources.

The refugees from South Sudan have a put burden on the economies of the neighboring countries which receive refugees. Uganda is one of the leading countries hosting a substantial share of refugees from South Sudan. According to Zhu and others, Uganda, having one of the most favorable and advanced refugee assistance programs in the world, has hosted more than 800,000 refugees from South Sudan, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The vast majority of these refugees are from South Sudan. Uganda has a policy of freedom of movement, work rights, and the right to own land for the refugees.<sup>111</sup> However, these policies have affected the wellbeing of citizens in terms of competition for opportunities and impacted the economy of the country's northern region called West Nile.<sup>112</sup>

The East and Southern Africa report indicated that, after 2016 the arrival of large number of South Sudan refugees created ripples in the market by causing inflation on basic goods such as housing, food and fuel. Though the government and humanitarian aid agencies tried to provide emergency assistance to address this, the action further complicated the crisis.<sup>113</sup> Hence the presence of limited resources in the refugee receiving areas and the competition for resources between the host communities and the refugees has often caused friction.

The same is true in Ethiopia where the influx of South Sudan refugees has affected the economy of the Gambella regional state, which is the highest receiving regional state of the South Sudan refugees in Ethiopia. In this regard, Olay notes that the competition between the locals and the

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<sup>111</sup> Ndoboli Nathan, Deputy High Commissioner of Uganda to Kenya, Interview, Nairobi, Kenya March 2018

<sup>112</sup> Heng Zhu et al (2016) *Economic Impact of Refugee Settlements in Uganda*, Policy report 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2016

<sup>113</sup> Bridging the Gap, Long-term Implications for South Sudanese Refugees in West Nile, Uganda, East & Southern Africa September 2017 available online <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BRIDGING-THE-GAP-final-1.pdf>

refugees for basic resources and social services, affected the flow of goods and services within the society and impacted the region's and the country's economy by putting pressure on the prices and that further resulted in depression of wages. In addition, the price of food went up and this negatively affected the majority of the local communities whose income could not match the high food prices.<sup>114</sup> That exacerbated the tension and violence between the local communities and the refugees.

Kenya is also one of the largest South Sudanese refugee receiving countries. The influx of refugees has put pressure on the country's economy. Wanjohi notes that the presence of South Sudan refugees in Kenya especially in the Kakuma refugee camp has impacted on the economy especially the cost of living for the host community. As a result of the influx of the refugees, the price of goods and services has gone up due to an imbalance of demand and supply. In addition, the presence of refugees has impacted on the lives of the pastoralist communities because of the reduction of grazing land and water.<sup>115</sup> According to Gawany, though host community has gained and is able to engage in income generating activities such as selling their animals to the refugees, there is a huge economic burden placed by the South Sudan on the economy of Kenya.<sup>116</sup>

### **3.5 South Sudanese Refugees and Social Burdens on the Neighboring Countries**

Gomez and Christensen note that the presence of refugees in a host country poses possible social burdens by increasing the demands for social services such as education, medical services, and infrastructure like water supply, sanitation, and transportation. Nadine also notes that refugees can

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<sup>114</sup> Kijak O. Olay (2017), "The Impact of Refugees on the Host Community in Ethiopia: The Case of Gambella Region" *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, Vol.3, No.-6. Pp. 748

<sup>115</sup> Muriithi J. Wanjohi, *Effects of South Sudan's instability on Kenya's economic and human security: a case study of Nairobi and Turkana counties*, Master Thesis, University of Nairobi, 2014

<sup>116</sup> Yusuf Gawany, UNHCR Resettlement/Solutions Officer, Interview, Kakuma, Kenya March 2018

create social tension in the receiving state and contribute to spread the conflict.<sup>117</sup> This is true in the case of Ethiopia where there exists a traditional competition and hostility between the Anuak and Nuer communities of the Gambella region. The inflow of refugees from South Sudan especially of the ethnic Nuers disrupted the ethnic balance between these two communities leading to tension and violence. Mufti concurs with this noting that the presence of refugees from South Sudan led to the outbreak of tribal feuds, citing the infamous abduction of children from the Southern part Ethiopia by South Sudanese militants and resultant absence of peace and tranquility in that particular region.<sup>118</sup>

Kenya is one of the largest refugee receiving country not only in the region but globally as well. According to Sanghi and others, Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp has hosted up to 190,822 refugees. The refugees are from Somalia, Ethiopia, Burundi and DRC. However, out of the 190,822 refugees hosted in Kakuma, 50 percent are South Sudanese refugees.<sup>119</sup> The presence of these refugees has put immense social pressures on the local community and the country at large. Sanghi and others argue that, although there exists a negative attitude towards the refugees by the Turkana communities, as recent developments have shown, there has been tension and violence between the refugees and the local communities. The source of the tension and violence is the competition for resources mainly land. Moreover, there is also a feeling by the local communities (Turkanas) that aid agencies that are providing humanitarian assistance are unfair in their distribution of resources.

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<sup>117</sup>Op. Cit. Ansorg Nadine (2014).

<sup>118</sup> Dina Mufti, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Kenya, Interview, Nairobi, Kenya March 2018

<sup>119</sup>Apurva Sanghi et al (2016) *"Yes" In My Backyard? The Economics of Refugees and Their Social Dynamics in Kakuma, Kenya*, Joint report of the World Bank Group and the UNHCR

According to the East and Central 2017 report, in 2016 a huge number of South Sudan refugees fled into the West Nile sub-region of Uganda. This influx raised challenges in the provision of social services such as health and education services. Ndoboli, acknowledged that the as most of the refugees sheltering in Uganda are women and children. This created a huge challenge for the Ugandan government to provide access to education for all the children in the refugee camps.<sup>120</sup> The arrival of the refugees put a further burden on the already poor provision of services and caused social tension over access to and provision of services. Moreover, this increased pressure on the already scarce natural resources consequently leading to degradation of the natural environment. As a result, tensions were raised over the allocation and control of valuable resources between the local communities and the refugees.<sup>121</sup>

### **3.6 Political and Security Burdens**

There is a growing connection between insecurity of states hosting refugees and the influx of refugees. Salehyan notes that in addition to humanitarian catastrophes, refugees have significant security implications for the receiving states because of two reasons. One, the influx of refugees might lead the receiving states to mobilize forces against their country of origin and two, as a result, the conflict in the country of origin for the refugees may be spread by the refugees themselves. In addition to economic burdens, the influx of refugees from South Sudan into the neighboring countries continues to pose major political and security challenges to neighboring countries and to the region at large. Odhiambo and Muluvi note that, by exacerbating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the influx of refugees from South Sudan, not only

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<sup>120</sup> Ndoboli Nathan, Deputy High Commissioner of Uganda to Kenya, Interview, Nairobi, Kenya March 2018

<sup>121</sup> Bridging the Gap, Long-term Implications for South Sudanese Refugees in West Nile, Uganda, East & Southern Africa September 2017 available online <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BRIDGING-THE-GAP-final-1.pdf>

puts pressure on the resources of host countries, but also undermines the national security of individual states and regional security at large.<sup>122</sup>

In 2016, the Kenyan Government indicated that it will close refugee camps citing insecurity and environmental burdens as a result of hosting more than 600,000 refugees for the last 25 years.<sup>123</sup>

The policy shift on the intention to close the refugee camps by the Kenyan government attracted the attention of the international community. For instance, the UNHCR expressed its concern about the pronouncement and requested the Kenyan government to reconsider its decision.<sup>124</sup> The majority of the refugees in the Kenyan refugee camps (Dadaab and Kakuma) are of Somali and South Sudan origin.

