

Timeline of Recent Intra-Southern Conflict

Note: This timeline is based on a range of sources, including key informant interviews and public reporting. While the HSBA has made every effort to confirm the facts, the rapidly evolving security situation in South Sudan makes independent verification of all events impossible.

21 June 2012—Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) President and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Chairman Salva Kiir issues four orders forming committees to review the SPLM's basic documents ahead of the party's extraordinary National Convention.

June-August 2012—The SPLM conducts a nationwide tour to consult members on nation- and state-building and to thank them for their support since the civil war. The feedback from states indicates widespread disaffection with the party's performance.

5 December 2012—South Sudanese journalist Isaiah Diing Abraham Chan Awuol is shot and killed in Juba. His writings are seen as highly critical of Kiir and supportive of a Machar presidency. There is widespread speculation that he has been killed by the National Security Services. As a respected Dinka Bor and a Major in the wartime SPLA, Isaiah's death causes considerable tensions within the elite.

Early 2013—In a meeting with Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the AU's High-level Implementation Panel for the Sudan-South Sudan talks, Kiir reportedly reveals that he will not stand in the 2015 elections, to the surprise of his own entourage, which includes Deng Alor. Deng later reports the president's statement to colleagues.

21 January 2013—Kiir issues Presidential Decree 06/2013, removing Lakes state Governor Chol Tong Mayay. Rumours suggest Chol is being punished for becoming too close to Vice-President Machar. He is later replaced by Matur Chut Dhuol, a recently retired SPLA Major General who had been 7th Division Commander. On the same day, Presidential Decree 07/2013 is issued, removing 30 top SPLA generals from active service and placing them on a 'reserve list'. The 30 include all six SPLA Deputy Chiefs of Staff as well as several high profile officers formally in the South Sudan Defence Forces (SSDF).

14 February—Kiir retires a further 117 SPLA generals under Presidential Decree 25/2013. The Minister of Information assures the press that 'the President still trusts them. He has hope in them and they should show good examples in accepting the changes.'

6 March—The SPLM Political Bureau convenes to discuss the party's basic documents, a process which takes a month. During the deliberations, Machar announces his intention to challenge Kiir for the leadership of the SPLM in its forthcoming National Convention. Machar reportedly details six areas where he believes Kiir has failed as Chairman, namely: corruption, tribalism, security, economy, foreign relations and the vision and direction of the party. Pagan Amum and Rebecca Nyandeng also announce their candidacies. Machar's disclosure prompts

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a bout of shuttle diplomacy within the SPLM leadership as officials make efforts to reconcile Kiir and Machar.

12 April—Sudan President Omar al-Bashir visits Juba for the first time since the independence of South Sudan, illustrative of thawing relations between Juba and Khartoum amid a series of agreements to reinvigorate the September 2012 Addis Ababa Agreement and restart oil production.

15 April—Kiir issues Republican Order 03/2013 stripping Vice-President Riek Machar of ‘all duly Delegated powers’ under the 2011 Transitional Constitution. On the same day, Kiir suspends the holding of the National Reconciliation Conference, which Machar is due to chair, until further notice. The decision is justified on the grounds that the delegated powers date to when Kiir was also First Vice-President of pre-secession Sudan, and they are no longer necessary. Many see the decision as a response to Machar’s March announcement.

26 April—The South Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SSLM/A), a rebel group dominated by former SSDF Nuer commanders from western Unity state, accepts the President’s amnesty offer and begins to move its forces to Mayom county, Unity state, to integrate into the SPLA.

5 May 2013—Oil exportation from South Sudan to Sudan restarts more than a year after production was halted due to a disagreement over transit fees.

20 May 2013—The deadline passes for the holding of the Third SPLM National Convention, which, as stipulated under Article 13 (4) of the 2008 SPLM Constitution, must be held within five years of the previous (2008) meeting.

17 June 2013—Kiir issues Republican Order 12/2013, lifting the immunity from prosecution of two key ministers: Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor Kuol—previously a close ally of Kiir and also of John Garang—and Kosti Manibe Ngai, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning. Both are accused of corruption. Republican Order 13/2013 is issued the same day, forming a Committee to investigate the alleged unprocedural transfer of some USD 8 million to Daffy Investment Group Ltd. It is rumoured that Deng is suspended as a result of relaying details of Kiir’s earlier meeting with Mbeki. Kosti may have been suspended due to efforts to remove suspected corrupt officials from the Ministry of Finance.

4 July— The *Guardian* (UK) publishes an interview with Machar in which he publicly confirms and explains his decision to challenge Kiir for the presidency in 2015, again outlining the key areas where he believed the President has failed.

7 July— Kiir dismisses the Governor of Unity state Taban Deng Gai by presidential decree. Taban is a member of the SPLM’s Political Bureau and long seen as unpopular in Unity state. Some speculate that he is dismissed for his links to Machar, as well as opposing a further presidential term for Kiir. Joseph Nguen Monyuel, SPLM Chairperson for Unity state, is appointed caretaker governor. Joseph is the brother of former rebel leader Bapiny Monyuel, whose South Sudan Liberation/Movement Army (SSLM/A) rebel group has recently been integrated into

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the SPLA. The SSLM/A had opposed the governorship of Taban Deng since its formation in 2011.

22 July—In contrast to official government statements, Machar urges the people of Abyei to go back to the area, and for the GRSS to recognize Abyei’s referendum. The government distances itself from his statement.

23 July—Following weeks of increasing speculation and tension, Kiir issues Republican Decree 49/2013, dismissing Machar as Vice-President. Machar’s dismissal is constitutional under Article 104 (2) of the Transitional Constitution. On the same day, Kiir issues Republican Decrees 50/2013 dismissing all ministers and 51/2013 dismissing all deputy ministers. In his capacity as Chairperson of the SPLM, he also issues Chairperson’s Order 01/2013, suspending Pagan Amum Okiech from the position of SPLM Secretary General and establishing a committee to investigate him for ‘mismanaging the affairs of SPLM’. A separate order instructs Pagan not to travel or address the media during his investigation. Pagan had been the South’s lead negotiator in Sudan-South Sudan talks and was known hardliner against the Government of Sudan (GoS).

31 July-4 August—Kiir issues a series of Republican Decrees, initially restructuring the government and appointing new ministers and deputies, before removing and repositioning some appointees and ordering further restructuring. Many SPLM old guard are dismissed *en masse*; new appointees include a number of individuals associated with the political establishment in Khartoum. The public generally welcomes the changes as efforts to streamline the government and remove senior politicians seen as contributing to past failings.

2 August—Kiir reportedly promises Khartoum that he will suspend all aid to the SPLM-North, which he has always denied providing.

