



5

years
**South Sudan
& Sudan**

**Enter houses
through
their doors ...**

... suggests an old Sudanese saying. This image, taken five years ago of a man clambering over a fence to view the debut football match of South Sudan's national team, shows how you can just as easily take an unorthodox route. Over the past five years, both Sudan and South Sudan have taken a few unexpected detours. To mark the five-year anniversary of the separation of the Sudans, The Niles correspondents from both countries have taken a closer look at the paths taken by the neighbouring states. Many developments are sobering, but a few offer scope for hope. In any case, the idiom on the cover of the first print edition of The Niles, published five years ago today, rings truer than ever: It is a fool who rejoices, when the neighbour is in trouble.



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The Niles

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News from the past five years.

South Sudan both Sudan

South Sudan	both	Sudan
		June 2011
		6 War broke out in South Kordofan following the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North's (SPLM-N) accusations that the ruling National Congress Party rigged election results.
		28 Agreement was struck between the delegations of the government and the SPLM-N to end the conflict in Southern Kordofan (known as the Nafi-Agar agreement).
July 2011	July 2011	July 2011
9 Official announcement of the independent state of South Sudan.	8 Sudan formally recognised the State of South Sudan.	The Doha Agreement for peace in Darfur between the government and the Liberation and Justice Movement was wrapped up, stipulating a referendum on the administration of Darfur.
	9 The Niles print edition went to press in Sudan and South Sudan. The cover featured the ancient Sudanese saying: "It is a fool who rejoices, when the neighbour is in trouble," aptly suited to mark July 9, 2011, the day when South Sudan emerged as the world's newest state. In its first publication, The Niles journalists dived into themes like: What do we have in common? What are our differences? What will happen to us now?	1 Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir rejected the Addis Ababa Agreement and directed the Sudanese forces to defeat the SPLM-N and capture its leader Abdelaziz al-Hilu in preparation for his trial as a traitor.
	11 The first crisis arose between Khartoum and Juba, after the latter decided to stop using their common currency. A week later, South Sudan's new currency was issued (South Sudanese Pounds). Sudan subsequently issued its own new notes and coins (Sudanese Pounds).	September 2011
		9.2011 Outbreak of fighting in Damazin, the capital of the Blue Nile State, between government forces and the SPLM-N. The latter withdrew. A presidential order then was issued exempting the head of the SPLM-N Malik Agar from being Wali of Blue Nile State.
	October 2011	10.2011
	8 The first official visit of South Sudan's President Kiir to Khartoum following independence.	
		11.2011
		November 2011
		12 The SPLM-N in Sudan's Blue Nile and South Kordofan, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Movement in Darfur form the Sudan Revolutionary Front. The groups agree to a unified political and military approach to regime change in Sudan. The governments of Sudan and South Sudan continue up to now to accuse each other of supporting rebels in their country. Sudan accuses South Sudan of supporting the SPLM-N and South Sudan accuses Sudan of supporting the SPLM-IO and splinter factions in South Sudan.
December 2011		December 2011
20 Prominent rebel leader George Athor killed near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo.		21 President al-Bashir unveiled the "Heart of the World" tourism project amid fears for the future of the Red Sea's unspoiled marine reserve Dongonab Bay. The tourism project is still yet to be implemented.
		23 The government announced the death of the President of the Justice and Equality Movement Khalil Ibrahim in an airstrike.
	January 2012	January 2012
	20 Juba halted oil production in the wake escalating disputes with its northern neighbour over oil transit fees.	TV channels in Sudan appear to drift away from what is happening in the country. One exception is al-Shorooq Channel's new talk show entitled "al-Mahatta al-Wasta" (The Middle Ground). The programme encourages people to talk freely, but since its launch the show has been strongly criticised for its lack of independence.
	February 2012	2.2012
	Sudanese President al-Bashir said in a television interview that a war between Sudan and South Sudan is possible.	
		3.2012
		March 2012
		18 George Clooney arrested over protests at the Sudan Embassy in Washington.
		27 (March 27 - April 4) Majida Nasreldine's play "Short Wall" is performed in Khartoum, dealing with the topic of coexistence among the Baggara and Dinka tribes in Abyei. The play was accused of racism because of its language used but the writer defended her work, saying it reflected reality.
April 2012		April 2012
28 Facebook added South Sudan to its country list. The move followed a petition by Ian Cox on change.org: "To recognise the existence of the country of South Sudan."		10 War in Heglig erupted between Sudan and South Sudan, after the SPLA took over the oil town.
		20 The Heglig war ended, but it remains unclear why. South Sudan claimed it withdrew its forces, while Sudan claimed it won the war and chased the SPLA out of town.
	May 2012	5.2012
	2 The U.N. Security Council adopted an unanimous decision of its members, declaration 2046, which calls for the states of Sudan and South Sudan to stop the war and negotiate to resolve the outstanding issues between them.	23 Sudan's Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha closed borders with South Sudan and halted cross-border trade. He sounded a blunt warning to smugglers operating in the frontier region: "I say to our soldiers, our orders are clear, 'shoot to kill'."
		28 Sudanese President al-Bashir declared a state of emergency in a number of towns along the border with South Sudan, including Abyei and Tabak, Abu Ghadha, Jini, Aladamon, Baram and al-Bashir in South Kordofan, and the provinces of al-Habsha and al-Salam in White Nile State, and the provinces of al-Dali and al-Maznoon in Senjar State. He approved special prosecutors, special courts and appellate courts of first instance for suspects.
June 2012	June 2012	June 2012
7 An Israeli court ruled in favour of the deportation of South Sudanese migrants.	6 The Sudan Football Association withdrew its ban on transfer of a player from South Sudan to Sudan. Mighty Club signed up Atir Thomas as its first foreign player.	16 A flurry of youth demonstrations took place against the government in several locations in Khartoum, which later turned into the Friday Demonstrations. Authorities eventually suppressed them.
18 Warrap State authorities have banned shisha smoking, declaring it illegal and unhealthy.		
July 2012		July 2012
10 South Sudan competed in its first full international match, a friendly against Uganda in Juba. The match ended in a 2-2 draw, with James Moga and Richard Justin Lado scoring for South Sudan. The game led to South Sudan entering the FIFA rankings at the start of August, where it joined in 199th place. On September 5, 2015, South Sudan won its first FIFA-recognised match, against Equatorial Guinea for the 2017 Africa Cup of Nations qualification.		9 The second print edition of The Niles is published to mark the joint first birthdays of Sudan and South Sudan. Journalists from both nations produced a snapshot using stories, images and songs, showing how life is changing.
	August 2012	8.2012
	29 Miss South Sudan Along Demach arrived in Juba after participating in the 2011-2012 Miss World Competition in China where she ranked seventh. She was crowned Miss World Africa 2012, making her the first South Sudanese to hold this title.	13 The Niles launches a new cover of Wardi's song "Azibni", by Alruba, with the participation of Abdelwahab Wardi.
		9.2012
		September 2012
		27 Presidents al-Bashir and Kiir signed eight agreements between their two countries in Addis Ababa.

South Sudan both Sudan

November 2012

- 23 The Citizen TV (CTV), the first and only independent TV Station in South Sudan is launched.
- 24 (November 24 - December 8) First participation of the South Sudanese football team in the CECAFA (Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations) Cup.

November 2012

- 13 November 13, 2012 – The World Health Organisation confirmed yellow fever killed 107 people in Darfur and warned it could spread to the rest of the country.

December 2012

- 5 Columnist Isaiiah Diing Chan Awuol was murdered in Juba, the first journalist to be killed in the country since it separated from Sudan. Critical journalism about politics and security has been on the wane since Isaiiah's death. He was a fierce critic of the government and voiced his opinions in blogs and columns. Officials promised to investigate and arrest the suspects and bring them to book – but nothing has come of that pledge.

December 2012

South Sudan's Chief Negotiator Pagan Amum said the first shipment of South Sudanese oil through Sudanese territory would take place at the end of the year.

January 2013

- 14 The Juba office of the international broadcaster Al Jazeera was destroyed by fire.

January 2013

Factions of the opposition and the Revolutionary Front signed a joint agreement called the Charter of the New Dawn, a blueprint for overthrowing the regime using political and armed struggle. It was followed by a wave of arrests of signatories to the agreement.

March 2013

Vice President Riek Machar Teny directed fierce criticism towards the country's President Salva Kiir Mayardit in the meetings of the political bureau of the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

- 1 Bishop Emeritus Taban Paride received the 2013 Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize in recognition for his efforts to promote peace in South Sudan.

April 2013

- 12 Sudanese President al-Bashir visited Juba for the first time since his participation in South Sudan's independence ceremony in July 2011. He held a series of talks with his South Sudanese counterpart Kiir.

April 2013

- The theatre play "The Regime Wants", directed by Abu Bakr el-Sheikh, debuted to great acclaim and earned plaudits for bringing theatre back to the Sudanese people.
- 1 Sudanese President al-Bashir released all political detainees, including politicians who were arrested after the signing of the Charter of the New Dawn.