The decision of the Kenyan government to close two camps also attracted the interest of regional actors. The reason for this concern was based on the worry that, the closure of the two camps would have an impact on the humanitarian disaster for the region. That means a larger burden for the neighboring countries of Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia which are already hosting big number of refugees. Kenya's continued its threats to close its refugee camps (Dadaab) which could displace more refugees to these countries. The directive also sparked interest within the domestic politics in Kenya. In this regard, in February 2017, the Kenyan High Court ruled against the proposal by

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<sup>122</sup> Paul Odhiambo and Augustus Muluvi (2014), Africa in focus, Impact of Prolonged South Sudan Crisis on Kenya's Economic and Security Interests, Accessed online on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2014/03/12/impact-of-prolonged-south-sudan-crisis-on-kenyas-economic-and-security-interests/>

<sup>123</sup> Agutu N. 'Refugees Must Go', *The Star*, (Nairobi), 06 May 2016

<sup>124</sup> Adrian Edwards, UNHCR appeals to Kenya over decision to end refugee hosting available online <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/5/5730b5f36/unhcr-appeals-kenya-decision-end-refugee-hosting.html> 09 May 2016

the Kenyan government to close the Dadaab refugee camp, claiming that it was unconstitutional and against Kenya's national, regional and international refugee law obligations.<sup>125</sup>

This debate between the international humanitarian agencies, development partners, the governments of Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan gave the issues of refugees an international character consequently internationalizing the South Sudan internal conflict. As Kenya continues to receive tens of thousands of refugees from the neighboring countries, insecurity continues to be a point of concern for the state. The lawlessness in Somalia for about the last three decades and the ongoing conflict in South Sudan has made Kenya one of the largest refugee receiving countries in the Horn of Africa region. The security of the North-Eastern part of Kenya has especially been affected as a result of a large number of refugee influx from Somalia and South Sudan. The impact on insecurity in this part of the country has been to the extent of almost impairing the government's development plans in the areas.<sup>126</sup>

Political instability in Gambella, the western part of Ethiopia continues to be a major challenge as a result of the influx of the South Sudan's refugees. According to Feyissa, in Gambella, the dispute on the regional politics revolves around "citizenship". Which poses questions on who qualifies to be an Ethiopian national. Before the arrival of large number of ethnic Nuer refugees from South Sudan to the region, the Anuak were the majority in the area. However, since 1994, as a result of the continued influx of South Sudanese Nuer refugees since the outbreak of the first South Sudan conflict, the Nuer ethnic group changed the status quo. The Anuak, who were supposed to be the majority, rejected majority Nuer. This created tension and has served as a major factor for inter-

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<sup>125</sup> Fredrik Lerneryd (2016), *A Review of the Legal Framework Relating to the Proposed Closure of the Dadaab Refugee Camp and Repatriation of Somali Refugees*, Report of Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

<sup>126</sup> Peter Kirui and John Mwaruvie (2012), 'The Dilemma of Hosting Refugees: A Focus on the Insecurity in North-Eastern Kenya', *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, Vol. 3 No. 8 [2012] pp. 161-171

ethnic conflict between the Anuak and Nuer resulting political instability in the Western part of Ethiopia.<sup>127</sup>

Most importantly, as a result of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, majority of the refugees arriving in the Gambella region are ethnic Nuer. Refugee camps in Gambella are gradually growing thereby changing the demographic structure in favor of the Ethiopian Nuers. This continued influx of refugees from South Sudan might have a negative impact on the already fragile peace in the region. In addition to inter-ethnic conflict and tension, there exists intra-ethnic clashes with in the Nuer clans. This is mainly because, the clan politics have divided the Nuer ethnic group in to two between Cieng Wau and Ceing Nyajani clans. This division was exacerbated when Riek Macher, the former Vice President and turned rebel leader established a military base in the area called Fagak, which belongs to the Cieng Wau, where two senior Nuer ethnic officials supported Kiir. On the other hand, by that time, Machar appointed James Gadet Dak who belongs to Cieng Wau clan and Ethiopian national as his spokesperson. This has further complicated the political and security situation in the Gambella regional state of Western Ethiopia threatening the country's stability and security and giving the conflict an international attribute. In April 2016, Ethiopian children were kidnapped by the South Sudanese militias mixing themselves with the refugees and by August 2017, when the forces loyal to Riek Machar and government forces fight for Pagak, believed to be an opposition stronghold, South Sudanese armed forces crossed the Ethiopian border.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Dereje Feyissa (2015) *The Adverse Impact of South Sudanese Civil War on Ethiopia - Some Preliminary Notes*, *International Law and Policy Institute*, May, 2017

<sup>128</sup> Ali Verjee "Why doesn't South Sudan's refugee exodus spur East Africa to action?" *The East African*, 07 December 2017



According to Vemur et.al, since independence, Uganda has been open-handedly hosting refugees from the unstable and conflict ridden neighboring countries mainly from Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, and Burundi.<sup>129</sup> Currently, Uganda hosts one million South Sudanese refugees in addition to the number of refugees that the country has hosted from Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Burundi.<sup>130</sup> It appears that this open and generous refugee policy has cost the country in many aspects. The influx of large number of refugees from the above mentioned neighboring countries threatened the politics and security of Uganda. Even before the independence of South Sudan, there was tension between Uganda and the Sudan as a result of influx of the Sudanese ( from the Southern part of Sudan) refugees to Uganda. Sudan accused Uganda of hosting and supporting the Sudan's People Liberation Army (SPLA) in the Ugandan refugee camps. On the other hand, Uganda accused the Sudan of supporting the Ugandan insurgent group called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).<sup>131</sup>

The current crisis in South Sudan has forced millions of South Sudanese fleeing their homes to settle in Uganda as refugees. This number of refugees is expected to increase by more than a million with the intensification of fighting in South Sudan. There are also unregistered refugees residing in Kampala, Arua and Gulu. As discussed above, this has placed a huge socio-economic burden on the receiving country, Uganda. According to ACCORD, at the beginning of 2014, conflict erupted between refugees and local communities caused by competition over natural resources namely, water and land. This conflict turned violent attracting the country's defense force to intervene. There was also tension and conflict between the South Sudan major ethnic

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<sup>129</sup> Varalakshmi Vemur et al (2016), *An Assessment of Uganda's Progressive Approach to Refugee Management*, Washington, DC

<sup>130</sup> UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan, Issue 13 | 17 August 2017 available at [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS\\_170817\\_OCHA\\_SouthSudan\\_Humanitarian\\_Bulletin\\_13-2.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SS_170817_OCHA_SouthSudan_Humanitarian_Bulletin_13-2.pdf)

<sup>131</sup>Op. Cit Stephen J. Stedman (1999).

groups (Nuer and Dinka) in the settlements among refugee communities.<sup>132</sup> This tension between the refugees and the local communities on one hand and among the refugee communities on the other hand forced the Ugandan government to take action through law enforcement and by the introduction of programs to facilitate dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms. The international relief agencies and partners as well have also provided new infrastructure and social services to meet the needs of the communities.

With regards to the political impacts of the South Sudan refugees in Uganda, the 2017 East & Southern Africa report indicated that, the unchecked influx of refugees has a potential to become a future political issue for the local and national governments of Uganda. The existing social, economic and environmental impacts of the refugees might in the future force the local politicians to call for the return of the refugees and put pressure on the national government to change its open policy on refugees.<sup>133</sup>

### **3.7 Environmental Burden**

Environmental degradation has become a concern for the survival of human beings and a source of conflict at the global level. Human activities greatly affect the environment especially when there is an increase in the number of population in an area which it puts more pressure on the natural environment. Refugees impact on the environmental by putting pressure on the natural environment when they compete to fulfill their basic needs for natural resources such as firewood, building materials, fresh water and land. Shepherd notes that, in Africa, refugees mostly camp in environmentally sensitive areas of arid and semi-arid which are not suitable for agricultural

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<sup>132</sup> Fanny Nicolaisen et al (2015), *The Cost of Peace, South Sudan – Uganda Relations*, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) Conflict Trends Report No. 4, 23 December 2015

<sup>133</sup>Op. Cit. East & Southern Africa (September 2017).

activities. Moreover, for the convenience of relief activities, refugee camps are large resulting in huge destruction on the environment. In addition, when refugees reside in receiving countries for long periods of time, they put more pressure on the environment around the camps and may deplete the resources in the surrounding areas.<sup>134</sup>

Kakonge argues that, most studies do not give due attention to the impact of refugees on the environment.<sup>135</sup> South Sudanese refugees for instance, have had a significant environmental impact on the neighboring countries. For instance, according to the East and Southern African 2017 report, competition for water, land and timber is a major source of tension and conflict between the South Sudan refugees and the local communities in the Northern Province of Uganda. Both the refugees and the local communities depend highly on the local forest for their basic needs such as building materials, firewood and charcoal leading to deforestation consequently affecting the fertility of the soil, resulting in flooding, and water siltation.<sup>136</sup> As a result of these activities, Ugandan environmental activists and experts raised the matter with the government and the international community citing destruction of the environment. The experts note that since the arrival of South Sudanese refugee in December 2013 in Adjumani district, the northern part of Uganda, more than 11 million trees have been cut down to create space for shelter, farmland and firewood.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Gill Shepherd (1995), *The Impact of Refugees on the Environment and Appropriate Responses* accessed online on 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2018 available online <https://odihpn.org/magazine/the-impact-of-refugees-on-the-environment-and-appropriate-responses/>