13 August—A vetting committee chaired by Hon. Abuk Payiti Ayiik, wife of recently dismissed Minister of Education Peter Adwok Nyaba, reports concerns to the National Legislature about the qualifications of the President’s appointee for Minister of Justice, his close ally Telar Ring Deng. The committee also highlights Telar’s role in a proposed deal to purchase land for the Bank of South Sudan. Parliament, in a closed ballot, votes to reject Telar’s appointment, setting a precedent. All other cabinet ministers are approved. Telar is seen as Kiir’s closest advisor and architect of the July dismissals.

23 August—Kiir issues a Republican Decree appointing James Wani Igga, Speaker of the National Legislative Assembly, as Vice-President. He is confirmed three days later by the National Legislature.

2 September—Parliament approves Hon. Manasseh Magok Rundial as its new Speaker, without a formal vote. Manasseh had been the National Congress Party Governor of Greater Upper Nile from 2000 to 2002. Prior to the approval, Kiir had reportedly addressed the SPLM Caucus, instructing members to accept Manasseh. Some members nevertheless reportedly favoured Machar for the position.

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3 September—Kiir flies to Khartoum to discuss the implementation of the September 2012 Cooperation Agreements and Bashir’s threat to shut down oil pipelines for a second time over Juba’s alleged support to the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF). Kiir reportedly offers reassurances regarding the South’s disassociation with the rebels. Both sides acknowledge that Abyei is the principal outstanding issue between Khartoum and Juba.

17 September—Kiir reappoints rejected Minister of Justice appointee Telar Ring Deng to his previous post as Presidential Advisor on Legal Affairs.

22 October—Bashir visits Juba to again discuss the Cooperation Agreements amid increasingly warm relations.

November—Bashir flies to Juba to cement the final implementation of the 27 September 2012 oil agreement, demanding terms for the progressive pay-as-you-go disbursement of the USD 3 billion special compensation fund. The compensation money was included in the agreement but no timetable had been set for its disbursement. This new agreement significantly raises the transit fee for crude transiting through the pipeline.

15 November—While officially opening the new offices of the SPLM Secretariat in Juba, Kiir announces that he is dissolving all political structures of the SPLM, which include the highest executive organ, the Political Bureau and the National Liberation Council (NLC). He explains that the structures have lapsed because the National Convention has not met to elect new membership within their five-year lifespan. He says that only the office of the Chairman and the Secretariat will continue to function.

6 December—A group of senior SPLM politicians sacked by Kiir holds a press conference at the new premises of the SPLM Secretariat while Kiir is on an official visit to Paris. Machar leads the group, which includes Rebecca Nyandeng (wife of the late John Garang), Pagan Amum Okiech, Deng Alor Kuol, Alfred Ladu Gore, Oyay Deng Ajak, Majak D’Agoot Atem, Madut Biar Yel, Gier Chuang Aluong, Peter Adwok Nyaba, Chol Tong Mayay, Taban Deng Gai, Ezekiel Gatkouth Lul, John Luk Jok, Kosti Manibe Ngai, and Cirino Hiteng Ofuho. They call on Kiir to hold a meeting of the SPLM Political Bureau—which he has reportedly declined to do since the March meeting—to discuss differences over the management of the party. They also announce a public rally to be held on 14 December in Juba, at the site of John Garang’s memorial. The SPLM Secretariat subsequently announced that the SPLM’s long-awaited NLC meeting would go ahead on the same day.

13 December—Machar issues a statement declaring that the planned rally will be postponed until 20 December, to allow more time for dialogue. The decision is in response to calls by elders and religious figures for the press conference and the NLC to be delayed while dialogue is pursued.

14 December—The NLC proceeds despite the calls for delays. Kiir gives a combative opening address, referencing the 1991 split in the SPLM, which had been led by Machar. Rather than discussing internal tensions, the council proceeds with

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deliberations on approving the SPLM's revised basic documents, one of the principal sources of disagreement in the party.

15 December—The NLC reconvenes. In protest at the proceedings, Machar and others politicians who were present at the 6 December press conference do not attend. The party's basic documents are passed without substantive debate and the NLC concludes its work a day early. Shots are heard in the vicinity of the Nyakuron Cultural Centre, the meeting venue, amid high tension. Kiir reportedly instructs Major-General Marial Chanuong, Commander of the Presidential Guards, to disarm the Guards—who are a combination of the personal forces of Kiir, Machar, and the late Paulino Mateip—in their barracks at Giyada, over suspicions that a Machar-led and SPLA-supported coup was imminent. During the disarmament that evening, fighting breaks out in Giyada between Dinka and Nuer elements within the Presidential Guards, reportedly as a result of selective disarmament. Fighting quickly spreads to the SPLA Headquarters at Bilpam, which is briefly overrun by Nuer soldiers before being recaptured by the SPLA's 2nd Division the following morning.

16 December—Security forces begin to arrest a series of ranking SPLM members in Juba, initially Majak d'Agoot Atem, Oyay Deng Ajak, Gier Chuang Aluong and Cirino Hiteng Ofuho. In a televised statement and dressed in military uniform, Kiir accuses Machar of staging a coup against the government. Machar, Taban, and Alfred Ladu Gore evade capture. Machar flees northwards after clashes in which a number of his bodyguards are killed or captured. Heavy fighting along ethnic lines spreads to residential areas around Bilpam such as New Site, which are largely occupied by soldiers.

16 December—Dinka security sector personnel, including the Presidential Guard, begin to arrest, abuse, and kill Nuer soldiers, politicians, and civilians in Juba, in what Human Rights Watch and UN reporting suggests was at least a partially organized operation during the week that follows the outbreak of fighting. In one documented case, 200–300 Nuer civilians are rounded up and imprisoned in Gudele police station on the night of 15 December before being executed the following evening.

18 December—Machar arrives in Bor by boat. SPLA 8th Division Commander Peter Gadet Yak, a former senior SSDF commander, seizes the key military sites of Panpandiar and Malual Chaat, in Bor, Jonglei state, securing significant military hardware and declaring that he has rebelled against the government. The division is heavily Nuer; many soldiers defect with Gadet. They seize control of Bor town, overcoming some resistance from security forces still loyal to the government. During the following days, there are reports of indiscriminate revenge killings by Nuer soldiers in Bor, a Dinka town, in retaliation for events in Juba.

Ethnic fighting breaks out between staff at a base camp of the Greater Pioneer Operating Company in Unity oil field late in the evening, with five reported fatalities. 11 more are reported killed as fighting spreads between workers at the Thar Jiath oil field, while fighting also breaks out within the 4th Division Oil Brigade. 4th Division Commander Major General James Koang Chol has reportedly instructed his forces not to get involved in the fighting.

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Pagan Amum is arrested in his home in Juba, where he has reportedly been under house arrest since his suspension in July.

19 December—Machar calls on the SPLM and SPLA to topple Kiir, confirming that he is now in open rebellion against the government, while denying that he had plotted a coup.