April 2013

- 6 Vice President Machar officially announced his intention to run for the third general conference of the SPLM party presidency. Taking the helm of the party rivaling Kiir would make him a candidate in the scheduled 2015 presidential election.

- 13 President Kiir issued a decree shrinking the powers of his deputy Machar.

May 2013

- 28 The Sudanese army said they retook the city Abu Kharshola.

May 2013

- 27 The Revolutionary Front mounted two attacks on the cities of Umm Ruwaba and Abu Kharshola, an achievement for the opposition forces as these two cities are located in North Kordofan State.

June 2013

- 19 A presidential decree dismissed Cabinet Minister Deng Alor and Finance Minister Kosti Manibe who were said to be embroiled in a multi-million dollar scandal and were referred to court on charges of corruption.

June 2013

- 8 President al-Bashir ordered Oil Minister Awad al-Jaz to freeze the export of South Sudanese oil through Sudanese pipelines, after the expiry of a two week deadline set by Khartoum for Juba to halt support for opposition groups in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur. In addition, Sudan shelved all cooperation agreements with South Sudan.

July 2013

- 8 A presidential decree dismissed the Governor of Unity State Taban Deng and appointed Joseph Ngok in his stead. Secretary General of the SPLM Pagan Amum said the dismissals were politically motivated.

July 2013

The third issue of The Niles is printed and distributed in Sudan and South Sudan. Covering the topic of land, The Niles journalists report on how the cherished asset has sparked extensive conflict and remains far more than a matter of square metres for citizens of the two countries.

- 10 The Sudanese government accepted proposals from the African Union's Head of the High-Level Implementation Panel Thabo Mbeki to overcome the crisis with South Sudan. It renewed its commitment to the agreements signed between the two countries, while the African Union pledged to assist the parties in the establishment of a demilitarised buffer zone.

- 23 South Sudan descends into an abyss. President Kiir sacked Vice President Machar, a sudden move that paved way for the outbreak of large-scale violence on December 15.

August 2013

- 23 A presidential decree appointed Speaker of Parliament James Wani Igga as Vice President.

September 2013

- 22 Civilian protests kicked off in reaction to the government's price increases but soon descended into violence in Wad Madani. The demonstrations spread to Khartoum, where they lasted several days and were dubbed "the September uprising". Amnesty said that at least 200 protesters were killed between September 23 and 28. Many more were injured, and over 600 people were arrested, the human rights group said.

October 2013

The Accountability Committee, set up by the NCP following criticism of the government's heavy-handed response to the September 2013 demonstrations, suspended three signatories of a critical note including former Presidential advisor Ghazi Salahuddin. It also froze party membership of six signatories, warned four and acquitted two.

- 24 Sudanese journalist Faisal Mohamed Salih accepts the Peter Mackler Award in Washington DC.

December 2013

- 6 Leaders of the SPLM held a joint press conference and directed fierce criticism towards President Kiir for his management of the country and the party. Participants included Former Vice President Machar, Rebecca Garang, widow of the influential party founder and leader John Garang De Mabior, suspended SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum, former Attorney General John Luk Jok and former Minister for National Security Oyay Deng.

December 2013

- 8 Al-Bashir carried out the most sweeping changes to the government and his party since he seized power with a coup in 1989. He dismissed Vice-President Ali Osman and his Deputy Party Nafi Ali Nafi. Bashir also reshuffled the government, dismissing Oil Minister Awad al-Jaz, who had been in the government line-up for more than two decades.

January 2014

- 3 The first round of negotiations kicked off between the delegations of the South Sudanese government and the SPLM-IO under the auspices of the IGAD in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.
- 8 The non-profit watchdog Crisis International published a report that 10,000 people had been killed in South Sudan since the civil war started, sharply raising previous estimates.
- 29 Seven top political leaders accused of participating in the coup were freed, including Deng Alor, Costa Manyebi, former Justice Minister John Luk Jok, three former ministers (former Minister of Communications Madut Biar, former Minister of Roads Gier Chuang Aluong and former Minister of Culture Sirino Hiteng) in addition to the former Governor of Lakes States Chol Tong Mayay.

January 2014

- 6 Sudanese President al-Bashir visited Juba for the first time since the war broke out in South Sudan. He declared that his country would not launch any hostile action against South Sudan from Sudanese territory. He also assured that South Sudanese citizens fleeing to Sudan would not be treated as refugees but as citizens.

January 2014

- 27 President al-Bashir addressed the nation. Notable was the presence of opposition leaders including Secretary General of the Popular Congress Hassan Turabi, who attended an officially scheduled speech by al-Bashir for the first time since his dismissal from power in December 1999. President of the National Umma Party Sadiq al-Mahdi and the leader of the "Reform Now" movement, Ghazi Salah el-Din were also present. Al-Bashir expressed his readiness to engage in a national dialogue with all political parties.

- 18 Soon after violence broke out, rebel factions of the SPLM-IO, loyal to Machar, fought for control of a number of regional towns. Thousands of people were killed and many more fled for their lives. Ugandan troops intervened on the side of the government.

South Sudan both Sudan

2.2014

March 2014

27 The National Consensus Forces announced their participation in the National Dialogue with the NCP as long as a ceasefire was immediately implemented. Other conditions included an amnesty, the release of political prisoners and investigations into political murders committed during al-Bashir's rule.

3.2014

11 The trials of former Secretary General of the SPLM Pagan Amum, former Minister for National Security Oyay Deng, former Deputy Minister of Defence Majak D'Agath and former South Sudan Ambassador to Washington Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, all charged with planning the coup, began in Juba.

April 2014

7 Violence had displaced more than a million people in little under four months of fighting.

8 The United Nations said pro-Machar forces sacked the oil town of Bentiu, killing hundreds of civilians.

25 The four politicians accused of the coup plot were released, officials said, in order to promote reconciliation and dialogue.

5.2014

9 The first direct meeting between President Kir and rebel leader Machar took place since the war began. In the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa the two men signed a ceasefire agreement, which collapsed after a week following a rebel attack on the oil town of Bentiu.

6.2014

July 2014

In the fourth print edition of *The Niles*, correspondents zoomed in on the issue of water jugs which are ubiquitous in the two Sudans. Questions posed included: 'Where do the weapons come from?' 'What role do they play in society?' 'How do people use them?'

8.2014

11 South Sudanese rebel leader Machar met Sudanese President al-Bashir in Khartoum.

9.2014

September 2014

5 Two separate National Dialogue documents were signed in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa under the auspices of the President of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel Thabo Mbeki. National Dialogue Committee representatives signed the documents, represented by the Minister of Council of Ministers Ahmed Saad Omar and leader of the "Reform Now" movement Ghazi Salah el-Din, the group of the Paris declaration which was represented by the President of the Umma Party Imam Sadiq al-Mahdi and the head of the revolutionary front and the SPLM-N Malik Agar.

24 [September 24, 2014 - April 26] Sudanese writer and dissident Mahjoub Sharif was featured in dissident artist Ai Weiwei's exhibition in Alcatraz, along side Martin Luther King Jr., Fela Kuti and Victor Jara among others.

October 2014

7 While South Sudan was in the throes of a vicious war the Ministry of Environment concentrated its energies on a smoking ban. The decision forbade smoking in public places and imposed fines of about 500 South Sudanese Pound (USD 170) — double the monthly salaries of workers and civil servants, who in reality are often paid late due to the conflict.

10.2014

11.2014

12.2014

January 2015

21 January 21, 2015 – The signing of the reconciliation agreement between the government and SPLM-IO leaders in Arusha, Tanzania, aimed at reuniting the SPLM.

1.2015

February 2015

14 General elections slated for June are called off because of the ongoing conflict. They are postponed until 2018.

2.2015

March 2015

5 Issue number five of *The Niles* is published on the topic of "People on the Move". War, hunger and poverty have forced teams of Sudanese and South Sudanese to flee their homes. As the edition went to press, more than 4.5 million people were on the road in the two countries. The *Niles* correspondents chronicled diverse experiences and destinations.

3.2015

April 2015

9 Farouk Abu Issa, chairman of the coalition, and Amin Mekki Medani and Farah Agar were released four months after their arrest following their signing of the "Sudan Appeal". The trial and civil hearing of Abu Issa and Madani started in February 2015.

27 The Electoral Commission said President al-Bashir won the presidential election and his NCP party snapped up a majority of parliamentary seats at the national and state levels.

4.2015

5.2015

A judge in Khartoum sentenced a pregnant 27-year-old, Mariam Yahya Ibrahim to death for the crime of "apostasy", and to 100 lashings for "adultery". Following intense international pressure, Ibrahim was released in June.

