

# South Sudan African Mission

Over 25 Years of Service to the People of South Sudan

P.O. Box 187, Gresham, Oregon 97030 - Phone: 503.729.4631  
www.southsudanafricanmission.org - Email: info@sudanafricanmission.org



## UPDATE ON SOUTH SUDAN'S POLITICAL UNREST

South Sudan has been in the news quite a bit lately. Vice President Riek Machar is in a power struggle with President Salva Kiir. The Dinka tribe, to which President Kiir belongs, is in conflict with the Nuer tribe, which Vice President Machar is from. South Sudan erupted into war on December 15 when a small skirmish among the presidential guard gave birth to tribal conflict. Because of these news headlines, SSAM felt it important to update our supporters and friends of the current situation in South Sudan.

*"At least 121,600 people have fled their home, and thousands are feared dead since fighting broke out Dec. 15, according to the United Nations. Some 63,000 civilians have sought shelter inside U.N. bases. While the conflict in South Sudan began as a political battle between Kiir and Machar, it has taken on an added tribal element with clashes between the Dinka and Nuer people."* Chicago Tribune, December 28, 2013.

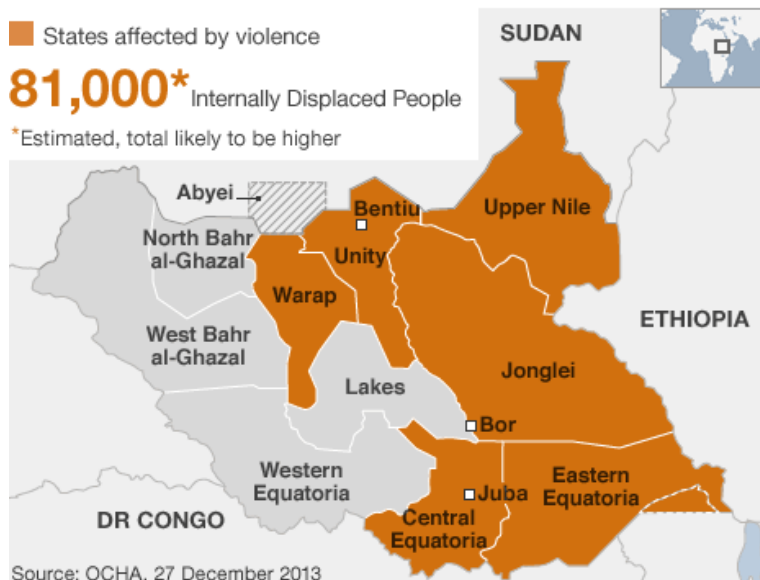
All involved with the South Sudan African Mission request your prayers for peace. Looking at the map below, Malek and Aweil are located in the North Bahr al-Ghazal region, but Santino and others are in the area of conflict. SSAM has worked in adverse situations for most of its 25 years, but this is the worst experience we have seen in recent years.

### South Sudan conflict

States affected by violence

**81,000\*** Internally Displaced People

\*Estimated, total likely to be higher



Source: OCHA, 27 December 2013

## Received from Dr. John, Christmas Day, 2013

Merry Christmas to you all.

Due to crisis and fear of insecurity, it wasn't an easy task to sit down and write any mail while I was in Juba for three days and two nights. There was no such thing as open war but fear of death was everybody's concern.

I booked a ticket from Kampala (Ethiopia) to Wau via Juba on Saturday, Dec. 21st. Unfortunately the flight was cancelled at Entebbe International Airport due to Juba's crisis that evening. Our heartbeat doubled and tension escalated within us. Countrymen and women from Juba told us to wait for it to be calm in Juba before we returned home but I trusted God that He would deliver us back home. We were able to board the second day to Juba. The transition to Wau was however aborted and my ticket redirected to the Aweil Airport. The domestic flight check in was done outside the boarding lounge. There were more tickets than boarding tickets probably as I was one of tens of passengers who missed Sunday flight. By God's grace I boarded my flight to Aweil yesterday Tuesday Dec. 24th. I didn't reach Malek but I celebrated the 24th/25th night here at the Aweil Church. There were thousands of brethren who unconditionally turned out to celebrate the birth of Christ throughout the night of the 24th and morning of 25th. Every Christian was engaged in praying to Jesus for peace. The peace He said He is leaving with us.

South Sudanese people are requesting our brothers and sisters in USA and in this country to reach God in prayer so that peace be upon everyone. By speaking to God in prayer, we will get the answer. We pray for peace at home, in our minds and peace in our hearts. But most of all, peace for those innocent brothers and sisters who lost their precious kin during the recent and ongoing violence in South Sudan state of Central Equatoria, Jonglei and Unity state.

Northern Bahr al-Ghazal is at peace like the rest of other seven states with an exception of Juba, Bor and Bentiu.

Yournew and the team are fine and in good health. Some central churches across the villages we visited with Steve, Tom and Peter have joined in prayer. From last night until this morning you could hear the drums beating to mark the birthday of Christ Jesus.

Every business in Aweil is running well. People can work day and night if they want to. Police are on the main street to notify the public of any suspicious groups.

SUDAN AFRICAN MISSION  
PO Box 187  
Gresham, OR 97030

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**PRAYER REQUESTS** (from Dr. John)

- Growth of the Churches of Christ in the hearts of people of South Sudan.
- The South Sudanese to change from tribes to one Tribe of Jesus Christ.
- Fair, just and peaceful governance amongst South Sudanese leaders.
- SSAM to have enough funds to sustain and open doors for more aid projects. For Christian leaders in South Sudan to expand the kingdom of God in this land.
- Provide us with wisdom so that we can do God's work without worldly obstacles. That we may have faith in Christ and the Almighty Father God forever.
- Myself that God may give me wisdom so that I know specific dreams that will keep me in union with Christ.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Yournew was busy during my few days of absence. We have ordered the metal poles for the office structure. We have contracted a truck to lift the brick from the Malek church to our new compound in Aweil to construct the office. Sending us water well funds to drill the well as construction continues is of greater help.

Complications come when neighboring countries like Uganda and Kenya have fear of crossing borders with goods. The people from Northern Sudan lack basic needs. Hunger is striking. Diseases due to overcrowding are higher than before. Fear and worry of tomorrows and today are traumatizing the civilians of this country.

The town of Bor is now under full control of SPLA forces as the spokesperson announced yesterday on national TV. The national forces said they will advance their victory to Unity state (Bentiu) in a few days. Join us by praying that no more deaths arise, and that the President and the Vice President are willing to come to dialogue. **Our church is one of a peace building institution. Christians need Christ's love. This is the only choice left when what you call home is becoming a battle ground and pool of a bloodshed.**

Steve, Bev and Tom and other SSAM leaders need not to fear purchasing the Christian Mobile Medical Clinic immediately after the border of Kenya and Uganda normalize. We can arrange this within the month of January. However the ongoing crisis will dictate. We will first wait for stability of security in South Sudan and soon after Yournew and I will request the resumption of the mobile medical van. As soon as I am able to write back I will provide some photos about the work going on in Aweil Compound.

Merry Christmas to you all and Happy New Year in 2014.

Yours in Christ, John



Dr. John at his graduation on December 18, 2013

Giving Statements for 2013 will be in the mail no later than January 20, 2014. If you do not receive yours by January 27th, please notify our office. We thank God for every dollar which was given to SSAM in 2013!