Unidentified Nuer gunmen attack a UN compound in Akobo, targeting Dinka. They kill two Indian UN peacekeepers and more than 30 civilians.

Heavy ethnic fighting occurs within the SPLA 4th Division headquarters in Rubkona involving the Tank Unit, before spreading to surrounding civilian areas.

20 December—Reports that opposition forces have taken Torit and are marching on Juba prove to be completely false (the whole of Eastern Equatoria remains calm and in government hands). However, the false reports spark panic among expatriates in Juba and a new urgency to evacuate.

Special forces of the Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) are deployed to Juba at the request of the GRSS. Uganda says its army will assist the evacuation of Ugandan citizens from South Sudan.

The government forms a 22-member Crisis Management Committee (CMC) chaired by Vice-President James Wani Igga to assess the impact of and mitigate the purported coup attempt.

Republic Decree 103/2013 reinstates five SPLA officers previously placed on the reserve list to active service. They are Major Generals Garang Mabil Deng, Peter Bol Koang, Bol Akot Bol, Simon Gatwich Dual, and Thiep Gatluak. Garang Mabil and Bol Akot are close allies of the President from Bahr el Ghazal while Bol Koang, Gatwic Dual, and Thiep Gatluak are Nuer officers who Kiir may be trying to discourage from rebellion. Bol Koang and Gatwic Dual were accused in 2013 of plotting a coup against the President.

21 December—Following heavy fighting in Bentiu and neighbouring Rubkona in Unity state, James Koang announces that he has defected with his division and has deposed Joseph Monytuel as Governor of Unity state. Koang, a Jikany Nuer who had never previously defected, claims that his Tank Unit commander had attempted to assassinate him under instruction from Monytuel and senior military figures in Juba. Koang instructs his forces to respect diversity and not engage in revenge killings. Joseph Monytuel reportedly flees to Wangkai with the state chief of police.

22 December—SSLM/A Spokesman Gordon Buay issues an ultimatum giving James Koang three days to return to the SPLA, otherwise SSLM/A forces, now aligned with the SPLA and under the command of Major-General Matthew Puljang, will dislodge him from Bentiu.

21 December—It is reported that rebel positions in Bor have been bombed by Ugandan jets. The same day, US Air force V-22 Osprey aircraft is hit by rebel gunfire

12 miles south of Bor in Jonglei in an operation to evacuate US nationals. Four US personnel are wounded in the incident.

24 December—Peter Gadet’s rebel forces organize an orderly retreat as the SPLA recaptures Bor. This allows a large number of civilians who had taken refuge in the UNMISS compound to return to their homes.

Further north, amid heavy fighting, defecting elements of SPLA 7th Division capture Malakal, the capital of the principal oil producing state of Upper Nile. Governor Simon Kun Puoch seeks refuge in the UNMISS base, along with thousands of the city’s residents.

25 December—In a Christmas day address at St. Theresa’s Cathedral in Juba, Kiir acknowledges killings in Juba and says the perpetrators of violence are ‘destroying’ him.

The SPLA 7th Division Brigade in Fashoda, Upper Nile, splits peacefully between forces of its Nuer commander and his Dinka deputy. Newly integrated SPLA Commander Johnson Olony later mediates between the two to avert fighting.

27 December—Ugandan MiG-29 jets bomb rebel areas around Bor in the hope of dislodging rebel forces, without much success.

IGAD holds an extraordinary heads of state meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on South Sudan. The communiqué states that IGAD: ‘condemns changing the democratic government of the Republic of South Sudan through use of force’; ‘commends the effort of the Republic of Uganda in securing critical infrastructure and installations in South Sudan and pledges its support to these effort (sic)’; and, ‘if hostilities do not cease within four days of this communiqué, the Summit will consider taking further measures’.

28 December—Pro-government forces reoccupy Malakal with little rebel resistance.

28-30 December— James Koang Chol accuses the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) of supporting the SPLA, and moving into Pariang county, Unity, from the Nuba Mountains. JEM issues a statement denying this, and said that it would not interfere with internal conflict in South Sudan. But aid workers at Yida report seeing JEM vehicles moving south to Pariang on 27 December. The SRF have been heavily reliant on the Pariang corridor for their war in the Nuba Mountains against the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF).

30 December— Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni visits Juba, pledges his support to Kiir and tells the assembled press that IGAD ‘gave Riek Machar four days to respond and if he doesn’t we shall have to go for him, all of us.’

31 December—The SPLA performs a tactical withdrawal from Bor town as rebel forces approach, accompanied by vast, unspecified numbers of Nuer ‘white army’ fighters. Most inhabitants of the town have fled in anticipation of the rebels’ arrival. Heavy fighting has occurred in the villages around Bor as the forces approached.

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Splits surface between the Dinka Gok and Athoc of South Bor and Dinka Hol, Nyarweng and Twic of North Bor. Some in South Bor accuse the sub-tribes of North Bor of allowing the white army safe passage to attack Bor town, which is in South Bor. It is rumoured that the Nuer fighters were under strict instructions from their leadership not to attack areas of North Bor, home of key opposition politicians Rebecca Nyandeng and Majak D'Agoot.

1 January—Immediately after the recapture of Bor, Gadet's forces—a combination of SPLA defectors and white army—begin marching southwards towards Juba along the main road from Bor. Kiir declares a state of emergency in Jonglei and Unity states.

4 January—The SPLA dispatches troops from Juba towards Bor under the command of Lieutenant General Malual Ayom Dor, many recently recruited from Bahr el Ghazal. One contingent travels by land and the other by boats on the Nile. Both units are ambushed at Pariak, 35 km south of Bor. SPLA Brigadier General Abraham Jongroor Deng is killed in the battle and SPLA forces suffer heavy losses.

To reinforce the SPLA troops fighting Gadet's forces, various Equatorial garrisons in Yei, Morobo, and Maridi are instructed to deploy to Juba. This prompts a series of defections among Nuer soldiers. Limited fighting breaks out in towns proximate to Juba such as Mundri, Rokon and Yei. Meanwhile, Equatorial politician Alfred Ladu Gore, who fled Juba on 15 December, reportedly starts to organize a fighting force among the Equatorial tribes.

5 January—Juba comes under significant threat from advancing forces of Peter Gadet, with reports that he has reached Gemeiza in Central Equatoria. Ugandan President Museveni sends significant reinforcements to South Sudan. Some of these troops are involved in another attempt at counter-attacking towards Bor, with a series of clashes continuing over several days.

Direct ceasefire talks begin in Addis Ababa but quickly hit difficulty when Machar demands the immediate release of the detained former members of government.