<sup>135</sup> John Kakonge (2000), A Review of Refugee Environmental-Oriented Projects in Africa: A Case for Environmental Impact Assessment, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, Vol. 18 no. 1 (2000) pp. 23-24

<sup>136</sup> *Bridging the Gap, Long-term Implications for South Sudanese Refugees in West Nile*, Uganda, East & Southern Africa September 2017 available online <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BRIDGING-THE-GAP-final-1.pdf>

<sup>137</sup> Ronald Ssekandi, 'Ugandan experts urge action on impact of South Sudan refugees on environment' *Xinhua* (ADJUMANI, Uganda) 11 June 2017

Kenya, as one of the largest refugee receiving countries in the region has serious refugee induced environmental challenges. Kumssa notes that, refugees in the Dadaab refugee camp, one of the largest refugee camp the country has, destroyed the environment by cutting down trees and damaging vegetation to meet their basic needs like firewood and other resources. This resulted in confrontation between the local communities and the refugees.<sup>138</sup> The government also confirmed the impact of the Dadaab refugees on the environment. According to a report on the *Star* Newspaper, the country's Interior Principal Secretary (PS) Karanja Kibicho expressed the country's concern over the heavy economic, security and environmental burden brought about by the presence of the refugees in the camp and this further threatens Kenya's national security interest.<sup>139</sup>

Local host communities also raised the same concern regarding the depletion of the environment by the refugees around and near the refugee camps. In November 2017, in Garissa, northern Kenya, residents protested and blocked the UNHCR camp claiming the degradation of the environment by the refugees residing in the Dadaab camps through charcoal burning, poaching and cutting down trees.<sup>140</sup> In Ethiopia, refugees created considerable damage on the environment by cutting down trees for firewood leading to the loss of flora and fauna in the Gambella National Park.

Having become part of the global agenda, environmental degradation impacts the well-being of human and further affects the basic conditions of peace and stability. As a result, refugee induced degradation of the natural environment due to uncontrolled human activities, is a concern to the international community and has attracted global attention. The pressure the South Sudanese

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<sup>138</sup> Asfaw Kumssa et al (2014), '*Conflict and Migration: The Case of Somali Refugees in Northeastern Kenya*' *Global Social Welfare*, Vol.1, No.4 pp. 145-156

<sup>139</sup> Adow Mohamed, '*Dadaab refugee camp will be closed by May 2017*' *The Star*, (Nairobi), 11 May 2016

<sup>140</sup> Abdimalik Hajir, '*Garissa residents block UNHCR offices in Dadaab over refugees*', *Daily Nation*, 30 November 2017

refugees put on the environment of the host countries is not only the concern of the host countries but that of the international community as well. The issue of the environment has attracted the attention of international environmental organizations. Therefore, the South Sudan conflict has become internationalized because of the refugee's pressure on the natural environment in the host countries.

### **3.8 Humanitarian Crisis, Humanitarian Agencies and Conflict Internationalization**

Refugees fleeing their homelands are sometimes forced to travel long distances either on foot or by any other available means of transportation to escape from the conflict. Finally, when they reach to the host countries, they are left usually with few properties and have limited access to food, water and other basic needs. As a result, refugees face health, safety, and security challenges and may lead to a humanitarian crisis in the host country. People die from starvation, diseases such as cholera and measles because of absence of clean water and poor sanitation. This put considerable stress on local governments, the receiving countries and the international community at large.

The South Sudan conflict erupted in 2013 displacing millions internally and led millions to run away their country to the neighboring countries as refugees and asylum seekers. According to USAID, there are more than two million internally displaced South Sudanese in need of humanitarian assistance. However, the efforts of the relief agencies have been disrupted by the ongoing conflict and lack of humanitarian access.<sup>141</sup> This resulted in the country being categorized as one of the level three (highest in the world) humanitarian emergencies in the world next to Syria, Iraq and Yemen and the first in Africa.

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<sup>141</sup>USAID, South Sudan Crisis Fact Sheet, No.10, August 4, 2017, Available at [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/south\\_sudan\\_fs10\\_08-04-2017.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/south_sudan_fs10_08-04-2017.pdf)

As noted above, humanitarian crisis is a common feature of refugees. The majority of refugees arriving in the refugee camps constitute women and children who are vulnerable to humanitarian challenges associated with food insecurity and malnutrition. Mabisu argues that, one of the negative impacts refugees have on the host communities is food insecurity. As civil wars tend to be long lasting, refugees may settle for longer periods of time in the host countries, consequently resulting in significant and long lasting impacts on the food security of host communities. Besides, the nation's hosting the refugees have preexisting food insecurity challenges which tend to be exacerbated by influxes of refugees. This situation may place additional burden on host communities and further food insecurity.<sup>142</sup> There is competition between the locals and refugees for the humanitarian assistance. This brings about conflict within the host country giving the conflict an international character. This is true in the case of South Sudanese refugees residing in the neighboring countries refugees.

According to The Guardian report, the influx of South Sudanese refugees and the availability of humanitarian assistance in the northern part of Uganda do not match. The international response is inadequate to provide for the basic necessities. Especially, after the July 2016 failed agreement renewed fighting resulted in a severe refugee crisis. Food insecurity, absence of medical care and disease like malaria such like problems are present in the camps.<sup>143</sup> This leads to competition over the scarce natural resources between the locals and the refugee communities further creating tension and violence. The same is true in Ethiopia.

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<sup>142</sup> Athur Mabisu (2014), *Refugees, Food Security, and Resilience in Host Communities: Transitioning from Humanitarian Assistance to Development in Protracted Refugee Situations*, 2020 Conference Paper No.2, May 2014

<sup>143</sup> Julian Hattem, 'Uganda at breaking point as Bidi Bidi becomes world's largest refugee camp' The Guardian(Imvepi), 03 Apr 2017

The absence of sufficient humanitarian assistance in the refugee camps has made life complicated for the refugees. Olay notes that starvation leads extreme stress on the youth refugees leading to emotional and psychological problems which drives the youth to alcoholism and related social problems. The crisis in Kenya best exemplifies this. According to a UNICEF report, the trend in Kenya shows that there is a big gap in the humanitarian funding requirements and the total funding received for humanitarian assistance. The outbreak of fighting in South Sudan in 2013 and the resultant influx of refugees exacerbated the situation.<sup>144</sup>

### **3.9 Conclusions**

As discussed in detail above, international borders cannot prevent South Sudanese refugees from crossing their national boundaries. The neighboring countries are directly or indirectly impacted upon by the ever increasing influx of refugees fleeing the South Sudan conflict. Refugees put economic, social and insecurity burdens on the neighboring countries. Refugee host countries experienced tensions and conflicts between the host communities and the refugees. This continued tension and conflict in the refugee receiving countries threatened the security and stability of the countries. This impact of refugees on the host countries and the involvement of regional and international state and non-state actors to share the burdens and responsibilities led the South Sudan conflict to become an international concern.

The humanitarian crisis experienced in the refugee receiving countries and the subsequent intervention of the international aid agencies in response to the crisis has further internationalized the conflict. There is a likelihood of increased refugee crisis in the region as the conflict in South

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<sup>144</sup> UNICEF, Kenya Country Office Situation Report 11 April 2014 available at [https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF\\_Kenya\\_Humanitarian\\_Situation\\_Report\\_March\\_2014.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Kenya_Humanitarian_Situation_Report_March_2014.pdf)

Sudan remains unresolved. On the other hand, the economic capacity of the refugee host countries to accommodate this large influx of refugees will continue to be stretched. This further will attract the involvement of the humanitarian agencies in the spirit of humanitarian assistance, subsequently internationalizing the conflict. Based on the above arguments, this chapter arrives on the conclusion that the influx of refugees to neighboring countries has affected the countries significantly with varying implications on political, economic and social dynamics.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **INTERNATIONALIZED SOUTH SUDAN CONFLICT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Internationalized conflicts have far-reaching insecurity implications. This is because of the link between domestic issues and international affairs. The ongoing conflict in South Sudan and its international dimensions have affected international relations and foreign policy in the Greater Horn of Africa region in particular and the neighbouring regions . As discussed in the previous chapters, the South Sudan conflict has generated instability to the neighbouring countries, a situation that has undermined the security of the whole region. This chapter discusses the impact of the already internationalized South Sudan conflict on peace and security in the Greater Horn of Africa region and beyond.