5.2015

South Sudan both Sudan

June 2015

- 23 The National Liberation Council of the SPLM passed a resolution re-appointing Machar as Vice Chairman of the SPLM and Pagan Amum as SPLM Secretary-General, and readmitting all dismissed SPLM members, who would have charges against them dropped. The move was part of the Arusha Agreement.

July 2015

- 1 The U.N. Security Council imposed sanctions on six commanders in South Sudan. Sanctions included travel bans and the freezing of assets. From the government side those named were: Marial Chanuong Yol, Gabriel Jok Riak and Santino Deng Wol. From the opposition side: Simon Gatwech, Peter Gadet and James Koang Chuol. The Central Bank of South Sudan officially introduced coins in denominations of 10, 20 and 50 piasters (worth less than 5 US cents on the black market).

August 2015

- 2 The International Olympic Committee recognised the National Olympic Committee of South Sudan, making it the latest territory to be included after Kosovo.
- 4 Three independent media outlets were shut down by South Sudan's authorities including: The Citizen newspaper, al-Rai newspaper and Free Voice. Voice of America (VOA), which shares offices with Free Voice, was also affected. The Editor in Chief of the Citizen newspaper, Nihal Bol, said no reason was given for the shutdown. Bol explained that a security officer telephoned him a day earlier saying that the paper should remain closed until further notice.
- 17 Armed opposition leader Machar signed the power-sharing agreement. The government delegation demanded 15 days to study the agreement before signing.
- 19 South Sudanese journalist Moi Peter Julius was shot dead by unknown gunmen in South Sudan's capital Juba. The body of the reporter, who also contributed to The Niles, was found the next morning. The motive of the killing was unclear but the tragedy came just days after President Kiir told journalists "if anybody among [journalists] does not know that this country has killed people, we will demonstrate it one day [...]". No one has been arrested for the murder.
- 25 The U.N. Security Council declared it was ready to act immediately if President Kiir refused to sign the power-sharing agreement and/or breaches previous obligations he has committed to.
- 26 President Kiir signed the power-sharing agreement but expressed his scepticism about a number of provisions. The deal followed endless negotiations, peace accords and international interventions but the conflict is far from resolved. Current estimates indicate that over 2.4 million people were forced to flee and tens of thousands of people died. Parties to the conflict are accused of horrendous human rights abuses.

September 2015

- 21 South Sudan's Minister of Environment presented the country's first environmental policy to the parliament.

October 2015

- South Sudan's airline, South Supreme, halted flights amid the country's deepening crisis and blamed the government and a lack of hard currency for the disrupted service.
- 1 Over 35 boys receive their traditional, but controversial head scarifications in Gogrial. A 13-year-old boy said now no one can call him a small anymore.

November 2015

- 4 An Antonov cargo aircraft crashed on the eastern bank of the River Nile shortly after taking off in Juba, killing at least 37 people.

December 2015

- 21 The armed opposition 150-strong delegation arrived in Juba, headed by chief negotiator Taban Deng, as a practical step in implementing the peace deal signed in August 2015.
- 24 President Kiir issued a decree to re-divide the states in the country increasing the number from 10 to 28. SPLM-IO rejected, saying it is a breach of the peace agreement.

January 2016

- 21 President al-Bashir ordered a review of the interim economic measures with South Sudan after Juba asked for oil transit fees to be reduced due to the global drop in oil prices.
- 27 Sudanese President al-Bashir opened borders with South Sudan, which had been closed following the Heglig war.

February 2016

- 11 President Kiir appointed Machar as First Vice President, also part of the peace agreement.

March 2016

- 7 The publication of travel-sized seventh edition of The Niles which was written and edited by a group of The Niles correspondents from Sudan and South Sudan at a news-room workshop in Nairobi. Opening with a quotation from Ayyek: "The children of the land scatter like birds escaping a burning sky" - the publication wraps together personal stories and recollections, creating an uncompromising snapshot of the mixed motivations for leaving.

April 2016

- While addressing a news conference in Juba, Information Minister Michael Makuei Lueth said the government opposed live political radio programmes. "These direct on-air programmes are not acceptable. This is where you allow anybody to come and say his rubbish and pass their filthy ideas to the public and you will not be able to control them," he said, adding that radio stations should pre-record programmes discussing critical issues.
- 15 South Sudanese attackers, believed to be from the Muri ethnic group, massacred 208 civilians and abducted 102 children from the Nuer community in Ethiopia. They drove away with over 2,000 heads of cattle taken from the Gambella area.
- 15 South Sudan became the sixth member of the East African Community after President Kiir signed a treaty in Tanzania's commercial capital, Dar es Salaam. South Sudan said it hopes for economic benefits from the regional group.
- 22 Machar's planned arrival in Juba was repeatedly delayed. The government agreed to allow the former Vice President turned rebel leader to return to Juba with 195 soldiers and their weapons, reversing its original rejection of his request.
- 26 Machar arrived in Juba and was sworn in as the country's First Vice President under President Kiir. The two leaders pledged to forge unity for the country.
- 28 After dissolving the old cabinet President Kiir announced 30 ministers by decree on state broadcasters SSTV/R. Kiir nominated 16 ministers, SPLM-IO's Machar nominated 10 ministers, the Former Detainees and other opposition political parties nominated two each. The new Transitional Government of National Unity is part of the August 2015 peace deal. The expanded government also has a parliament comprising 400 members.
- 29 The new cabinet was sworn in and held their first meeting the same day to discuss issues such as security and the economy.

July 2016

- 4 (July 4 - 7) The Juba Film Festival takes place for the first time. A number of passionate filmmakers are behind the festival which aims to showcase South Sudanese films and take them to a broad audience.
- 9 South Sudan marks its fifth Independence Anniversary.

June 2015

- 6 A new cabinet formation was announced with the former Minister of Agriculture Ibrahim Mahmoud appointed Vice President of the party and Presidential Assistant, while his predecessor, Ibrahim Ghandour took charge of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- 15 The first ever shadow-puppet play "Hammour's wish" was performed in Khartoum, Sudan

6.2015

7.2015

8.2015

9.2015

10.2015

11.2015

12.2015

1.2016

2.2016

3.2016

4.2016

5.2016

6.2016

7.2016

September 2015

- 16 President al-Bashir succeeded in holding the first direct meeting between the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and the South Sudanese rebel leader Machar since the outbreak of the war in South Sudan. Uganda said it would consider withdrawing its troops from South Sudan if warring parties agreed on a lasting peace deal.

October 2015

- 10 The Sudanese national dialogue process restarted after months of interruption.

December 2015

- 23 The ninth Red Sea Festival for Tourism and Shopping started in Port Sudan. The festival continued until mid-February 2016.

December 2015

- 6 "A foot will not even find water in the Nile", the sixth The Niles is published focusing on the pressing issue of water.
- 23 President Kiir ordered the immediate withdrawal from the border (1965) with Sudan for a distance of five miles, declaring his readiness to normalise relations with Khartoum.

January 2016

- 4 Sudan cut diplomatic relations with Iran.

March 2016

- 5 Hassan al-Turabi, head of the Popular Congress Party (PCP), died. Turabi was a leading figure in the ruling NCP, until a falling out with al-Bashir.
- 29 Awadia Mahmoud, founder of a tea sellers' association, received the International Women of Courage Award from the U.S. Secretary of State.

April 2016

- 11 The administrative referendum for the people of Darfur was held for three days, as stipulated in the Doha agreement. The vote, which would determine whether Darfur would have one or five states, was boycotted by the opposition.
- 23 The Darfur Referendum Commission unveiled the referendum results: More than 97 percent voted for the status quo of five states, amidst criticisms of a lack of credibility.

April 2016

- 20 Reporters Without Borders (RSF) World Press Freedom Index 2016 signalled that both Sudans have a dire record on press freedom. The international media watchdog ranked South Sudan at 140 out 180 countries while Sudan was in position 174, making it the seventh worst country in the world, according to its latest report.

5

... issues which still hamper north-south relations five years on

Five intractable problems continue to cloud relations between Sudan and South Sudan: Borders, citizens, oil, rebels and Abyei. These five thorny issues were part of the Cooperation Agreement inked by the two presidents on September 27, 2012, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. With an eye on recent developments in both countries, the two Sudans remain a long way from resolving them.

by Adam Mohamed Ahmed
Khartoum, Sudan

I. Borders: Where is the zero line?

The Addis Ababa agreement underlined the need for clear borders, or the so-called Zero Line identification, and the withdrawal of the two countries' armies from each other's territories.

On January 29, 2016, South Sudan's President Salva Kiir ordered his army to immediately pull out from the area within five miles from the border with Sudan. However, the negotiating parties failed to identify the Zero Line, making it hard to determine the demilitarised security zone between the two countries.

"The major obstacle for the two states from September 2012 to January 2013 was identifying the Zero Line, which Sudan considers essential to address the vitally important security issues," said Moiz Farouq, a former delegation member to the negotiations with South Sudan. "The Joint Border Demarcation Committee – set up before the separation – agreed on 80 percent of border demarcation of the states. They, however, disagreed over four sites; namely, Kafia Kingi, Mgeinis, Joda and Kaka."