6 January—Sudanese President Bashir arrives in Juba as a sign of support to Kiir. Sudan Foreign Minister Karti is quoted as saying that Sudan would be willing to negotiate the creation of a joint SPLA-SAF to secure the oilfields. The next day Bashir denies this proposal; later his government renews the offer (18 January) before denying it again (20 January).

7 January—Remnants of forces that defected in Equatoria coalesce at Rajaf, just across the Nile from Juba. Other opposition forces also take up positions south of Juba on the Juba-Yei road.

The government announces a unilateral ceasefire with the South Sudan Democratic Forces (SSDA)-Cobra Faction rebel group of David Yau Yau.

8 January—Combined forces of the SSLM/A and SPLA 3rd and 5th Divisions finally capture Mayom in western Unity state, which had been under rebel control since the

defection of the James Koang on 21 December. Several days of heavy fighting leaves the town destroyed.

9 January—SPLA forces reach Rubkona, across the bridge from Bentiu, reportedly with allied fighters from the SSLM/A and the JEM. The town has already emptied of civilians in anticipation of the attack, while Machar's forces have also largely withdrawn, destroying ammunition dumps along the way. By the end of the day on 10 January, the SPLA secures the city.

10 January—The three Equatoria governors meet and call for the mobilization of Equatorians to defend their territory, condemn any move to usurp power unconstitutionally, and strongly stand with Kiir in attempting to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. They call for political federalism and a regional quota in recruitment to the security sector.

Rebel forces attack Baliet, a Ngok Dinka town on the arterial road from their stronghold in Nassir to Malakal. As fighting continues, SPLA Sector Commander Johnson Gony Biliu is ambushed outside Baliet on 11 January.

Defence ministers of South Sudan and Uganda sign a status of forces agreement in Juba to formalize the presence of UPDF in South Sudan.

11 January—International envoys (IGAD, the European Union, and the United States) go to South Sudan to meet Machar, asking him to sign a cessation of hostilities declaration. He refuses as long as the 11 senior SPLM detainees are not freed.

Nuer elements of SPLA 7th Division based at Doleib garrison in Upper Nile defect, prompting fighting in the area.

14 January—Having been summoned to Juba from Yei, SPLA Brigadier General Marac Akoon is ambushed and killed at Bongo by rebel forces.

Following intense fighting, Malakal is retaken by pro-Machar forces, a combination of defecting SPLA and thousands of Jikany Nuer white army fighters. White army forces kill, rape, and loot indiscriminately, targeting Dinka and Shilluk. Shilluk are targeted for being perceived as allied with the government. Some 200 are estimated to drown while fleeing by boat across the Nile in the course of fighting.

15 January—In Manyo county, situated in the Shilluk west bank of the Nile in Upper Nile, Nuer 7th Division forces in the SPLA garrison outside Wadakona defect and capture the town, following a similar incident in Kaka town. Kaka is soon reclaimed by the government, captured by former rebel commander Ayouk Ogat. But the rebels retain Wadakona.

16 January—Uganda publicly admits its role in fighting alongside the SPLA to recapture Bor. On the same day, its Parliament passes a motion declaring *post-facto* support to the deployment of the UPDF to South Sudan. UPDF reinforcements, supported by strong air cover, start to move northwards to Bor again.

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16 January—The SPLA recaptures Bor, with the UPDF playing a key role. Rebel forces withdraw in an orderly manner, avoiding a set-piece engagement with the Ugandans.

20 January—Government forces recapture Malakal after days of heavy fighting, with support from forces of Johnson Olony and reportedly elements of Malik Agar’s SPLM-N troops. Government forces target Nuer left in the town.

22 January—Rebel forces that had defected from various Equatorial SPLA units, led by Commanders Alfred Ladu Gore, Gabriel Tanginye, Thomas Mabor Dhol, and Simon Gatwic Dual, clash with government forces in Awerial county of Lakes state. Once it became clear that Gadet’s forces would not capture Juba, these defectors who had been encircling Juba fled to opposition areas in Panyijar in Unity state, taking them through government-held areas in Lakes state. They clash with government forces a number of times in eastern Lakes, before reaching Panyijar in early February.

23 January—The government and opposition sign a Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement in Addis Ababa, to come into effect in 24 hours. It calls for both parties to 'redeploy and/or progressively withdraw forces, armed groups and allied forces invited by either side from the theatre of operations.' This is interpreted by the opposition to imply a commitment by the government to instruct the Ugandan forces to withdraw from South Sudan.

24 January—Both sides trade unsubstantiated accusations of ceasefire violations across Greater Upper Nile. They cannot be verified because the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM) outlined in the CoH Agreement has not yet been deployed.

26 January—Minister for Justice Paulino Wanawila announces that Machar, Taban Deng, Alfred Ladu Gore, and the four remaining detainees will face treason charges for an attempted coup, despite international calls for the release of the four.

29 January—Seven of the eleven SPLM detainees—Deng Alor Kuol, Gier Chuang Aluong, Cirino Hiteng Ofuho, John Luk Jok, Chol Tong Mayay, Kosti Manibe Ngai, and Madut Biar Yel—are released into the custody of the Kenyan government after talks between Kiir and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta. Majak D’Agot Atem, Oyay Deng Ajak, Pagan Amum Okiech, and Ezekiel Gatkuoth Lul, remain in South Sudanese custody. Deng Alor and Gier Chuang are summoned to the office of the President before they depart, where Kiir urges them to pursue peace. John Luk makes a conciliatory televised speech on arrival in Nairobi, praising Kiir and angering many in the opposition.

30 January—The GRSS signs a ceasefire deal with the SSDM/A–Cobra Faction in Addis Ababa, pending full peace talks. The key clause states that ‘the SSDM/A Cobra Faction agree to remain neutral in the ongoing conflict between SPLA and the forces led by Dr. Riek Machar’.

1 February—SPLA attacks Leer town, the home of Machar, recapturing it from rebels. It is the first clear violation of the CoH Agreement. The Satellite Sentinel

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Project provides evidence of attacks on the town, including extensive destruction of civilian structures. JEM fighters are said to have participated in the capture of Leer on behalf of the government.

3 February—SPLA Chief of General Staff General James Hoth Mai warns the army to stay out of politics and admits that it has been weakened in the process of accommodating a patchwork of competing militia groups.

4 February—Machar calls for the release of the SPLM detainees, saying there was no coup plot and they are not associated with his military rebellion. Machar hopes that, once released, the detainees will join his rebellion and give it more political credibility and ethnic diversity.

5 February—IGAD mediators announce that the recently released seven SPLM former detainees will join in the second round of peace talks in Addis.

Rebel commander of Upper Nile Gathoth Gatkouth issues a statement rejecting the 23 January CoH Agreement, reportedly saying ‘we cannot make a deal with someone who has massacred his own citizens’.