#### **4.2 Challenges of the Internationalized Conflict in South Sudan**

The Greater Horn of Africa is made of the following countries: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, region is prone to conflict since of the countries in the region are in crisis. The combination of man-made and natural disasters makes the Horn of Africa region fragile. Conflicts erupt in the region are not limited to the country of conflict. Once conflicts erupt in the Horn of Africa region, they diffuse to the rest of the region and acquire regional characteristic.

Najafov notes that internationalized conflicts have the chance to diffuse rapidly to the region and further internationally as the conflicts breaches very sensitive issues of ethnicity which makes the conflict very complex. This is mainly because most of the time the conflicts are connected with

genocide, terrorism, human trafficking and smuggling of small arms and light weapons.<sup>145</sup> Internal conflicts have crucial peace and security implications. According to Knopf, the disintegration of the newly independent state caused serious peace and security challenges to not only neighbouring individual countries but also to the United States of America and its security allies which are working very hard to maintain peace and stability in the region.<sup>146</sup> Knopf further notes that, the fragile nature of the Horn of Africa region, inter-regional tensions and the presence of huge number of refugees in combination with the regional dimension of the South Sudan internal conflict challenges the peace and stability of the region.

There exists an age-old rivalry between Sudan and Uganda. Ethiopia and Uganda are also competing for regional supremacy in the region. Sudan and South Sudan have a lot of unresolved issues. Proxy wars and power play by proxy forces are common characteristics to the region. Moreover, unresolved border tensions, competition versus cooperation for shared trans-boundary resources such as water and land and regional rivalries also characterize the region. As a result, South Sudan has become the proxy battlefield for the regional powers to pursue their power interests. Therefore, South Sudan serves as the disputed buffer zone between rivals Sudan and Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia, Ethiopia and Egypt and Ethiopia and Eritrea.<sup>147</sup>

This situation has worsened following the on-going conflict in South Sudan. The out flow of refugees to the neighbouring countries has also affected the already fragile peace and security of the region. For instance, there is a growing ethnic conflict along the Ethio-South Sudan border

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<sup>145</sup> Najafov Z.(2017),Internationalization of Ethnic Conflicts and the Impact on Regional and International Security, *Journal of Political Science & Public Affairs, Vol.5 No.4. pp. 1*

<sup>146</sup> Knopf A. Kate (2016), Ending South Sudan's Civil War, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), Special Report No. 77, November 2016, USA.

<sup>147</sup> East & Southern Africa (2017), East Africa and the Horn in 2022, An Outlook for Strategic Positioning in the Region, Inter-Agency Regional Analysis Network, March 2017 available online at <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IARAN-East-Africa-to-2022-revised.pdf> accessed on 09 May 2018

instigated by raids and counter raids by militias from both sides.<sup>148</sup> Therefore, the internationalized South Sudan conflict has affected the peace and stability of the neighbouring countries.

The Horn of Africa region countries have common cross-cutting affairs, for instance the countries have shared borders. They share long borders, common people and common natural resources which are common conflict features of the Horn of African countries. As a result, the absence of peace and stability in South Sudan has had a direct impact on the neighbouring countries. This is particularly a serious challenge to the countries and people of Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda as the countries are the major players in the conflict. Berhanu argues that state security and human security are closely interrelated. Hence when human security is promoted and conserved, it gives an assurance for state security.<sup>149</sup> The problem of state insecurity in South Sudan has influenced both state and the human security of the neighbouring countries and the entire Horn of Africa. This is because, insecurity and instability causes conflict to diffuse across regions. However, the conflict in South Sudan has particularly influenced Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda in terms of peace and stability.

### **4.3 Implication to the Individual Neighbouring Countries**

#### **4.3.1 Implications to Ethiopia**

The newly born countries, South Sudan and Ethiopia have strong political and diplomatic relations. The two countries share a long border and common people living along the common border. The relationship between Ethiopia and South Sudan dates back to the independence time. During the

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<sup>149</sup> Kassahun Berhanu (2013), *Conflicts in the Horn of Africa and Implications for Regional Security* in Redie Bereketeab, (ed), *The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security*. Pluto Press, London pp.72-94

war for independence, the Ethiopian government supported the SPLM/A while Sudan supported Ethiopian insurgents of the Tigrayan People Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF). Ethiopia also played a very important role in the process of the CPA and its eventual agreement under the framework of IGAD. After independence, Ethiopia tried to maintain its strong ties with South Sudan because, Ethiopia had serious security challenges that emanated from unstable South Sudan.

Mesfin argues that the South Sudan crisis resulted in an influx of the number of refugees and created tension in the Ethiopian western region of Gambella where the two competing ethnic groups of the Nuer and Anuak are fighting for political and economic supremacy.<sup>150</sup> The influx of the refugees exacerbated the problem of insecurity in this part of the country. Ethiopia is always worried about the ever increasing political divide between the two communities and its potential dangers of complicating and worsening the situation in this region.<sup>151</sup> Ethiopia and South Sudan share ethnic groups since the Nuers live in both Ethiopia and South Sudan. Feyissa also notes that number politics (who outnumbers who) between the two communities are very controversial.<sup>152</sup> These two communities are dominant in the region and are always fighting one another for political, economic and social control. The political tension has been further complicated by the influx of Nuer refugees from South Sudan since the independence struggle of the South Sudanese against the Sudan. In addition to number politics, there is also the issue of citizenship. The question of who is illegible to be an Ethiopian citizen and who is indigenous has always been an area of

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<sup>150</sup> Op cit.

<sup>151</sup> Dina Mufti, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Kenya, Interview, Nairobi, Kenya March 2018

<sup>152</sup> Op cit.

debate between the two communities. Writing about citizenship debate and the number politics between the two ethnic groups Feyissa note:

“The Anuak claim to be the indigenous people of Gambella and up until the 1994 census they had constituted the demographic majority. The Nuer, whose largest settlements are in South Sudan, have become an ethnic majority since 1994 constituting over 40 % of Gambella’s population. Expectedly, the Anuak fiercely dispute the results of the census.”<sup>153</sup>

Until now, much of the immigrants from South Sudan are ethnic Nuer. This number has increased for the last three years since the eruption of the South Sudan conflict. The Anuak, who claimed to be the indigenous people to Gambella as mentioned above are worried since they are outnumbered in numbers by the Nuer. In this regard, Feyissa further argued that, the incompatible interest of the two ethnic groups was the main cause of the conflict and subsequent instability in the Gambella region- western part of Ethiopia.<sup>154</sup> Apart from the competition between the two communities in Gambella, the region is also an important place where cross-border mobilization of military took place. The Nuers in Gambella supported the opposition leader Riek Machar, though the Ethiopian government that has been promoting neutrality. As the Nuer are becoming dominant both in numbers and in the region’s politics, they even further help their tribes men (the Nuer from South Sudan) who run away from the conflict to cross the borders easily and shelter in the refugee camps in Gambella. After 2003, the conflict in Gambella and its centre of gravity has changed from between Anuak and Nuer to the central government of Ethiopia and Anuak as the central government tries to balance the political representation between the two belligerent communities consisting of the Nuer and Anuak in the region’s council.<sup>155</sup> This is a major security and stability

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<sup>153</sup> Dereje Feyissa (2015) *The Adverse Impact of South Sudanese Civil War on Ethiopia - Some Preliminary Notes*, International Law and Policy Institute, May, 2017

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

<sup>155</sup> Ibid

threat to Ethiopia since the conflict in South Sudan has always had a spill over effect to surrounding countries and continues to be a national security issue to Ethiopia because of the above mentioned reasons.