On January 27, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir issued an order to reopen the border, following positive gestures by his South Sudanese counterpart.

But question marks were raised about this plan in March this year, when rumours swirled that borders were once again being blocked, speculation which proved unfounded. But the highly politicised issue of borders remains volatile and does not look likely to go away, any time soon.

2. Citizens or foreigners?

On March 18, 2016, the Sudanese Council of Ministers said it would treat South Sudanese people as foreigners, removing their access to health and education services and taking a hard line on southerners who do not hold passports.

It ruled that all South Sudanese needed a valid official entry visa within a week. The move sparked shock among the immigrants, as it unwound a previous decision which granted them the right to live as Sudanese citizens. The move was implemented amid rising tensions between the Sudans following Khartoum's accusation that Juba harboured rebels. In response, South Sudan's Information Minister Michael Makuei threatened to take similar steps against Sudan.

3. How much for a barrel of oil?

Following extensive talks, the two parties finally struck agreement on charges for transporting oil from South Sudan through the Sudanese territories. Oil forms the backbone of South Sudan's economy and the loss of oil income left a deep dent in Sudan's finances following secession, making the fees a hot topic for both countries. The negotiating teams, with mediation from third parties, finally agreed that South Sudan would pay Sudan a total fee of 24-26 U.S. dollars per barrel.

This sum included an 11 U.S. dollars per barrel fee for transportation services, payable to the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company, a Chinese-Malaysian company operating in the Unity State fields. This fee also includes a processing fee of 1.60 U.S. dollars, a transport fee of 8.40 U.S. dollars and a one dollar transit fee for each barrel.

As for oil coming through PetroDar, a Chinese-Malaysian company operating in the Upper Nile state fields, South Sudan pays 9.10 U.S. dollars per barrel.

In addition to these fees, South Sudan must "transfer a finite sum of 3.028 billion U.S. dollars, as a transitional financial arrangement", according to the Cooperation Agreement.

Following the outbreak of war in South Sudan and plummeting global oil prices, the new country's fragile economy took a hit, prompting Juba to request a reduction in oil transit charges. On January 11, 2016, former South Sudanese Foreign Minister Barnaba Benjamin said his country asked Sudan's government to lower the charges. "It is due to global fall of oil prices," he told Sudanese Al-Shoroq TV.

Shortly after however, Sudan's Finance Minister Badreddine Mahmoud said that "South Sudan has defaulted on oil transit charges and Khartoum is obliged to take its share in kind in accordance with the JCA".

In his address to the Sudanese parliament on January 20, he added that: "The Sudanese government is making technical arrangements should Juba shut down its oil pipelines."

But just a day later the Sudan News Agency (SUNA) quoted government sources saying that al-Bashir agreed to reduce Sudan's charges on South Sudan's oil transit.

This reduction does not affect the total amount to be paid by South Sudan, i.e. 3.028 billion U.S. dollars. It only means that the amount per barrel would be reduced, thus extending the pavement period initially set at three and a half years in the cooperation agreement.

4. Who is helping the rebels?

Written in black on white in the Cooperation Agreement is the clause that neither country can allow armed oppositions in its territories. But hardly any time passed before accusations started flying back and forth between the two countries.

The Sudanese government was quick to point the finger at South Sudan's government for failing to cut ties with the SPLA-North, the Sudanese offshoot of South Sudan's SPLA. And when Vice President Riek Machar broke away from President Kiir in December 2013 and became a rebel leader, Juba accused Khartoum of supporting him. "Security arrangements remain a huge challenge," said Farooq, adding that it is nigh on impossible to monitor a 1260 km-long border which is home to two-thirds of both countries' populations.

5. What next for Abyei?

As part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended the second Sudanese civil war, a "special status" was awarded to Abyei. But even after South Sudan became a country in its own right, the issue continued to burn. Oil-rich Abyei abuts both Sudan and South Sudan and is claimed by the two countries.

In 2012, the African Union proposed a referendum over Abyei, in which the nine Dinka Ngok tribes and the population living in that area would participate, taking into consideration the political rights of the Misseriya tribe.

The Khartoum government refused to support the decision because the Misseriya tribe were excluded from the vote, meaning the outcome would likely go against Sudan. The Juba government, however, approved the proposed referendum. The issue hung in the balance until October 2013, when the nine Dinka Ngok tribes in Abyei forged ahead with a unilateral referendum to annex the area to South Sudan but The African Peace and Security Council refused to accept their vote. To this day there is little to suggest that the status of Abyei will be settled in the near future.

How to bury the hatchet...

"Sudan is committed to all the agreements it has signed with Juba and is keen to implement them," said Ali Sadiq, spokesman for Sudan's Foreign Ministry. "We believe that the security of the south leads to security for Sudan, and vice versa. Therefore using many regional platforms and international mediation, we seek to convince disputing parties in South Sudan to bury the hatchet."

But, at the same time, Sadiq said Juba never seemed keen on forging a neighbourly relationship with Khartoum and failed to implement agreements struck between the two states.

For his part, South Sudan's Spokesman Michael Makuei called on the Sudanese government to discuss outstanding issues with South Sudan, rather than taking unilateral decisions. "South Sudan's government will not take any action unless the decisions are implemented on the ground," he said in a press statement.

And Farouq casts doubt on both countries' motivation to improve relations. "The two countries have a lot in common, social, political, and economic ties," he said. "They are still unable to draw up a long-term strategy based on these commonalities. They simply lack the ability and/or willingness to look at their relationship comprehensively and from a long-term perspective."

... questions to Dr. Ann Itto,

former General Secretary Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Minister of Agriculture. Ann Itto is one of the senior SPLM leaders who worked closely with the influential party founder, the late John Garang de Mabior.

Interview by Mugume Davis Juba, South Sudan

TN: How do you feel about the fifth anniversary of independence?

AI: I am happy we are independent. Each independence day reminds me of the long years of struggle. Our people long fought for independence, not just for the sake of it, rather they saw it as an opportunity for us – the citizens of this country – to sit together and make plans, to build a country that is equitable, just and prosperous.

Each independence day we celebrate, I reflect on how much has been achieved. Are we going in the right direction? Can we do things better? I ask myself: What is my role in this? In the next year can I do more to achieve the South Sudan we want. We have not arrived to the destination. Our people did not want just independence but to build a country devoid of wars and conflict. They want us to have a country that we are proud of.

TN: Has independence achieved your forefathers' dreams?

AI: I would say no. The most important thing is that we are now free. Nobody can take that away from us. But the fact that we have war among ourselves is an indication that we did not get certain things right.

This is not the time for fighting. It is supposed to be the time for building the foundation of a just and equitable country. A country where our youths can go to school and get some skills so that they can become the building blocks of this nation. I would say we have not reached this stage yet – but we can learn from our mistakes.

The most important thing is that we have admitted that things have gone wrong with the management and the administration of this country. We have agreed to sort it out by having a government that has a separation of powers. We have also admitted that our people have suffered enough so we have to bring them back so that they can become productive. We have also agreed to have a government that provides security for everyone.

We have a lot of resources so we have to work to be developed and stop depending on other countries. We have the opportunity to address the economic challenges as well as having a permanent constitution where people will be able to debate and agree on the political systems and the values of this country. We have to look at a better transitional justice as well as a favourable reconciliation process.

TN: What has been the greatest achievement for this country in the last five years?

AI: The main thing is, of course, keeping the country independent. Before this conflict started, we had begun to put down roads and improve the connectivity of people through telephone systems. We had started inviting investors from different countries. But the conflict derailed these efforts. It removed confidence from both nationals and investors – so we have to work hard to restore it.

TN: As an individual, where do you see yourself in the next five years?

AI: You know I am a political animal. I have been in politics for a very long time so I will continue working with anyone who wants this country to recover. I will work with both women and youth to achieve this. Another thing that I want to do is agriculture which I think is very important. More than 80 percent of our people depend on agriculture so we, as a nation, have to improve production and allow our people to be able to contribute to our development.

I am putting up a modern farm which will be a model farm for the youth and anyone interested in agriculture. They must look at farming as more than subsistence but more as a business venture. Therefore farming must be financed and scientific.

TN: What about your country, where would you want to see South Sudan in the next five years?

AI: I believe by that time we would have totally ended the war and would have addressed the impact of conflict and have laid the foundation of infrastructure and institutions and systems that would allow a country to run peacefully. We would begin to achieve things and create harmony. I believe there would be increased productivity and that people would be happy about the services they get.

... South Sudanese conflicts that threaten peace

Before independence in 2011, South Sudan was surrounded by several rebel groups which threatened its first steps towards secession. After independence, some of the region's rebel movements struck deals with the government but several remained defiant.