Rebels claim that hundreds of soldiers have defected to them in Rumbek East while preparing for an attack on rebel positions in Panyijar.

6 February—At a meeting of senior SPLM members, Kiir announces that the positions of party Deputy Chairperson and Secretary-General, previously held by Machar and Pagan Amum respectively, are now vacant. He vows to appoint their replacements soon. Five days later he issues an Executive Order formally dismissing Pagan from the party.

The army holds a rally in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal to bring 6,000 new recruits into the SPLA, which has been decimated by defections since December.

7 February—A large force of Dinka *gelweng* and uniformed government forces from Lakes state attack Panyijar in Unity state, a Nuer area with rebel sympathies, killing a paramount chief and raiding an unknown number of cattle. The town is razed and a large number of civilians are reportedly killed before the pro-government forces withdraw.

Rebels claim to have killed a Ugandan soldier who was shot and fell out of a helicopter gunship in Lakes state as it attacked a column of rebels moving from Juba to Panyijar. The rebels recover and release the soldier’s identity card, but Uganda denies that its forces are carrying out attacks in Lakes and Upper Nile.

The US State Department issues a statement calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from South Sudan and warns against the regionalization of the conflict. The US also calls for the release of the four remaining SPLM detainees. The following day, UPDF Spokesman Paddy Ankunda tweets: “[W]hat if violence rolls back into Bor, Juba after UPDF withdraw, will the US be there to help?”

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10 February—The SPLM-IO, as the collective military and political opposition is now known, announces that it is boycotting the second round of peace talks over the non-implementation of the CoH Agreement. It cites the continued presence of UPDF in South Sudan and the failure of the government to allow the SPLM current and former detainees to participate in the talks. Kenya had earlier announced that it would prevent the seven former detainees from travelling but it later reverses the decision, to the anger of the Juba government.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn joins calls for the withdrawal of foreign forces from South Sudan, warning against the regionalization of the conflict. Ethiopia has long been uneasy at Uganda’s military presence in South Sudan.

Kiir terminates the SPLM party memberships of Machar, Taban Deng, and Alfred Ladu Gore.

Rebel forces close in on Malakal in Upper Nile, attacking SPLA 7th Division headquarters in Owachi and Doleib.

12 February—Citing information that remnants of cluster bombs were found on the Juba-Bor road the previous week, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon issues a statement condemning the use of these weapons in the South Sudan conflict. The road was the scene of intense fighting in January with UPDF involvement. The UPDF subsequently denies having used cluster bombs in South Sudan.

13 February—The seven SPLM former detainees arrive in Addis Ababa and hold a press conference declaring their neutrality from both warring parties in the conflict. SPLM-IO delegates publicly insist that they respect the decision of the seven but it is widely believed to cause resentment among them. The seven former detainees and SPLM-IO continue to call for the release of the remaining four SPLM detainees.

Minister of Defence Kuol Manyang reveals that South Sudan is paying for UPDF operations in South Sudan.

15 February—At an SPLM Youth League rally in Juba, Kiir acknowledges that youths were mobilized into a ‘national reserve’ despite objections at the time. The reference is widely understood to be to the recruitment of youths from Bahr el Ghazal, many of who were later assigned to the Presidential Guard and were involved in fighting in Juba in December 2013.

16 February—On recapturing the strategic town of Gadiang in Duk county, the SPLA’s overall commander in Jonglei state, Malual Ayom, presents to the press evidence of ammunition airdrops to the rebels. Heavy fighting continues in Duk county in the following weeks, displacing thousands.

A government delegation led by Presidential Advisor on Legal Affairs Telar Ring Deng visits Khartoum, with speculation that it is to discuss Sudan’s support to Machar’s rebel group.

17 February—Government Chief Whip MP Tulio Odongi claims during deliberations in the National Legislative Assembly that 70 per cent of the SPLA had defected to the rebels, justifying the need for foreign military assistance. Minister of Interior MP Aleu Ayieny says that the police have also been affected by defections from across Greater Upper Nile.

18 February—Rebels enter Malakal, eventually recapturing it from government forces in a well-coordinated assault comprising forces from Jonglei and Upper Nile. A group of Nuer SPLA soldiers conducts a coordinated defection to the rebels as the rebels approach Malakal. SPLA-aligned Shilluk commander Johnson Olony is shot in the neck and seriously wounded during the attack, and SPLA Brigadier-General Garang Tong Atak from Northern Bahr el Ghazal is killed. The rebels accuse UPDF of carrying out airstrikes against their positions in support of government forces. On the same day, ethnic fighting breaks out in the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) protection of civilians camp in Malakal between Dinka and Shilluk on one side and Nuer on the other, reportedly resulting in 10 dead. Several incidents of targeted ethnic violence are reported in Malakal.

20 February—The large opposition force that has been sheltering in Panyijar, Southern Unity state, begins to disperse, largely to Upper Nile by boat from Shambe port. Alfred Ladu Gore and Simon Gatwic Dual travel instead to Akobo in Jonglei.

21 February—Upper Nile state Minister of Petroleum Francis Ayul announces the evacuation of foreign oil workers from Paloich and Adar oilfields due to fears of an imminent rebel assault. He is later sacked, with speculation that his removal is linked to the evacuation announcement.

24 February—Rebels attack government positions in Guel Guk, 30 km from the Adar oilfield.

26 February—Opposition forces cross the Nile from Malakal, capturing Lelo and Owachi in Malakal and Panyikang counties, respectively.

2 March—Presidential spokesman Ateny Wek reveals that Juba requested a 10-battalion IGAD force to protect Juba and oil infrastructure, in order to replace Ugandan troops.

3 March—IGAD mediators announce the adjournment of the second round of peace talks in Addis Ababa, which have made little progress amid disputes between the two delegations on a number of key issues, including the establishment and composition of an interim government.

5 March—Following a disagreement over salary payments to Nuer SPLA commandos residing in UNMISS camps, fighting breaks out in Giyada barracks in Juba. Commando leader and senior Nuer General Peter Gatwic Gai is arrested.

Kiir appoints a team of four SPLM Political Bureau members to initiate an internal SPLM reconciliation with the seven former detainees. The team comprises Daniel Awet Akot, Gemma Nunu Kumba, Paul Mayom Akec, and Akol Paul Kordit.

7 March—SPLA forces intercept an UNMISS supply column that is discovered to be transporting weapons, contrary to its manifests. The trucks are impounded and the government accuses UNMISS of supporting Machar. UNMISS explains that the weapons were being transported to a Ghanaian peacekeeping contingent in Unity state.

The African Union's Peace and Security Council at heads of state level appoints a Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights violations and other abuses committed in South Sudan since mid-December 2013. The five-member commission is to be headed by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

10 March—Following the UNMISS weapons intercept in Rumbek, a rally is held in Juba to protest international interference in South Sudan. UNMISS is the primary target of the public's ire. Speaking at the rally, Vice-President James Wani Igga implies that the international community intends to re-impose colonialism.