#### **4.3.2 Implication to Eritrea**

Eritrea has a stake in the South Sudan conflict. The country has been under sanction by the United Nations Security Council because of its destabilizing role in the region. The sanction was imposed in 2009 because of Eritrea's provision of fire arms and other logistics support for Al-Shabaab which is as an international terrorist group that threatens the region's stability.<sup>156</sup> The United Nations Monitoring Group report over Eritrea indicates evidence for the involvement of Eritrea in the South Sudan conflict.<sup>157</sup> Eritrea has a contentious border issue with Ethiopia. According to the East & Southern Africa 2017 report, the border of Eritrea with Ethiopia is very volatile.<sup>158</sup> The internationalized South Sudan conflict serves as a proxy battle ground for Ethiopia and Eritrea. Ethiopia is always worried about the strong relation between South Sudan and Eritrea. This is mainly because Eritrea tries to destabilize the security of Ethiopia through South Sudan by supporting Ethiopian insurgents along the Ethio-South Sudan borders and South Sudan may serve as a battle ground for unresolved issues between the two rivalry countries.<sup>159</sup> Ethiopia always works to minimize security threats that could arise from Eritrea. On the other hand Eritrea wants

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<sup>156</sup> Martin Plaut (2014) South Sudan: New Battleground for Ethiopia and Eritrea? Available online <https://martinplaut.wordpress.com/2014/03/08/south-sudan-new-battleground-for-ethiopia-and-eritrea/> accessed on 10 May 2018

<sup>157</sup> Ibid

<sup>158</sup> East & Southern Africa (2017), East Africa and the Horn in 2022, An Outlook for Strategic Positioning in the Region, Inter-Agency Regional Analysis Network, March 2017 available online at <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IARAN-East-Africa-to-2022-revised.pdf> accessed on 09 May 2018

<sup>159</sup> ICG (2016) Op cit.

to strengthen relations with South Sudan. This may be as a result of rivalry relations between Ethiopia and South Sudan.<sup>160</sup> As a result the internationalized South Sudan conflict remains a big security threat for both Ethiopia and Eritrea and the surrounding regions.

### **4.3.3 Implications to Kenya**

Kenya played a critical role in the Sudan's peace process by hosting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which was signed in Naivasha in the year 2005. Many political commentators argue that Kenya midwived the CPA. After independence, as noted by Koos and Gutschke the country was also involved in the peace initiatives under the framework of IGAD.<sup>161</sup> Like other neighbouring countries, Kenya has also hosted many South Sudanese refugees. The current crisis resultant of more refugees to cross the Kenyan border. The presence of huge number of South Sudanese refugees in the Kakuma refugee camp has put economic, social and security challenges which attract the interest of other governments abroad. There is competition for the natural resources particularly on school and water points between the refugees and the local communities.<sup>162</sup> This has put financial pressure on the Kenyan government to build more schools and dig more water ponds to satisfy the needs of the local communities. Failure to provide the necessities needed might cause tension between the refugees and host communities, which is an implication of internationalized conflicts.

Odhiambo and Muluvi note that the influx of refugees from South Sudan to Kenya undermined the security and stability of the country by aggravating the proliferation of Small Arms and Light

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid

<sup>161</sup> Carlo K. and Thea G. (2014), Op cit.

<sup>162</sup> Yusuf Gawany, UNHCR Resettlement/Solutions Officer, Interview, Kakuma, Kenya March 2018

Weapons.<sup>163</sup> The movement of arms and weapons and transfer to criminals complicates the problem of security and peace. Armed criminals in the host community and refugees cause major insecurity problems in the camp and beyond. The criminals' safe haven is in the host community exacerbating cattle rustling in the nomadic communities. According to Crisp, domestic and community violence, sexual abuse and violence, armed robbery, are common factors responsible for the insecurity in refugee camps and states instability. .<sup>164</sup>

Moreover, the internationalized South Sudan conflict has crippled Kenya in utilizing its economic interests in South Sudan. The interest of Kenya in South Sudan is not only economic but security related. As a result of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, significant numbers of Kenyans who have been running their businesses in the country were forced to return to Kenya.

#### **4.3.4 Implications to Sudan**

South Sudan got its independence from Sudan in 2011 following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A. As a result, there exist so many unresolved issues between the two countries. The International Crisis Group (ICG) report indicated that the relations between North Sudan and South Sudan have been very tense between the years 2011 and 2013 and three issues were very important in defining relations between the two countries. These are economy (oil), security (the presence of armed groups) and border demarcation (including Abyei). At the beginning of the South Sudanese civil war, the

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<sup>163</sup> Paul Odhiambo and Augustus Muluvi (2014), Africa in focus, Impact of Prolonged South Sudan Crisis on Kenya's Economic and Security Interests, Accessed online on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2014/03/12/impact-of-prolonged-south-sudan-crisis-on-kenyas-economic-and-security-interests/>

<sup>164</sup> Jeff Crisp (1999), New Issues in Refugee Research, A state of insecurity: the political economy of violence in refugee-populated areas of Kenya, Working Paper No. 16 (Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, UNHCR, 1999 Geneva Switzerland)



relations between Sudan and South Sudan seem to be improving. However, the above mentioned issues remained important in the relation between Sudan and South Sudan and even on how to resolve internal conflicts in the two countries.<sup>165</sup>

Because of the current crisis in South Sudan, both Sudan and South Sudan seem reluctant to resolve the above issues. However, these are very important issues that will define the future relations between the two countries. Yousif and Rothbart note that Sudan shares 2135 Kilometres of their border with South Sudan. The long border area is not in full control of the two governments. This paved way for free movement of Small Arms and Light Weapons. The presence of small arms and light weapons in turn fuelled the cross border clashes between the two countries. The presence and activities of rebels between the two states undermines the states control of territories and provoke military clashes. The competition over control of the border lands between Sudan and South Sudan is exacerbated by the presence of oil fields in North Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei areas.<sup>166</sup>

Abyei issue remains to be a big security threat; therefore security is at the centre of the relations between the two States. In Sudan there are groups who demand self-rule (autonomy) called SPLM-North. The CPA did not resolve the problems entirely in Sudan groups remained behind in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile areas unsatisfied. According to the ICG report, these groups in South Kordofan and Blue Nile (SPLM-N) struggled alongside the SPLM/A during the civil war. However, the groups in these two states were given an opportunity of popular consultation to decide their future fate in consolidation with CPA.

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<sup>165</sup> Op cit.

<sup>166</sup> Op cit.

In 2011, insurgents in this areas fought war with the central government of Khartoum. In the same year, these groups formed an alliance with the Darfur rebel groups and created the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) to challenge the Khartoum government. This became an important determining factor and further complicated the relation between the two countries. This is mainly because of two reasons: first is, it is believed that the group received assistance from the South and also that the Darfur rebels sided with the South Sudan government and fought the opposition.<sup>167</sup> There is an allegation from the Sudan government that SPLM/A is supporting these groups and the South Sudan government also accuses Sudan of supporting insurgents. According to Berouk, Riek Machar has been an important friend to President Bashir. However, after the eruption of the crisis in South Sudan, in 2014 the Sudanese president visited South Sudan and showed support to president Kiir against Machar yet the South Sudanese government kept on alleging that the South Sudan opposition forces were given a sanctuary in the Sudan territory for military operation and further to attack president Salva Kiir's government.<sup>168</sup> Therefore, the current internal conflict in South Sudan with its international dimension has indicated to be far reaching.

#### **4.3.5 Implications to Uganda**

Uganda is one of the countries facing high refugee plight from South Sudan.<sup>169</sup> The country has also become one of the trading partners with South Sudan. Berouk argues that, Uganda has vested economic and geopolitical interests with the newly independent country.<sup>170</sup> Hence, the current internationalized South Sudan conflict has serious security implication for Uganda. Nicolaisen and others, argue that the ongoing conflict in South Sudan has great impact on the Ugandan politics

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<sup>167</sup> Op cit.

<sup>168</sup>Op cit.

<sup>169</sup> Op cit.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

and its economy. The northern part of the country known to host huge number of South Sudanese refugees. As a result of the influx of South Sudanese refugees to this part of the country, results to market system disruption.<sup>171</sup> Inability to stabilize the market could cause tension between the refugees and the local communities. This situation attracted the interest of the government and other partners to fill the gap in the market. The implication is that internationalized conflict threatens the internal peace and stability of the refugees in receiving countries.

On the other hand the influx of South Sudanese refugees in the area has made service delivery impossible.<sup>172</sup> When the government fails to provide schools for the needy, illiteracy will increase which has a medium and long term implications for the security of the country. In the short run, children who are idle could be dangerous criminals who threaten stability in the society. In the long run, conflict over service provision and access to the services could cause tension between the host and refugee communities. In addition, absence of basic health services means increase in number of epidemics and could cause child and maternal mortality, and even malnutrition.