During its first five years as a separate nation, South Sudan has continued to struggle with several rebel attacks and, in 2013, descended into full-blown civil war. Despite a peace deal, conflicts still rage in many places. The cycle of violence is partly due the flood of weapons left behind after decades of strife and war. Tensions have also grown out of a void caused by scant central government, security, development and justice. Here are five major conflicts which have cast the longest shadow on South Sudan's recent years and which continue to keep peace at arms' length.

by Esther Muwombi
Kampala, Uganda

I. The Jonglei ethnic clashes

Violence in Jonglei stirred just one month after South Sudan achieved independence, with 600 people killed. By January 2012, South Sudan sounded a warning about violence in the populous eastern state after some 100,000 people fled clashes between rival ethnic groups.

Jonglei remains a volatile time bomb, with increased violence likely among its heavily armed communities. Rival groups in Jonglei have a long history of raiding each another's cattle, and are quick to arm themselves to defend against such raids.

Although the government carried out several disarmament exercises in the state, weapons are still widespread. This dates back to the civil war of 1983-2005 when the Nuer tribe fought under the White Army, a local militarised defence unit set up to protect cattle and property. Fully disarming communities which are used to relying on weapons has proved difficult. Meanwhile, many of these fighters are currently SPLA soldiers and therefore protect their weapons whenever a disarmament exercise is carried out. In recent years, an underground culture has emerged, whereby older South Sudanese hand down guns to younger family members to ensure their protection.

"I got my first gun from my uncle. I was back from Uganda after the war had ended. He called me before we went to bed and said 'my son, you have come to a dangerous country you must have this gun, but make sure you use it well'," said Bongiri Jhon, a student.

Fear and anxiety in Jonglei has risen sharply during the 2013 civil war, which heavily affected the state, making locals even less likely to part with their weapons.

The 2011 ethnic clashes ended when the government deployed SPLA troops and the United Nations sent 1,100 peacekeepers to new permanent bases in the troubled area. But, to this day, some communities continue to raid each other and Jonglei remains a hotspot.

2. Rebel attacks on Mayom town

The South Sudan Liberation army (SSLA), an armed rebel group that operates in the Greater Upper Nile area, is another major threat to peace in South Sudan. The SSLA's biggest attack, when rebels targeted Mayom town, killing 75 people, happened in the same year that South Sudan finally gained independence. The group has outlined its vision to fight against corruption, underdevelopment and the domination of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, South Sudan's ruling party, as well as the predominant role of the Dinka ethnic group in most government offices.

During the 2011 attack Deputy Head of SSLM/A Bapiny Monytil said its rebel troops planned to move to other states once Unity State is fully controlled. However, his rebel group was later defeated by the SPLA and driven out of Unity State into Sudan.

In April 2013 the South Sudanese government granted an amnesty to SSLA fighters and reported that 3,000 rebels had taken up the offer, crossing the border from Sudan with around 100 armed vehicles. President Salva Kiir issued a pardon to all SSLA fighters who handed their weapons over to security forces.

But the violence entered a new chapter following the 2013 civil war when many former SSLA troops who had been assimilated into the larger SPLA switched allegiances, instead linking up with rebel factions loyal to Riek Machar.

Other former SSLA members have remained silent and their whereabouts is unknown. But if South Sudan's ruling party continues to be dominated by one ethnic group it is highly possible that the SSLA could resurface as a serious threat to peace in South Sudan.

3. The Abyei conflict

Abyei's rich oil reserves at the border between the Sudans have long made the area a hub of violence as the two countries struggle for control of the valuable fields, especially Heglig. Its border location has also led to conflicting ethnic, cultural, and linguistic claims between the two major groups, the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya nomadic herders, who hail from northern Sudan and move with their animals according to the season.

In the lead-up to South Sudan's independence, all eyes were trained on Abyei, amid fears that disputes over its status would spark a return to war.

In May 2011, two months ahead of South Sudan's independence day, these fears turned into reality when a Sudan-backed militia and the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) troops invaded the Abyei area, destroying civilian property and displacing an estimated 110,000 Ngok Dinka from their traditional homeland. The Sudanese forces won control over the area but peace talks between the two countries ensued to resolve the conflict.

These negotiations collapsed in January 2012 amid disagreement over how oil revenues should be shared between Sudan and South Sudan. That spat led South Sudan to halt oil production, prompting it to halve public spending on most services and leaving its citizens with serious hardships. In early January 2013, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and South Sudanese President Salva Kiir met but failed to reach a final agreement on the future of Abyei.

In October 2013, Abyei residents voted overwhelmingly to join South Sudan during an unofficial referendum which was not generally recognised. Sudan swiftly rejected the proposal, saying that local government institutions must

Five pounds over five years

The troubled economies of Sudan and South Sudan

How far will five South Sudanese Pounds go in Juba?

by Ochan Hannington Kampala, Uganda

Following rebel leader Riek Machar's return to Juba to join the government of national unity, there are early signs that South Sudan's deep economic hardships are starting to ease.

There is urgent need to improve South Sudan's tattered economy after more than two years of civil war, which effectively unwound tentative post-independence development.

In 2011, South Sudan's oil stocks set it in good stead to develop economically. However, amid the civil war, oil production has halved and widespread fighting has sent the South Sudanese pound (SSP) into free fall, plummeting 90 percent and making vital imports practically unaffordable for most citizens.

But now experts see evidence of stabilisation. "Already, the SSP has gained against the dollar in April when news broke about Dr. Riek coming to Juba," said James Alic Garang, a senior economist at Ebony Center who formed part of the team assessing South Sudan's recently approved bid to join the East African Community (EAC).

On April 23, one U.S. dollar sold for SSP 30 amid expectations that Machar would return. It had gained strength sharply, up from around SSP 43 per U.S. dollar about three weeks earlier. Garang said that, although it may take time, he hoped calm would come back to boost confidence and convince investors to return to the country, a vital next step if its economy is to recover.

South Sudan's problems were exacerbated by the fact that oil production, which accounts for about 98 percent of the economy, tumbled as oil fields were cut off by fighting and transport was impeded.

Throughout the conflict, South Sudan's markets were practically empty, hiking demand, and prices, of basics items across the country. This burdened civilians like Mama Kuku, a housewife and mother of six, who lives in Juba.

As fighting raged, she said she constantly struggled to get enough food for everyone in her house. Whereas she used to spend five pounds for her family's lunch, recently inflated prices have left her stranded. "Now 50 SSP is nothing for us! Not even enough for breakfast," she said.

She added that these days lunch would now cost more than SSP 100.

During the conflict, while prices skyrocketed, many goods were completely out of stock. For example, on several occasions motorists were forced to sleep in their cars in queues as long as 600 metres, waiting to buy fuel at petrol stations across the country. At times it takes days, or even more than a week, before fuel is accessible to civilians.

And Mama Kuku still frets about the future of her family. She says the future looks bleak, a perspective economists say is realistic, unless the government of national unity manages to steer the country along a calmer path.

And what do you get in Khartoum for five pounds?

by Adam Mohamad Ahmed Khartoum, Sudan

Five years ago, five Sudanese pounds would get you a long way, even covering the basic costs of living.

A university student, for example, living in the suburbs would take a five pound note from

his parents to cover his daily expenses. One pound would pay for travel to and from the most far-flung suburb to Khartoum centre. He would get some breakfast at the university canteen, usually taking the "sharing" option, where a number of students eat from a big plate of Fatteh (bread soaked in beans, with olive oil, onion, garlic and cheese).

Five years ago, five pounds would get you 30 loaves of bread (enough to feed an extended family for two days). Today, you would walk away with just 10 loaves – and loaf size and weight has dropped considerably over the past five years.

Today, five pounds can only get you two cups of tea – or one cup of milk tea.

"I only use the SDG 5 note as small change, today it has no value," said Omar Ali, a shopkeeper in downtown Khartoum. He explains that it would buy a small tin of water (which cost 50 piasters in 2011) and a medium sized cake (which cost 2-30 piasters in 2011).

Five years ago, a five pound note was worth two U.S. dollars but it has sharply weakened and is now worth less than a quarter of a dollar.

Sorghum, maize, rice, red beans and bread

Prices of South Sudan's five key foods have soared over the past five years.

by Esther Muwombi Kampala, Uganda

When South Sudan became independent in 2011 an estimated 900,000 people faced food shortages. But fast forward five years and it is estimated that some 5.3 million will lack enough food this year, according to the United Nations World Food Programme.

"Internal food security analysis shows that South Sudan will face the most severe lean season in 2016 since its independence, driven by insecurity, poor harvests, and displacement in some areas of the country," according to a WFP report published in May, which specified that the lean season runs from March to September.

Since 2013, the provision of basics has been impeded by conflict and weaker crop production as people flee their lands to escape violence. The 2013 civil war disrupted key transport routes and depressed an already weak economy.

The World Food Programme has warned that if peace does not take hold, many people will become increasingly vulnerable, face food shortages and even famine.