Duk county MP Philip Thon Leek announces that rebel forces have been pushed out of Duk county in Jonglei after weeks of fighting. Duk is a northern border of the Dinka of Greater Bor with the Gawaar Nuer of Ayod and a frontline in the fighting.

11 March—The trial begins in Juba of four former senior SPLM members accused of treason and a number of other offences. The four are Majak D'Agot Atem, Oyay Deng Ajak, Pagan Amum Okiech, and Ezekiel Gatkuoth Lul.

12 March—Brigadier General Kuac Deng Kuac, commander of government operations in Pibor before the outbreak of renewed internal conflict, is shot dead in Juba.

13 March—At a heads of state summit in Addis Ababa, IGAD resolves to deploy a regional stabilization force to South Sudan, provisionally named the Protection and Deterrent Force (PDF), with a mandate to protect the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM) field teams. The communiqué commends Uganda's intervention in South Sudan, but many see the proposed PDF as a means to precipitate the withdrawal of the UPDF.

14 March—SPLA Spokesman Philip Aguer announces that 120 soldiers detained for human rights abuses in the December violence in Juba escaped detention during fighting in Giyada barracks on 5 March.

17 March—Kiir issues Republic Order 10/2014 establishing six new ministries. The expansion is seen as a means for Kiir to accommodate political allies and provide the appearance of a broader-based government, but no ministerial appointments follow.

18 March—Minister of Defence Kuol Manyang visits Khartoum amid rumors that the rapprochement between Khartoum and Juba is breaking down. Khartoum is angered by the alleged involvement of JEM and SPLM-N in South Sudan's campaign against the rebellion. Both sides recommit to implementing September 2012 cooperation agreements and Sudan reiterates support for the government of South

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Sudan. The same week, Eritrea rejects accusations that, along with its close ally Sudan, it is supporting the rebels in South Sudan.

The Chair of the South Sudan Human Rights Commission Lawrence Korbandy presents its Interim Report on South Sudan's Internal Conflict to the Council of States. The report acknowledges that 600 Nuer were killed and 800 wounded when 'a section of the security forces began targeting the Nuer' between 16 and 18 December 2013.

19 March—Amid heavy fighting in Upper Nile, government forces recapture Malakal from the rebels, delivering a major blow to Machar, who had recently visited his forces in the town. Government forces also successfully resist rebel advances on Guel Guk. Following the recapture of Malakal, Northern Bahr el Ghazal Governor Paul Malong and SPLA Deputy chief of Staff for Operations Lieutenant General James Ajonga, also from Northern Bahr el Ghazal, visit Malakal. The presence of both underlines the primacy of Bahr el Ghazal officers and recruits in the government campaign in Upper Nile.

The United States, the United Kingdom, and Norway issue a joint statement threatening sanctions against any actors that undermine the peace process.

20 March—The government delegation to the IGAD peace talks in Addis Ababa delivers a letter to mediators explaining that it will not take part in negotiations that include the seven SPLM former detainees. This stand increasingly sets the government on a collision course with the mediators.

22 March—Government-aligned local defence forces launch a successful attack to recapture Baliet from rebels.

23 March—Kuol Manyang proceeds to Cairo to sign a defence cooperation agreement with Egypt. There are inconsistent reports over the nature and extent of support pledged by Egypt.

24 March—Rebels recapture Duk Padiet town in Duk county, Jonglei state, seen as a first step towards recapturing the strategically important town of Bor.

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom accuses Eritrea of 'aggravating' the South Sudan conflict.

Lou Nuer and Murle hold a community peace meeting in Thiaktop, Pibor county, agreeing on a number of confidence-building measures to overcome two years of bloody conflict. The Lou Nuer are a key rebel constituency, causing concern in the government that the Murle may seek to side with the rebels against the government. These fears prompt the government to redouble efforts to achieve a peace agreement with Murle rebel leader David Yau Yau.

25 March—South Sudan is reported to have submitted an application for membership of the Arab League, but the government denies this the following day. Foreign Minister Benjamin Marial had announced that he was invited to a League summit in

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early March, adding that he was hopeful that the League could help to resolve the conflict in South Sudan.

26 March—While giving evidence as a prosecution witness in the trial of the four SPLM detainees, Director of SPLA Military Intelligence Major General Mac Paul surprisingly denies that a coup plot led to the outbreak of fighting in South Sudan in December. Paul is the only major witness not from Kiir's Bahr el Ghazal inner circle, and his testimony undermines an already weak case. The trial has been characterized by a significant degree of transparency and judicial independence.

The SPLA spokesman acknowledges that the government has lost the Nile port town of Kaka in Upper Nile to the rebels. The town is strategically valuable as a transport hub to Sudan and sits opposite the oil town of Melut, the rebels' principal target. March has seen military progress for the rebels in Upper Nile, despite the loss of Malakal town.

Foreign Minister Benjamin Marial submits a request for support from Zimbabwe to help protect South Sudan's oil fields from the rebels. Marial was the SPLM envoy to Zimbabwe during the Sudanese civil war.

27 March—The rebel delegation issues a press release stating that it will boycott peace talks if Uganda is afforded observer status.

In an interview with Bloomberg News, Machar describes the planned IGAD stabilization force as 'hostile' and a legitimate target for his forces. Machar fears that the force will be used to reinforce government control of Upper Nile's oil fields.

29 March—Delegations representing the government and David Yau Yau agree the terms of a draft peace agreement in which the Greater Pibor Administrative Authority will be established, effectively an autonomous Murle-dominated state in all but name and a major concession to Yau Yau. The GPAA will comprise the current Pibor and Pochella counties.

The Lakes state government introduces a dusk-to-dawn curfew and launches a civilian disarmament campaign in response to spiraling violence in the state within and between communities. Many see the violence as fuelled by a youth campaign to create insecurity and compel the president to remove caretaker Governor Matur Chut Dhuol, whose heavy-handed leadership is proving highly unpopular.

30 March—16 people, 14 of them women, are killed in a violent raid into Twic county of Warrap state from Mayom in Unity state. The border is an ethnic fault line between Nuer and Dinka. The brutal nature of the violence reflects the growing enmity and proliferation of small arms along the border in the ongoing civil conflict. It is one of several violent raids between Unity and Warrap states since the war broke out in December.

1 April—SSLM/A Major General Matthew Puljang is appointed Commander of SPLA 4th Division in Unity state. The appointment reflects a government strategy to co-opt independent armed groups in the fight against Machar's rebellion. The strategy

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serves to split the Bul Nuer community of Mayom in Unity between government and rebel supporters.