This in turn has affects the relations between Uganda and South Sudan. The foundation of the relations between Uganda and South Sudan were established back in the colonial times and the South Sudanese liberation war. The South Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A) under the leadership of the late John Garang and the current Ugandan President Museveni and his movement-the National Resistance Movement (NRM) have had strong connections. As a result, the SPLM/A was given the opportunity to move freely in the Ugandan

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<sup>171</sup> Bridging the Gap, Long-term Implications for South Sudanese Refugees in West Nile, Uganda, East & Southern Africa September 2017 available online <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BRIDGING-THE-GAP-final-1.pdf>

<sup>172</sup> Bridging the Gap, Long-term Implications for South Sudanese Refugees in West Nile, Uganda, East & Southern Africa September 2017 available online <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BRIDGING-THE-GAP-final-1.pdf>

territory.<sup>173</sup> Elaborating the current relations between the two countries, Nicolaisen and others argue that the relation was strengthened after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which was signed between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A that gave a self-autonomous right to the South Sudanese.<sup>174</sup>

Even though, the two countries have economic interests in their relations, security is at the core of Uganda and South Sudan relations. When it comes to security, for Uganda, the strength of South Sudan is considered as a guarantor for the protection of Ugandan border from infiltration of an old enemy Sudan.<sup>175</sup> Therefore, the current South Sudan conflict has a significant security implication to Uganda because of that, Uganda was the first neighbouring country that intervened militarily in the South Sudan conflict in the name of protection of basic installations. Ugandan citizens residing in South Sudan have made the negotiation efforts by IGAD difficult and complicated.

In addition countries in the Horn of Africa region have faced scourge of conflict in South Sudan that has also attracted the interest of other countries. Egypt is one of the countries which does not belong to the region and yet has an interest in South Sudan. In analysing Egypt's interest in the Horn of African politics, Mesfin argues that Egypt's interest is more so based on influencing the region's politics so as to pursue its national interest which is maritime related. To protect its interest, Egypt signed a military cooperation agreement with South Sudan in 2014. The main objective of this agreement was to give an opportunity for Egypt to strengthen its relation with South Sudan and to weaken Ethiopia's geopolitical influence in South Sudan and in the region at large.

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<sup>175</sup> Op cit.

The involvement of Egypt in the South Sudan crisis is another setback to peace and stability of the region. This is mainly because as argued by Mesfin, the military agreement and further cooperation between Egypt and South Sudan is a potential threat to the Ethiopia's security interests.

#### **4.4 Regional Security Implication**

The concept of security is controversial traditionally; security was associated with state security meaning in other words national security. However, the issue of security is not limited to state affairs in the contemporary world. Barry Buzan tried redefined concept of security to be more of holistic approach to include military, economic, societal, political as well as environmental issues.<sup>176</sup> On one other hand, Appleby argues that security is the mechanism by which a society preserves its traditional practices, cultures, norms, customs and religious beliefs of citizens.<sup>177</sup>

Conflict undermines the security of not only the state but also its structure, values of its citizens to live a peaceful life. The conflict in South Sudan is not immune to cause this problem of insecurity and instability to the people of South Sudan, to the nation and to the region at large. Chinyanganya and Mhlanga note that the conflict in South Sudan has threatened the core values of the people and the nation. Since the situation undermines the country's national security and consequently its sovereignty and territorial integrity.<sup>178</sup>

The impact of the South Sudan conflict in undermining security is unlimited; it crosses the borders of the country and puts pressure on the security of the neighbouring countries, of the region. There

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<sup>176</sup> Buzan, Barry. "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century." *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 67.3 (1991): 431-451.

<sup>177</sup> Scott R. Appleby (2000) *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

<sup>178</sup> Op cit.

are many factors attributed for this. Berhanu argues that non-demarcated boundaries between the neighbouring countries serve as the main source of tension. The countries also host huge number of refugees, shared ethnic groups; proliferation of small arms and light weapons is also a common feature of the region. There are border disputes between Ethiopia and Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Eritrea and Djibouti. The border between the newly independent state, South Sudan and that of Sudan is not well demarcated. Moreover, the borders in most of the countries divide ethnic groups for instance; there are Somalis in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Nuers in Ethiopia and South Sudan, Tigray in Ethiopia and Eritrea. All these play a very important role in the delicate and unstable relations between the countries of the region.

The Nile water is one of the trans-boundary resources which has been a source of tension among the countries with in the region. Berhanu notes that, in this region there is no common agreement on how to share the waters of the Nile river between the upper and lower riparian countries. In this very complex region, the implication of the internationalized South Sudan is significant. Chinyanganya and Mhlanga argue that the conflict in South Sudan is slowly evolving in to a full blown conflict. It has got a regional security complex dimension that could be analysed under the IGAD region context.

Before stating the main aide behind the regional security complex theory, it is important to define what a region means. According to Ahmed, a region is an area where containing two or more states and each of the states in the region interacts in a friendly manner or in hostility and the interaction subsequently affects the states security.<sup>179</sup> Regional Security Complex Theory focuses on geographical factors and it argues that states found in a certain geographical region interact very

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<sup>179</sup> Sidra Ahmed (2016), Regional Security Complex Theory in South Asian context, Posted on May 2, 2016 by The Asian Watch, Accessed on August 21, 2017, Available online at <https://tasianwatch.wordpress.com/2016/05/02/regional-security-complex-theory-in-south-asian-context/>

closely in security situations than states which are far off geographically. That means, proximity is very important in the process of securitization. In this case, the issue of security becomes a common concern for the states which are members of a particular region. The Greater Horn of Africa Region which comprising countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda meets the definition of a region and has a complex security situation.

As Buzan and Waever discussed, the issues of security of states in a region are closely interlinked. They argue that regional powers have an even greater opportunity to deal with the issues of regional security because of their geographical proximity. Almost all the countries in the region have experienced either internal conflicts, inter-state conflicts or both. Schwartz and others assert that the region faces a number of challenges such as underdevelopment, weak governance, extensive poverty, recurrent violent conflict, and other sources of human insecurity, caused by transnational terrorism and organized crime.<sup>180</sup>

#### **4.5 International Implication**

Internal conflicts have always had international security and stability implications. This is mainly attributed to the fact that either domestic conflicts attract international actors or international conflicts have domestic sources as noted by Mwangi. As mentioned above, the current crisis in South Sudan has created perhaps one of the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. The conflict displaced many people internally and forced millions to flee their country as refugees to escape

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<sup>180</sup> Matthew Schwartz et al (2013), Rethinking International Counterterrorism Assistance to the Greater Horn of Africa: Toward a Regional Risk Reduction Strategy, *Perspectives on Terrorism, Volume 7, Issue 6* pp.102.

the conflict. Many people have been also been killed as a result of the crisis. According to the Blanchard, more than 50,000 South Sudanese have been killed since the conflict outbreak.

Humanitarian intervention is not a new phenomenon to South Sudan. The country is labelled one of the highest humanitarian recipient countries. In elaborating the involvement of international humanitarian agencies, Maxwell and Donnelly note that;

Many international NGOs have operated in South Sudan during the civil war period, the CPA period and the post-Independence period, shifting their emphasis over time away from war-time humanitarian support towards resettlement, reconstruction, state-building, peace building and economic development activities.<sup>181</sup>

Since the long civil war that was fought between the Sudan (then known as central government) and the SPLA/M caused destruction to the southern part of the country, South Sudan received huge amounts of humanitarian aid starting from the 1980s. Even after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between SPLM/A and the Khartoum government, the southern region was receiving one billion USD per annum.<sup>182</sup>

The current internationalized South Sudan conflict has further increased the magnitude of the humanitarian intervention. Mass killings, displacement of people internally, refugees, drought and food insecurity exacerbated the humanitarian crisis and attracted the intervention of the international organizations in the name of humanitarian assistance. Right after the outbreak of the crisis in South Sudan, the international community started to raise funds to address humanitarian crises from (2014-2016) with an annual demand of 1.1 billion USD for the first year alone.<sup>183</sup> The European Commission, the United Kingdom and the US are among the leading donor countries

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<sup>181</sup> Op cit.

<sup>182</sup> Ajak Peter (2015), State Formation, Humanitarianism, and Institutional Capabilities in South Sudan, International Peace Institute, Issue Brief, Juba, South Sudan, May 2015.

<sup>183</sup> Anna Osborne (2014), Global Humanitarian Assistance, South Sudan, Donor Response to the Crisis. Development Initiative No.1 United Kingdom, January 2014



providing millions of Dollars to South Sudan. During the outbreak of the conflict in 2013, South Sudan was also the highest aid recipient country next to Syria and Lebanon at the global level.<sup>184</sup>

Although humanitarian interventions play a very crucial role to save the lives of civilians, in protecting and helping civilians in times of war. This is mainly because the international humanitarian agencies have their own vested interest in the countries where they intervene in the name of humanitarian assistance. Wood and Sullivan note that humanitarian intervention in conflict ridden areas has may aggravate conflict by giving an additional motive to the government and the rebel groups.<sup>185</sup> In South Sudan, humanitarian aid is claimed to exacerbate the conflict and sufferings of civilians. In arguing the politics of aid in South Sudan Oudenaren notes that, ‘Humanitarians are portrayed as impartial technocrats, keeping above the fray of conflict and politics, dispensing aid fairly to anyone in need. In turn, the “beneficiaries” of the aid are cast as apolitical themselves.<sup>186</sup> Hence, the involvement of international humanitarian and aid agencies in South Sudan aided the internal conflict to be internationalized.