Food provision hinges on the faltering progress towards peace. At the beginning of April, food prices ticked lower as the South Sudan pound regained some ground against the U.S. dollar. The black market rate stood at one U.S. dollar to SSP 30 – a significant shift from the past one-and-a-half-month trend of one U.S. dollar to SSP 45.

But the World Food Programme said it expected an increased reliance on costly imported foods for the better part of 2016. Cross border supplies of cereals from Sudan to northern markets is expected to be depressed due to crop failures and low production surpluses anticipated for the 2015/16 harvest period in the Greater Darfur region and West and South Kordofan. A glance at how South Sudan's five staple foods fared over the past five years shows at a glance why so many citizens, who often earn as little as SSP 60 per day, are worried about where their next meal will come from.

Sorghum

Prices of sorghum, a cereal crop which is a staple in South Sudan, are starting to dip in local currency terms across the country. But prices

in Juba, for example, have been sharply inflated by the conflict. The price of white sorghum in Juba is now at SSP 30, more than twice its price-tag in November and December, making it hard for many families to be able to afford to make Kisira, a typical dish.

Beans

Last December, most South Sudanese markets sold red beans, known as janjaro, at an average price of SSP 40 per kilogram, more than double the price of two months earlier. Bean prices were highest in parts of South Sudan facing the most insecurity, which disrupted markets, transportation and farming activities. Prices continued rising in March this year, due to low supply and high transportation costs. Yida and Juba reported the highest prices, which spiked as high as SSP 65 per kilogram.

Rice

Back in 2011 when South Sudan became independent, rice sold for just SSP 5 per kilo and prices stayed at SSP 7 in 2012. The onset of the civil war sparked dramatically inflated prices, pushing them to a peak of SSP 80 per kilo last year. This year prices have eased slightly to SSP 60 per kilogram.

Bread (Eshi)

Shortly after independence, you could buy five loaves of bread, known as Eshi, for just SDG 1. But prices jumped sharply following the outbreak of the civil war, which interfered with agriculture and trade. It is now selling at SSP 5 for a small loaf. Eshi is one of South Sudan's key foods and small loaves of bread made from wheat are usually served with beans or beef. For a satisfying family meal, one needs 3-4 loafs of Eshi, pushing the meal price to SSP 20, even without the soup.

Maize

In 2015, white maize prices in most markets were around SSP 30, generally double the level of 2014. In 2011 after independence was declared, a malwa of maize sold at SSP 5. This year, prices have eased slightly in many markets, except for Rumbek, where they have spiked to new highs, with white maize costing SSP 51. Non-conflict areas have ample supply of maize flour from Uganda flooding their markets, but they retail at extremely high prices, putting them out of reach for most South Sudanese citizens.

"Business is better in Khartoum"

Bile Sokhen, a South Sudanese film producer and owner of a media production company in Khartoum, outlines his five reasons for staying put in Sudan.

Interview by Mohamed Hilali Khartoum, Sudan

"First, I was born here in Khartoum. Second, I cannot imagine myself living somewhere else.

Third, in regard to my work, I am known here, I have a name and I am famous. I do not think I am going to have these privileges in South Sudan.

Fourth, my friends and acquaintances, the closest people to me, are here in Khartoum. I cannot do without them.

Fifth, the situation in the south is unstable and so I am not feeling encouraged to go and live there."



Cattle, camels and other animal livestock have been used as currencies in what are now Sudan and South Sudan from time immemorial.



Knife Money: This valuable tool was a common means of exchange during pre-modern times throughout the region.



Maria Theresia Thaler: The Austrian silver dollar – aka "Father of the Bird" – was widely used from the early 19th to the mid-20th century.



Five Milliem: The Ottoman Lira was introduced by the Egyptian-Turkish invaders after 1844.



Five Piasters: General Charles Gordon issued these vouchers during the siege of Khartoum by the Mahdist insurgents in 1884.



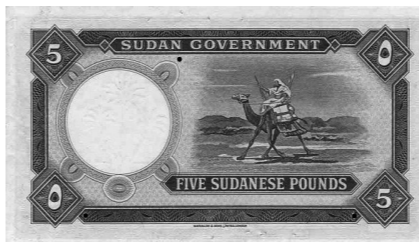
Five Qirsh: After the victory over the Turkiya colonisers, the indigenous Mahdist regime (1885-1898) minted its own coins.



Five East Africa Cents, 1937: After the re-conquest in 1899, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium promoted various currencies.



Five Sudanese Piasters, 1940: As Fascist Italy failed to conquer Sudan during WWII, these notes were never issued.



Five Sudanese Pounds, 1955: These notes were designed in the months before independence and never issued.



Five Millimes, 1956: This design stayed the same under various parliamentary and military regimes until 1972.



Five Pounds, 1956: This design stayed the same under various regimes until the May Revolution of 1969.



Five Pounds, 1970: This design stayed the same for 10 years.



Five Millimes, 1972: This coin was designed to emphasize the Pan-Arab ideology of the early Nimeri regime.



Five Sudanese Pounds, 1981: This design reflected the unprecedented cult of personality introduced by dictator Nimeri who turned to Islamism.



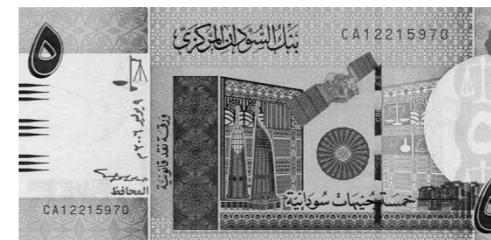
Five Sudanese Pounds, 1985: This design was introduced after dictator Nimeri was toppled by the April popular uprising.



Five Dinars, 1993: This design was introduced after the 1989 "Ingaz" Islamist military take-over.



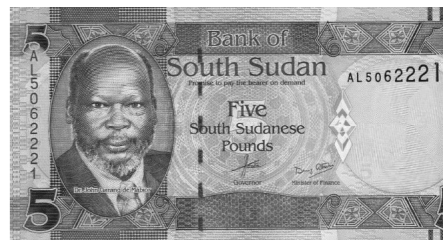
Five New Sudan Pounds, 2002: This coin was designed by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M).



Five Sudanese Pounds, 2007: This currency was launched by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with the SPLA.



Five "Dartur Sultanate" Dinars, 2008: A U.S. citizen minted this fake coin, reflecting international controversy around the Darfur conflict.



Five South Sudan Pounds, 2011: The currency was introduced after a week after the independence of South Sudan, replacing the Sudanese Pound at par.

Cash or cow?

The history of five pounds

5 days reporting from Malakal

Radio reporter Francis Michael describes his fear and shock as fighting took over Malakal, reducing it to a ghost town.

by Francis Michael
Juba, South Sudan

E

verything looked calm and quiet in Malakal on the morning of December 23, 2013. It was just before Christmas and the city's inhabitants were busy getting ready for the festivities. Despite the fighting which broke out in Juba on December 16, Malakal remained calm and its people were cheerful and relieved.

I left my house in the morning for work at 'Sawt al-Mahaba' radio station in al-Malakiya neighborhood, nearly even kilometres away from my house. On my way to the office, I surveyed people's opinions about their preparations for the feast, given the rising market prices following the border closure in Joda district, in the north of Upper Nile State towards Sudan.

I reached the radio station at 9:30 am and the morning shift for the link presenter ended at 11:00 am. I was alone for the second shift and we aired special Christmas hymns for the listeners.

Then a friend called me, wanting to know what was happening in the city. He told me that people were fleeing towards the Nile and the main market area. I called a friend who had gone out to buy some items, but her mobile phone was switched off. I was later told that she lost it as she fled the market.

Leaving the studio to check what was happening, I saw people hurrying, mostly running. I called the station manager to tell her what I saw. She asked me to close the station because there was news that rebel forces had attacked the city from the riverside.

Just before I left, two of my colleagues arrived and we closed the station together. As we were locking up, we met the then State Minister of Information and Broadcasting Philip Jiben Ogal who was racing towards the broadcasting station. He requested me to reopen the station so he could address the people and ask them to return to their homes. I called the station manager and she gave him the go-ahead. We were also instructed that all programmes aired should be pre-recorded.

The minister aired his message for the people, reassuring them that there was no problem and asking them to return to their homes after many had fled to the United Nations mission headquarters outside the city.

In the evening, having investigated the situation to report the news, I made some telephone calls to other authorities. I learned that the senior officials from Upper Nile State, including the governor himself, had already left the city for the U.N. mission base. I made further enquiries through some colleagues

who worked at the U.N. offices and it turned out that a dispute had broken out among government ministers, leading to divisions, caused by the December 15 conflict in Juba.

We spent that evening in fear, knowing that conditions were expected to deteriorate over the upcoming 24 hours. Overnight there was an exchange of fire at the army base, less than 1.5 kilometres from my house. The sound of gunfire was horrendous. It was the first time in my life I'd heard shooting from machine guns, rocket propelled grenades and other weapons.