3 April—US President Barak Obama signs an Executive Order empowering Secretary of State John Kerry to initiate targeted sanctions against individuals or entities deemed to be partaking in a wide range of activities including human rights abuses, attacks on the UN, obstruction of the peace process, and undermining democracy. The move reflects growing frustration in the US administration at the intransigence of the warring parties. GRSS Minister of Information Michael Makuei responds by accusing the US of meddling in South Sudan’s affairs.

5 April—Kiir visits Bashir in Khartoum. The two once again discuss the implementation of the 2012 Cooperation Agreements, which has seen no progress, while Kiir lobbies Bashir to support his government’s position over the role of the former detainees in the Addis talks. There is growing concern in South Sudan that Khartoum is stepping up support to the rebels, with unconfirmed reports of a sizeable rebel force training in Kharasana, Sudan.

The Shilluk community of Upper Nile announce the formation of a community defence force to defend against rebel attacks. They are reported to have recaptured Tonga from the rebels. The SPLA welcomes the move, saying it is unable to defend all communities.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn meets with the two delegations in Addis Ababa, following the failure to launch talks. Hailemariam secures the agreement of the parties to reconvene on 23 April.

A parallel intra-SPLM ‘Leadership Review and Self-Assessment Forum’ is launched in Addis, facilitated by the Ethiopian ruling Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front party and South Africa’s African National Congress. Mediators acquiesce to demands of the South Sudan government and declare that the former detainees have been removed from the peace talks and will instead feature in the SPLM talks.

7 April—The Sudanese air force bombs Panyang in Pariang county, Unity, apparently targeting JEM positions. The attack prompts public protests from South Sudanese officials.

9 April—SPLA Spokesman Philip Aguer accuses Sudan of harboring rebel forces, citing rebel attacks on Kaka in Upper Nile on 6 and 9 April which he says were reinforced by forces from inside Sudan commanded by James Gai Yoch, formally of the SSLM/A rebel group. An anonymous government source tells the *Citizen* newspaper that a ‘huge’ force is being trained and equipped in Kharasana. SAF swiftly rejects the accusations.

Ugandan Land Forces Commander, General David Muhoozi, visits UPDF in Juba and tells the press that Uganda will only withdraw if there is an alternative mechanism to ensure order.

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10 April—Spokesman of the seven SPLM former detainees John Luk Jok tells the *Sudan Tribune* that an interim government should be formed excluding both Kiir and Machar.

11 April—IGAD announces the first deployment of MVM observers to Bor and Bentiu, to oversee the implementation of the 23 January CoH Agreement.

Nuer politicians are reportedly arrested in Gambella, Ethiopia, while campaigning to prevent local youths from joining the rebellion in Upper Nile.

15 April—Rebel forces recapture Bentiu, lost to the government on 10 January. The rebels had little military presence in Unity after relinquishing Bentiu, fuelling speculation that the forces came from Sudan. Widespread atrocities are committed by rebels, including the targeting of hundreds of Sudanese traders, killed in revenge for JEM’s alignment with the South Sudanese government.

Representatives and supporters of the SPLM-IO meet in Nassir, Upper Nile to discuss the establishment of party structures, principles, and objectives. Machar is endorsed as Chairperson of the SPLM-IO with freedom to appoint a deputy and heads of eight thematic committees in due course. It is agreed that the SPLM-IO will campaign for a federal system of government.

16 April—Rebel forces begin shelling Renk town in Upper Nile from their positions in Manyo county. Renk has so far remained peaceful in the war, but now becomes a target in the wider context of the rebels’ assault on Upper Nile’s oil fields. The same day, the SPLA attempts to recapture Kaka. By 23 April, rebels have captured Renk.

17 April—Armed Dinka Bor youths rally at the UNMISS compound in Bor to deliver a petition to the UNMISS State Coordinator. While delivering the petition, they claim to be provoked by the sound of Nuer inside the UNMISS Protection of Civilians site celebrating the fall of Bentiu to the rebels. The Bor youths begin shooting into the PoC site, some successfully breaching the perimeter fence. UNMISS peacekeepers fire back at the youths to stop their advance. The clashes result in at least 51 fatalities, of which nearly all are Nuer IDPs, according to the UN.

21 April—The government acknowledges the recapture of Mayom by rebel forces, reflecting a rapid change in fortunes in the state since the rebels captured Bentiu.

UPDF announces it has taken up positions in Bor to protect the UNMISS compound amid increasing tensions between UNMISS and the local community following the 17 April attack.

23 April—Kiir removes long-serving SPLA Chief of Staff General James Hoth Mai, replacing him with the Governor of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Paul Malong Awan. Malong is seen as one of Kiir’s closest allies. He also oversaw the recruitment of a large number of the post-December SPLA from Bahr el Ghazal. The same day, Director of Military Intelligence Major General Mac Paul is replaced by Major General Marial Nuor, who while Director of Public Security was arrested on charges of human rights abuses in 2011.

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The UN Security Council reviews footage of the aftermath of the rebel capture of Bentiu, with the French Ambassador revealing that the Council, including China, is now contemplating the use of sanctions. Minister of Information Michael Makuei accuses UNMISS of refusing entry to civilians to its Bentiu site during the fighting, an allegation strongly refuted by the UN. The atrocities in Bor and Bentiu prompt a hardening in the international community's approach to the conflict.

24 April—Minister of Justice Paulino Wanawilla announces in a press conference that the trial against the four SPLM detainees is to be abandoned 'for the sake of peace'. The surprise move is seen as a reflection of the weak case against the four. Wanawilla clarifies that treason charges remain against Machar, Taban Deng Gai, and Alfred Ladu Gore.

25 April—Fighting breaks out in Mapel, Western Bahr el Ghazal following an attack on an unarmed Nuer soldier in the marketplace by angry wives of Dinka soldiers. Nuer forces, some of who had been stationed in Mapel for more than two years awaiting integration into the SPLA, take flight and defect along with some senior officers from the SPLA's 5th Division in Wau. Local government authorities seek to convince the defectors to return peacefully. Many of the Nuer forces in Mapel had been deployed by the SPLA to the conflict theatres of Upper Nile and Jonglei in the preceding weeks, from where they had deserted or defected to the rebels.

Government forces reportedly regain control of Renk and Mayom.

25 April—IGAD and international envoys visit Machar in Nassir, in advance of a new round of talks in Addis. They persuade him to meet face-to-face with Kiir.

26 April—Rebels acknowledge the capture of Ayod by government forces, a major coup for the SPLA. The rebels are weakening in Jonglei as the white army loses momentum and ammunition is limited, although they continue to advance in Duk county.

27 April—At a regional conference on illicit financial flows in Bahar Dar, Ethiopia, Kiir bemoans unnamed foreign powers that had helped South Sudan achieve independence and are now supporting Machar's rebellion.

