

New Report on Sudan: Indiscriminate bombing exacerbates humanitarian crisis in Southern Kordofan Amnesty International 17 April 2013 The UN Security Council and African Union (AU) must take immediate action to halt indiscriminate attacks in Southern Kordofan, Amnesty International said in a new report that highlights the urgent need for humanitarian access to the conflict-affected areas.

Indiscriminate bombings, lack of humanitarian assistance and massive displacement which has severely disrupted agricultural production, have all conspired to place civilians in the areas controlled by the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) in Southern Kordofan, in an extremely precarious situation.

This will only get worse in the next few months as food supplies are dwindling and the impending rainy season makes roads impassable.

“The international community continues to watch this catastrophe unfold as the humanitarian situation worsens in conflict-affected areas of Southern Kordofan. It’s time for some concerted action,” said Khairunissa Dhala, Amnesty International’s South Sudan researcher.

“Indiscriminate attacks must immediately cease and the international community must bring pressure to bear on the Sudanese authorities to grant immediate and unhindered humanitarian access,” she added. (...)

Amnesty International has documented bombings by the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) carried out during key planting and harvesting periods which have caused severe damage to people’s livelihoods. According to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network the majority of internally displaced people are likely to face crisis levels of food security by the time the rainy season starts in the next few weeks.

The bombings have severely disrupted daily activities such as farming and education. Where schooling is still possible, it takes place in open spaces, so that teachers and pupils can run to seek safety in nearby foxholes and caves. Access to healthcare and clean water has also been severely hindered, denying basic rights to the civilian population.

As the conflict ensues, the number of people fleeing to South Sudan as refugees rapidly increases. More than 70,000 people have fled to Yida camp in Unity State.

And more continue to arrive every day. The UN anticipates that the number of refugees in the camp will reach 100,000 by May.

Challenges to hosting and providing adequate services to the burgeoning refugee population in Yida refugee camp remain. As the camp grows, refugees face pressure to move to other sites prior to the rains.

Amnesty International calls on the South Sudan authorities together with international agencies to ensure that refugees have access to basic services at all sites, including education.

“Nearly two years on, the conflict in Southern Kordofan and the humanitarian crisis that it has brought, are severely undermining people’s basic human rights,” said Khairunissa Dhala.

“The Sudanese authorities are harassing, arresting and detaining a number of people who are speaking out about the situation inside Sudan,” she added. (...)

The report Sudan: Civilians caught in unending crisis in Southern Kordofan also calls for an independent inquiry into the alleged violations and abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict, including the Government of Sudan and the SPLA-N.

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