Not far from my house, lived a minister of the state parliament. Assaultants fired at her house, but stray gunshots also hit my home.

I'd experienced such an indiscriminate war before when I was living near the residence of former Upper Nile Governor Peter Charlemagne. Back then, fighting broke out between the popular army and government militias and his house was repeatedly targeted.

In 2011, a militia force from the Sudanese army broke away during a disengagement of forces agreement. At that time, I was at the radio station, less than 300 metres from an army camp, and I spent the whole night holed up inside the office.

In the morning of December 24, citizens took to the streets. Malakal's inhabitants had grown used to the exchange of fire in the city and by now things had calmed down. People began to move from the south to the north and from the west to the east. However, a feeling of uneasiness remained.

Most people headed to the U.N. headquarters seeking refuge while some hid in nearby villages. In the evening of that same day, I went to the U.N. mission to enquire about the displaced people. The conditions I found were appalling: People lived out in the open and were in urgent need of water. They drank water from the small brooks near the U.N. offices, which was contaminated by sewage and wastewater.

After long attempts to get through the strict security checks at the U.N., I managed to speak to the organisation's Malakal Officer Debora Shin, thanks to a local employee at the mission. I asked her what her mission would do to help people outside their offices fence, considering the ongoing indiscriminate shooting. She said she was awaiting instructions from Juba and could not allow those people into the headquarters. Some lucky people had managed to get into the U.N. mission with their families, however, assisted by mission workers. But the majority, hundreds of scared citizens, remained out in the open from the early morning until 7:00 pm. One child and an old man died and three citizens, including a five-year-old child, were injured.

On the morning of December 26, the U.N. mission officials decided to go to the city to bring food and tents from the World Food Programme warehouses following a truce between the government and the rebels. I was one of the workers who was ready to go to the city. My main purpose was to find out what was happening. But soon after the truce arrangements were completed, shooting started again and two people were killed outside the U.N. headquarters.

That day, I had a brawl with a Ugandan U.N. mission officer, who was responsible for relief affairs but she refused to take the tents outside to the camp to provide shelter for the citizens who needed protection.

On the night of December 26, the U.N. mission in Malakal decided to allow the citizens into its headquarters to protect them from stray bullets, having received information that the government troops would attack the city in the morning of the following day.

Then came a most difficult experience: We had to transport the patients to the hospital inside the camp. Hunger, thirst and direct exposure to the sun for three days were the main causes for people's illnesses. Most of the patients were university students from the Upper Nile University and pregnant women. We transported them to hospital or offered them juice and water only because we were short of food, we hardly had anything to give.

I felt hungry, but I had to tolerate it, remain patient and help people. Without planning to, I switched from media work to humanitarian work.

Thanks to the efforts of a young South Sudanese man who worked in the AIDS Protection Ward, the U.N. mission representative allowed citizens into its library and we spent the rest of the night there.

On the morning of December 27, the sound of artillery fire was heard all over Malakal. At 10:00 am, the State Information Minister arrived from Foluoj and told me the government forces would soon reach Malakal and that they wanted to resume broadcasting at the government radio station after forcing the rebels out of the city. As considerable damage was sustained by the government radio station, they wanted to broadcast from the 'Sawt al-Mahaba' station. I told him that the manager was responsible and they later agreed to reopen it on December 28.

The situation inside the U.N. mission's offices was extremely bad and there was no water or food. We spent two days in which we survived on scarce supplies of water and juice. It was the most difficult stage and when we got out after the war, I decided not to return there under any circumstances.

On the morning of December 28, we walked out to the city and went to the main market which had been ransacked and looted. Large parts of it were burnt out. We could see dead bodies littering the street. It was the first time in my life I'd seen corpses in the city. I started counting them, but stopped because there were too many. Most of the bodies were of homeless children killed in front of the shops. My friend who was accompanying me was scared so we decided to return to the U.N. mission's camp after I took some pictures to accompany my report for The Niles website. I will never forget the title of that story 'Malakal Main Market: Lootings and Corpses on Streets'.

“It was the first time in my life I'd heard shooting from machine guns.”

At 1:00 pm, the radio station's manager called me and told me that the station would be opened at 3:00 pm and that I should go there. After opening the station, the Information Minister Philip Jiben Ogal was on air. Malakal's citizens began to return to their houses. We closed the station at 6:00 pm. There were only three of us; the minister, the station manager and myself, as well as the minister's guards. We travelled in the minister's car and parted at al-Malakiya neighborhood. I decided to return to the U.N. base to join my friend. There was a single bakery on the way and I thought about taking some bread with me, but night fell while I queued and so I returned to the U.N. base without bread.

On my way there, the city streets were completely empty. I was walking alone. Halfway to the U.N. base, I saw armed soldiers deployed in front of me and I decided to return to the al-Malakiya neighbourhood, in the hope of finding a safe place to sleep in as it was closer than going all the way to the United Nations. It was completely dark and I was very scared. I knocked at the door of one of the houses and asked for a place to sleep. The family refused to take me in and I tried somewhere else. An old lady advised me to find a place to spend the night at instead of walking in the dark. I knocked at another door and I finally found someone who offered me a shelter. I spent the night with strangers who let me sleep under their roof. The following day, I continued my walk to the radio station where I worked alone for three consecutive days. All my colleagues were no longer in the area.

We have spent very difficult times in Malakal since the start of those ill-omened incidents. Within a short span of five days, Malakal was a ghost town, completely deserted with empty shops and dead bodies strewn in the city streets. Most of the population left, but I decided to stay and continue my professional work as a journalist. Eventually, though, I was forced to flee as well. At 6:30 pm of February 17, 2014, I left Malakal, packing up just before some of the city's worst battles broke out in the early hours of February 18.

m'CT

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NAGA NOW

The Niles correspondents travelled from Khartoum to the archaeological sites of Naga. Five encounters on a journey back to the roots of their culture.

The portraits on the following pages are part of a cooperation between David Chipperfield Architects and The Niles, shown at the 2016 Architecture Biennale in Venice.



Name: Alhidai Jibril
Age: 27
Occupation: Excavation worker, gold miner, farmer, livestock herder
Meeting point: Naga archaeological site

“A poem for my camel.”

My friend Ahmed and I are employed by the Qatari-Sudanese project in the royal city of Naga. The archaeological season lasts only three months so we need additional jobs to make ends meet. I completed one year of basic school. The nicest time of the year is when I can be around my camels. This is also when I am at home with family and friends. We sing and memorize poetry. This is a poem about my camel: 'Magician of the sunsets / sailing the sands / slim-waisted and high humped / ready for a long journey'.

Name: Igbal Mohammed
Age: 36
Occupation: Tea lady
Meeting point: Shendi service area

“I left my husband in the dead of night.”