29 April—In a phone call to Kiir, the UN Secretary-General asks the GRSS to desist from its hostile rhetoric towards UNMISS.

Following the defections in Mapel and Wau, a small number of Nuer forces defects from the 3rd Division in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, but is eventually persuaded to return by the state authorities.

30 April—After several delays, peace talks resume in Addis.

2 May—US Secretary of State John Kerry visits Juba in a bid to pressure Kiir and Machar to meet in order to recommit to the CoH Agreement and peace talks.

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4 May—The SPLA recaptures Bentiu and Nassir from the rebels. Nassir is a particular coup, being Machar’s headquarters. Rebel commander James Koang claims that JEM and SPLM-N forces assisted in the government’s recapture of Bentiu.

6 May—The US Treasury Department announces sanctions against rebel commander Peter Gadet and SPLA Presidential Guards Commander Marial Changuong for their part in atrocities committed in Juba and Bentiu in December and April, respectively. Machar later denies that Gadet was commanding forces in Bentiu in April.

9 May—Kiir and Machar meet in Addis Ababa following concerted pressure to do so from the international community. They sign a one-page agreement, recommitting to the January 2014 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and pledging to open humanitarian corridors unconditionally. The deal is supposed to initiate ‘30 days of tranquility’ to allow farmers to plant crops and avert famine. Reflecting deep tensions, Machar’s spokesman later denies that Machar and Kiir had held direct talks over the agreement in Addis, but rather were consulted separately by mediators.

With Kiir and Machar in Addis, fighting continues in Unity state, where government aligned forces recapture Rubkona and later move on to Bentiu. Both sides accuse the other of breaking the CoH Agreement in Unity and Upper Nile.

While in Addis, Kiir and David Yau Yau sign the 29 March draft peace agreement, which requires ratification by the Council of States.

11 May—On his return from Addis Ababa, Kiir announces at Juba airport that the 2015 elections will be delayed by two years to allow for an interim government and a reconciliation process. He has consistently stated that he must lead any interim government. He later blames the US for forcing him to postpone the elections. In the same speech, Kiir says that he was pressured into signing the agreement with Machar in Addis, primarily by Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn.

12 May—UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon calls for a special tribunal for South Sudan in the aftermath of the publication of the UN’s final human rights report on the conflict in South Sudan, which documents widespread human rights violations by both warring parties since the conflict broke out in December 2013.

Talks take place in Addis Ababa between the SPLM-IO and the SPLM former detainees, who have been joined by Pagan Amum, Majak D’Agot, Oyay Deng and Ezekiel Gatkuoth following their release from custody in South Sudan. As the ranking member of the SPLM Political Bureau in the former detainees group, Pagan assumes leadership. The two sides acknowledge that they differ only over the use of force by SPLM-IO. After long demanding their release, the SPLM-IO representatives feel a sense of betrayal by the former detainees.

14-16 May—The SPLA accuses the rebels of carrying out multiple attacks on its positions across Greater Upper Nile. Multiple CoH Agreement violations are reported, though none are large scale.

In a press briefing in Nairobi, GRSS Minister of Information Michael Makuei accuses the West of causing the current conflict in South Sudan by backing the rebels. He claimed that this was motivated by the West's disappointment at not profiting from the country's oil wealth under the current government.

18 May—IGAD announces that the ongoing Addis Ababa peace talks will be adjourned until 29 May due to ongoing differences between the parties.

19 May—Amid a growing humanitarian disaster in South Sudan, international donors meet in Oslo, pledging USD 600 million to scale up the humanitarian response.

A BBC interview with Kiir is broadcast in which he is highly critical of Machar and questions Machar's commitment to the CoH Agreement.

22 May—CoH Agreement violations are reported in Nassir and Doleib in Upper Nile state. Both towns remain under government control.

24 May—Equatorian politicians including Central Equatoria Governor Clement Wani Konga meet in Juba and reiterate their collective and long-standing demand for a federal South Sudan. Machar's SPLM-IO has previously stated it is fighting for a federal state. Vice-President and ranking SPLM Equatorian James Wani Igga warns the gathered politicians not to support Machar as a means of realizing federalism, in comments that are poorly received in Equatoria.

Kiir attends the inauguration of President Jacob Zuma in South Africa, using the occasion to push once again for the rapid deployment of a regional stabilization force. The government appears to hope that such a force will reinforce its positions as the UPDF has done, with concerns growing that Uganda is keen to withdraw its forces.

26 May—A letter purported to be written by Pagan Amum is published, addressing the people of South Sudan and accusing the government and rebels of engaging in a power struggle at the expense of the people of South Sudan. It says that the SPLM former detainees represent the 'face' and 'integral leadership' of South Sudan.

A statewide peace conference begins in Aluakluak in Lakes state to seek a resolution to months of persistent and bloody communal violence. It is widely thought that the violence is a result of youth resistance to the deeply unpopular acting Governor Matur Chut Dhuol, appointed by Kiir in January 2013, as well as the proliferation of small arms since the outbreak of the current conflict. Inter-communal fighting continues in various locations of Lakes during the peace conference.

27 May—The UN Security Council endorses a new six-month mandate for UNMISS. The new mandate retreats from state building activities, emphasizing human rights and humanitarian assistance. The decision reflects the international community's evolving approach to South Sudan, increasingly focused away from the government and towards the population. The new mandate also provides for a regional IGAD protection force of three battalions within the UNMISS military command structure. The protection force is intended to focus on the protection of the MVT and South Sudanese civilians, but the mandate contains an oblique reference to protection in

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areas of high risk of conflict, including oil installations. Machar has previously stated that a regional force that protects the oil fields on behalf of the government will be deemed a legitimate rebel target.

Machar arrives in Kenya for a weeklong visit in which he meets twice with President Uhuru Kenyatta, as well as a number of other senior officials.

29 May—GRSS Minister of Foreign Affairs Marial Benjamin visits Moscow, publicly thanking the Russians for blocking sanctions against South Sudan in the Security Council. After many years of close relations with the US, the government is apparently seeking new allies.

30 May—Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in South Sudan Hilde Johnson announces that she will leave her post in July after three years and an increasingly fractious relationship with the government.

Former SPLA Major General Dau Aturjong announces his defection to the rebels at a press conference in Nairobi, coinciding with Machar’s visit. He refers to Kiir as a ‘tyrant dictator’. Dau’s defection is notable because he is an influential and moderate Malual Dinka from Northern Bahr el Ghazal state—a stronghold of Kiir—and a senior wartime SPLA General. He is also a political rival of the new SPLA Chief of Staff Paul Malong.

31 May—Machar concedes in a press interview in Nairobi that he is not in full control of his forces. Many blame Machar for unleashing the uncontrollable forces of the Nuer White Army on South Sudan in 1991 and again in December 2013 for his own political interests.

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