Soltani argues that in the case of regional rivalry great powers could intervene for the purpose of balance of power. The intervention of the great powers in regional conflict interlinks the local security problem to the global level. Apart from regional rivalry and balance of power, international powers also have their own vested interests in internationalized conflicts. The current crisis in South Sudan has attracted the interest of competing international powers such as the US and its western allies in one hand and China on the other hand.

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid

<sup>185</sup> Reed Wood and Christopher Sullivan, *Doing Harm by Doing Good? The Negative Externalities of Humanitarian Aid Provision during Civil Conflict* (Working Paper presented on AidData, 11 July 2015)

<sup>186</sup> Daniel van Oudenaren, Politicized Humanitarian Aid is Fueling South Sudan's Civil War, available online 27 February 2017 <https://www.irinnews.org/opinion/2017/02/27/politicised-humanitarian-aid-fuelling-south-sudans-civil-war>, accessed on 06 July 2017

#### **4.5.1 Implication to the Troika**

The Troika with the member states of the USA, UK and Norway, were very important in the process of the South Sudan independence. Political commentators argue that South Sudan is the product of the US foreign policy hence US and its allies have an interest in the internationalized South Sudan conflict. For the United States of America and its western allies terrorism is a major threat to the security of the Horn of Africa region. According to ICG, the US and the western countries have an interest in combating transnational terrorism in HOA region. The US is primarily interested in resolving South Sudan conflict before it escalates to a full blown. To this end, the USA and the region are working in partnership to fight terrorism in the region.

Moreover, the US has a competing interest with China. China has an economic interest which is oil whereas the US has a security interest in South Sudan. However, the interest of the two powers in South Sudan seems to be more inclined towards competition. The competition for regional influence is another drawback for international peace and stability.

The United States of America under Troika has also humanitarian interests in South Sudan. It is considerably the largest humanitarian donor since the outbreak of the conflict allocating billions of dollars for charitable activities and at the same time the lion share for the UNMISS's finance comes from the United States. However, Maxwell and Donnelly argued that after independence, especially after the outbreak of the 2013 conflict, there was a change in both the relationships with the government of South Sudan and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The Troika as a group turned their back to the Government of South Sudan and significant number of international NGOs distanced themselves from both conflicting parties.

#### **4.5.2 Implication to China**

As mentioned above, China has vested economic interest not only in South Sudan but also in the African continent at large. For example, Chun and Kemple-Hardy note that China signed two bilateral economic agreements even after the outbreak of the war in 2013 to further strengthen its economic ties with South Sudan. According to these agreements 97 per cent of South Sudanese exports to China are allowed to enter the market without any tariff. This was designed strategically to secure its fair share in the South Sudan oil.<sup>187</sup>

Most of the oil companies in South Sudan are Chinese companies. Nonetheless, the internationalized South Sudan conflict threatened the Chinese companies from utilizing their fair share of oil in the region. There is always a competition between USA and china in playing a role in the Horn of Africa region and to secure their political and economic interests.

#### **4.6 Conclusions**

Internationalized internal conflicts have negative consequences for the international security. The impact of the ongoing South Sudan conflict is not limited to the South Sudan territory. As it has internationalised, the conflict spilled over and affected the individual neighbouring countries, the region and the international security system at large. The neighbouring countries are directly affected by the internationalized conflict South in Sudan.

The conflict has attracted refugee influx, the smuggling of small arms and proliferation of illegal weapons and ethnicity in the Horn of Africa region. Apart from regional actors, the South Sudan conflict has also attracted the involvement of international powers either motivated by their own

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<sup>187</sup>Zhang Chun and Mariam Kemple-Hardy (2015), From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Prevention: China in South Sudan, Safe World Conflict Prevention Working Group (CPWG) briefing No.1, 31 March 2015.

vested political, economic and diplomatic interests or to seek international solution to the conflict. In addition, the deteriorating humanitarian situation in South Sudan has also attracted international humanitarian agencies to save the lives of civilians who are displaced as a result of the continued fighting between the government and the rebels.

As a result, the internationalized South Sudan conflict has become a menace to the stability and security in the Great Horn of Africa region and at the international level. Based on the above arguments, this paper concludes that the impact of the conflict in South Sudan has crossed the boundaries of the country and undermined the peace and stability of not only the Horn of Africa region but also that of international peace and stability. As internal internationalized conflict involves many states as well as non-state regional and international actors, it has also become a key concern for foreign policy issues.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The main focus of this study was to examine the role of refugees in the process of internationalization of internal conflicts in Africa with a special focus on South Sudan. The study also provided an overview of conflict in South Sudan: issues that drivers the conflict, actors, factors and dynamics. The first objective of the study aimed at deliberating on the issues, factors and role of regional and international external actors in the internationalization of the South Sudan conflict. The second objective aimed at critically examining the nexus between refugees and the internationalization of the South Sudan conflict and the final objective aimed at examining the implication of the internationalized South Sudan conflict to the neighboring countries and Horn of Africa region's security and stability.

#### 5.2 Summary

The ongoing conflict in South Sudan and its resultant refugee crisis is not simply a concern for the South Sudanese and humanitarian aid agencies. It has become a great concern to the region and the international community as well. The current conflict in South Sudan has cost the lives of millions of its people. The conflict has also displaced many internally and forced millions to flee their country to escape the violence. The refugees from South Sudan sheltered in the neighboring countries cause tremendous social, economic, political and security burdens on the host countries and serve as one of the reasons for regionalization and further internationalization of conflict. The deteriorating humanitarian crisis attracted the major international powers, regional organizations

and humanitarian organizations in the name of humanitarian assistance. This involvement of external actors further internationalized the South Sudan internal conflict.

In this study, chapter one provided the general structure of the study particularly on the concept of conflict internationalization, highlighted the role of refugees in disseminating internal conflicts to the neighboring countries and beyond. The study further argues that the concept of conflict internationalization is very controversial and many factors are responsible for a conflict to be internationalized. According to this concept, internal conflicts may evolve and maintain international attributes. Of course, many factors are responsible for an internal conflict to get internationalize in regard to this refugees play major role. Refugees put economic, social, environmental, political and security pressures on the receiving states.

Chapter two dealt with the role of external actors and how actors involved in the South Sudan conflict aim at addressing the South Sudan conflict. The findings clearly depict that external actors have played critical roles in the South Sudan conflict. The external actors ranging from neighboring countries, regional actors and international actors intervened in the South Sudan conflict in various ways. The study ascertains that the intervention role of neighboring countries was very critical. Especially the direct neighbors (Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda) have been playing an important role in the South Sudan's internal conflict. Moreover, regional and international actors have played even more significant internationalization role in the ongoing South Sudan conflict.

The third chapter looked into the role of the South Sudanese refugees in the process of internationalization of the internal South Sudan conflict. The Study observed that millions of South Sudanese refugees shelter in the neighboring countries bringing about very important social, political, economic, and environmental and security pressures to the refugee receiving countries.

This impacts the host countries in many ways. Based on the principles of burden sharing, both the refugee receiving neighboring states and the international community support the refugees. This interaction between the neighboring states and the international humanitarian agencies further internationalize the conflict.

Chapter four looked into security and stability implications of the internationalized South Sudan conflict to the neighboring countries, the region and beyond. The findings were that indeed the internationalized South Sudan conflict has undermined the peace and stability of the neighboring countries and the region at large. They share common people with common culture, long borders and trans-boundary resource, besides; there is historical enmity among the neighboring countries. As a result, one supports the other's rebel groups there is also a proxy war in the South Sudan soil. Because of this, the ongoing conflict in South Sudan affects the national security and interest of the neighboring countries. The internationalized South Sudan conflict posed a serious instability challenge to the neighboring countries. Given the fragility of the Horn of Africa region, the internationalized South Sudan conflict brings another burden of instability and insecurity challenges because of smuggling of small arms and proliferation of light weapons.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Given the interconnectedness and interlinkage of the actors and factors in the South Sudan conflict, the findings of the study have labeled the internal conflict in South Sudan as more than an internal issue. Instead, it involves a number of state and non-state actors from the neighboring states, the regional actors and the international powers. The countries in the Horn of Africa region have transnational security apprehensions. This drives the interest of the neighboring states to intervene in the South Sudan internal conflict. The intervention of the neighboring countries to the South

Sudan internal conflict emanates from their national interest that have being undermining the ongoing conflict.

The same is true with the distant international powers and international humanitarian organizations. South Sudan has an important resource called oil which attracts the interest of especially the major international powers.<sup>188</sup> The country also has a huge potential for agriculture. As a result, international actors intervene in many ways to protect their vested interests. The study affirms the intervention of these actors to pursue their interests either in the peacekeeping process or in the name of humanitarian protection, helps the south Sudan conflict to internationalize. This makes the conflict to become regionalized as well and gives it an international attribute spilling over to the neighboring countries.

On the other hand, the outflow of refugees from South Sudan serves as a means to diffuse the conflict to the neighboring countries. Refugees put economic, political and social pressure in the receiving countries. Apart from these pressures, the refugees in the host countries create clear security tensions in the neighboring countries like Ethiopia and Kenya. In this regard the ever increasing tension between the Anuaks and Nuers in the Gambella region of Ethiopia and the security challenges in the Kenyan refugee camps (Dadaab and Kakuma) is a good example. The same is also true in Uganda which receives the largest number of refugees from South Sudan in the region.

As discussed in detail in chapter four, insecurity and instability is a major challenge to the Horn of Africa region. One of the factors that aggravate this problem is the flow of refugees from conflict

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<sup>188</sup> Laura M. James (2015) *Fields of Control: Oil and (In) security in Sudan and South Sudan*, nbmedia Geneva, Switzerland



ridden states to other states in the region. Therefore this study labels the internal conflict in South Sudan as internationalized by the intervention of external actors and the out flow of refugees from South Sudan and the consequently affected neighboring countries.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The Study makes the following recommendations and specifically to domestic actors and stakeholders, Regional actors, IGAD and AU and the International Community. Based on the findings of the study recommends;

### **5.4.1 Recommendation for the South Sudanese Domestic Actors and Stakeholders**

Many factors have been responsible for the eruption of the ongoing South Sudan conflict. However for Morrow political power struggle between the incumbent president Salva Kiir and his opponent the former vice president Riek Machar was the major factor that caused the violent clash between the major ethnic groups of the country.<sup>189</sup> This conflict could not be resolved just by simply harmonizing the political differences between the two leaders. Instead it needs an all-inclusive political approach that engages all the political elites of the country representing all the different ethnic groups.

Though the main fighting in South Sudan is between the President and his supporters (some pro government and mainly those of the Dinka ethnic groups) and his opponent Riek Machar and his supporters (the Nuer), South Sudan has diverse ethnic composition which have their own stake in the future of the country.<sup>190</sup> There is a missing link between the stakeholders in the South Sudan conflict. As a result, for sustainable engagement in conflict prevention and management in the

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<sup>189</sup> Rachel Morrow (2014) South Sudan: Conflict Mapping, Ontological Security and Institutionalized Conflict, Generations For Peace Institute Research, June – December 2014, The University of Oxford

<sup>190</sup> Ibid

ongoing negotiations and further conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes should be inclusive accommodating all the different actors and their interests and aspirations of the country's different ethnic groups. These players could be community leaders, youth, and political parties and the private sector. Though the role of external actors in mediating the conflict and bringing lasting peace in the South Sudan internal conflict is very crucial, it is up to the conflicting parties to negotiate and seek a home grown peace process and solution to the problems to analyze and come up with real causes and solutions for the conflict.

The main reason for the conflict in South Sudan is politics. The two major actor's interest is to dominate the politics of the country and by extension to control the country's economy.<sup>191</sup> For political problem, the solution is too political. For the country to resolve the conflict there is a need for political will for the purpose of unity in South Sudan. In this regard, the two leaders need to put their selfish political and economic interests aside and give priority for the future of the very survival of the country. To this end, the two leaders have to narrow down their differences for the sake of the people and the country and resolve their difference amicably. Apart from the political elites and fighters, there is also a need for Comprehensive Peace Agreement that enables the actors to engage the other stakeholders such as civil society, and accommodate their views and interests in the way to come out of the crisis and for further nation building process.

The warring parties do not seem serious about the implementation of the agreements they signed. The international community has been warning both the government and the rebel groups of

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<sup>191</sup> Andrew T.Maina (2014)South Sudan Conflict Analysis: Levels, Actors, Interests and Solutions available online on <https://theforeignpolicyanalyst.wordpress.com/2014/01/16/south-sudan-conflict-analysis-levels-actors-interests-and-solutions/> Posted on January 16, 2014 , accessed on May 2018

sanctions unless the parties comply to their commitments, seeing sanctions as an alternative measure to arrest the escalation of the conflict <sup>192</sup> However, this paper recommends that coercive actions like sanctions on both sides could not bring a lasting peace in South Sudan. Therefore, the international community should look for alternative measures by engaging the warring parties diplomatically.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendation for the Regional Actors, IGAD & AU**

When it comes to resolving the conflict in South Sudan, the role of regional actors should not be undermined. AU and IGAD as regional actors contribute a lot in mediating the warring parties of South Sudan. However, there always complaints on the lack of coordination between the two organs.<sup>193</sup> This has impacted the peace processes negatively and has complicated the mediation efforts of the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Hence, there is a need to integrate and coordinate effort by the regional actors especially between IGAD as a regional block and AU as a continental organization to engage all the main actors and end the violence in South Sudan. Moreover, IGAD has to move one step ahead and assist the warring parties to deal with the root causes of conflict.

Regional divide as a common attribute among the regional actors mainly Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda is another factor. Even though, these countries have vested economic political & security interests in South Sudan, agreement between active IGAD member countries on the way forward to alleviate the ongoing conflict. The regional actors particularly those who have

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<sup>192</sup> ISS Peace And Security Report (2018), Time For Sanctions Against South Sudan, available online on [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) Posted on 7 February 2018, accessed May, 2018

<sup>193</sup> Lucy A. & Kumalo L. (2017) Democratize or Disintegrate, How the AU Can Help South Sudan, Institute for Security Studies

competitive interests have to refrain from at least direct military involvement either supporting or against any party. To bring sustainable peace in South Sudan and to the region, these countries should ease the tension and narrow down their differences of interest to help the newly independent country to come out of the vicious circle of conflict.

It appears that Uganda hosts the largest number of South Sudanese refugees in the region sheltering close to one million refugees. This puts pressure on the country in many ways (economic, social, political and security). The regional actors have to think on the fair distribution of the refugees to avoid unnecessary burden over one country and show regional unity.

#### **5.4.3 Recommendation for the International Actors, the Troika, UN & International Humanitarian Organizations**

The international community has been playing a significant role in the South Sudan since the time of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Countries like the USA were instrumental in the separation of South Sudan from the north. The US has also played an important role in the ongoing conflict and as one of the super powers it taken a leading role to bring peace and stability in South Sudan.

The international community should support the efforts of IGAD and make certain that both parties are negotiating with trust amongst them and engage other stakeholders of the conflict. Moreover, the international actors need to assist the parties to implement the agreements reached between the warring parties. So far, IGAD has played a critical role in mediating the conflicting parties and to resolving their differences amicably. However, it appears that coordination and further assistance from the international community is needed. Hence, the international community should understand the regional complexity and should continue to strengthen regional organizations like AU and IGAD to facilitate regional peace and stability. The role of the UN is very critical too in

the ongoing South Sudan conflict resolution and peace keeping, for the UN there is a need to strengthen its mission in South Sudan (the UNMISS).

Humanitarian organizations need to supply aids in a manner that will not fuel further conflict in the refugee camps and consider as well the environmental impacts of the refugees in the host countries and design some natural resource conservation mechanisms to maintain good relationship between the host communities and the refugees. In addition, more funds are needed from the international humanitarian organizations for the refugee host countries to fulfill the needs of the refugees so that the burden on the natural resources decreases that normally leads to inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts in the refugee camps. However, the international humanitarian organizations need to make sure that the relief aids are fairly distributed to the needy to arrest conflict escalation.

Despite several agreements reached and signed between the government and the rebel groups, violence has continued to escalate and cause internal displacement and out flow of refugees along South Sudan border. In order to hold back from the expansion of the conflict further in the region caused by refugees plight, both financial and political commitment is needed from the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced people, to minimize refugees out flows to the neighboring countries and back in their homeland.

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