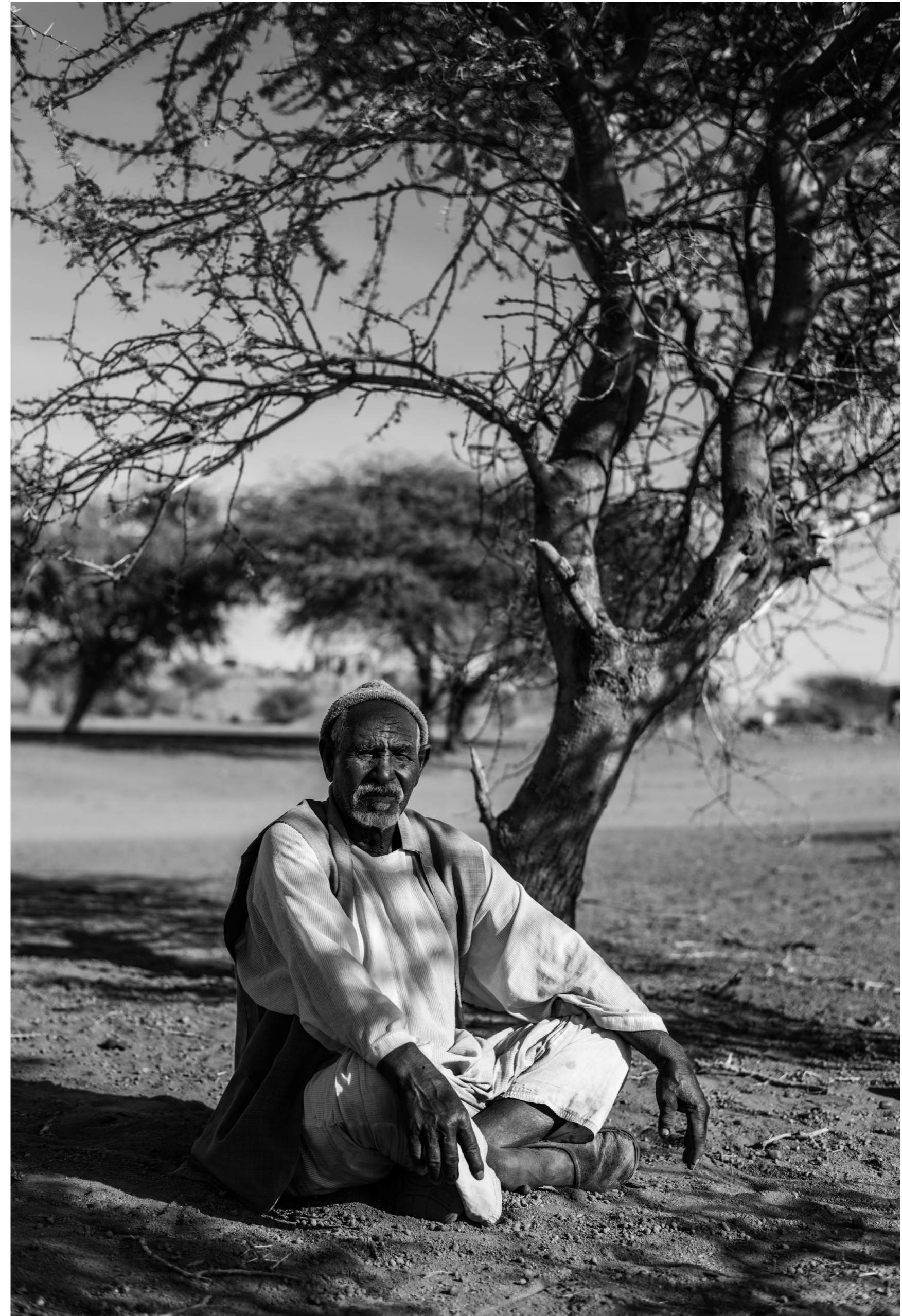
I have been working as a tea lady ever since I came to Shendi two years ago. Originally I am from Dilling, a beautiful town in the Nuba Mountains. I ran away from my husband after many years of a bad marriage. I chose not to move to Khartoum because he might find me there and kill me. So I went even further away from home and settled in this remote place. I was confident that I would be able to make a living here with tourists passing on the Khartoum-Atbara motorway. I also took the daughter of my sister with me to help me with my work; she is 12. My 17-year-old son is still with his father.



Name: El-Amin El-Baagir
Age: 80
Occupation: Site guard
Meeting point: Naga archaeological site

“The security situation is good because we are united.”

I have served as Naga's guard since 1976 – that is 20 years before the excavations on this site began. We hardly face any security problems since, as Shaigiya, we are a very close-knit tribe. In the past our lands were covered with trees. The woods were home to wild animals that would scare both our children and our livestock. People were superstitious and ignorant. They didn't know how to pray or how to memorize verses of the Koran. They would tell legends such as that of Abu Lamba [father of the lamp], whom they believed misled the unwitting in the desert at night using a mysterious light.



Name: Hiba Mohammed
Age: 20
Occupation: Student of natural sciences at the University of Khartoum
Meeting point: Naga archaeological site

“The ordinary people have always been on the outside.”

I grew up in the village of Hajar al-Asal, 200 kilometres north of Khartoum at the river Nile. It is the place where the semi-nomads of Naga send their live-stock for grazing in the dry season. The powerful civilisation of Kush with Meroë as its wealthy metropolis, and the flourishing city of Naga, could not have come into existence without the abundant resources of the Nile. I believe that the kings and queens of Kush are my ancestors. The archaeological sites show that they used to be exactly like us now: The kings and queens had their palaces, their ministers were next to them, and the ordinary people were outside those places.



Name: Mahdi el-Zaki
Age: 20
Occupation: Shoe salesman and assistant driver
Meeting point: Motorway next to Naga

“I dreamt of America.”

I'm originally from El-Obeid and I help my cousin ship iron sheets from Port Sudan to Darfur. My dream was to emigrate to the United States of America but I didn't win the green card lottery. Now I would love to be in nature working as a farmer for part of the year and and would take care of our cattle the rest of the time.





أين ستكون بعد خمس سنوات؟

فرانسيس مايلك، نوسة سيد أحمد، موقومي ديفس، مارثا آقاما، أكيم موجيرا

«لا أستطيع التكهّن كيف ستكون حالة جنوب السودان خلال السنوات الخمس القادمة بسبب المشاحنات المستمرة، ولكنني أأمل أن نعيش بسلام لما فيه خير البلاد وسلام لجنوب السودان، وهذه هي أميّنني بعد خمس سنوات.»

ماري أدوت، مواطنة من جوبا، جنوب السودان

«خلال السنوات الخمس المقبلة سأكون قد حققت تقدماً كبيراً في الموسيقى. وأمل أن أعيش في بلد يعمه السلام، في أمة ليس فيها تمرد وقبليّة وكراهية. كل ما نحتاج إليه الآن هو السلام.»

جويس جيدياي، الملقبة بالجميلة جوي كوكس، أم وفتاة، جوبا، جنوب السودان

«قلت قبل عامين أنني أريد إنجاز بعض الأمور، ولكنني لم أستطع لأنّ وظيفتي المدنية تدفع لي راتباً ضئيلاً لا يكفي لتسيّد فواتيري حتى. لذلك، لا أستطيع اتخاذ أي قرار قبل أن تستقر الأوضاع ويتحسن الاقتصاد. أنا الآن أعيش ليومني، وعندما يحلّ الغد سأواجهه.»

إيزابيل، موظفة حكومية، يي، جنوب السودان

«أنا أغني أغانٍ معظمها تعليمي وذات جودة عالية، وسأصبح واحداً من كبار الفنانين في جنوب السودان.»

صموئيل سبت إيمانويل، المعروف أيضًا باسم سامسي، موسيقي، يي، جنوب السودان

«ليس لديّ أدنى فكرة عما سيحدث بعد خمس سنوات! أتمنى فقط مستقبلًا جيدًا لابنتي. أما أنا، فأسبر مع التيار، فأعتماداً على رؤيتك لوضع البلاد، تكون الأمور جيدة أو سيئة.»

ماري أكادي مانوا، أم، كمبالا، جنوب السودان

«سأصبح قساً في كنيسة مع دار لرعاية الأطفال لتلبية احتياجات عدد كبير جداً من الأطفال اليتامى في هذا البلد. أريد أن أشغل مشاريع تنموية أخرى أيضاً، كجزء من مساهمتي في بناء الأمة.»

إلياس سيمي، قس، يي، جنوب السودان

«بعد خمس سنوات، أرى نفسي صحفياً محترفاً وجريئاً.»

فدانيال فرايدي، طالب، كمبالا، أوغندا.

«أسفة، ليست لديّ إجابة عن هذا السؤال!»

فيولا رينتينسيا، كمبالا، أوغندا.

«أعتقد أنه بعد خمس سنوات سأكون شخصية مستقلة قادرة على الوقوف على قدمي وفأدر على دعم والديّ.»

خميس إيمانويل نابوليون، طالب، كمبالا، أوغندا.

«أريد العودة إلى الجامعة لنيل شهادة الماجستير، وأريد الزواج في غضون خمس سنوات. وأمل أن أصبح أباً بعد الزواج مباشرة.»

فيكي ليونق، كمبالا، أوغندا.

«بعد خمس سنوات سوف أكون في الجنوب بشرط أن تحسّن الأوضاع. لقد فكرت في الهجرة مراراً وتكراراً. ممكن أن أهاجر إذا كانت هناك دولة توفر لحياتي المعيشة، والعمل، والعيش الكريم. لقد فشلنا فادتنا في الإدارة، لكن رغم ذلك سوف أكون في جنوب السودان بعد خمس سنوات.»

ملي أيزك، جوبا، جنوب السودان.

«ولدت في جوبا وعشت حياتي في الخرطوم، بالنالبي أنا أفتخر بوطيّنني ولا يمكن أن أترك بلدي. لا أفكر في الهجرة إلى أي مكان بعد خمس سنوات، إلا إذا أجبرني الحرب. جنوب السودان بعد خمس سنوات سيعيش في سلام واستقرار.»

حياة ونستون، جوبا، جنوب السودان.

«أؤمن أن الجنوب بعد خمس سنوات سيكون بلداً آمناً، فيه سياسيون واعون يركزون أمور الشعب.»

شول قاج شول، جوبا، جنوب السودان.

«هدفني هو أن أقدم الأفضل لجنوب السودان، لذا بعد خمس سنوات سأكون في جوبا، لأن جنوب السودان سيكون من البلدان المتطورة في جميع مجالات التنمية. صعب عليّ أن أترك بلدي أو أن أهاجر إلى مكان آخر.»

جيمس أويواج، مسرّحي، جوبا، جنوب السودان.

«من الصعب عليّ التكهّن أين سوف أكون بعد خمس سنوات، كل شيء يتوقف على ظروف البلد. إذا كان هناك استقرار، سأستعيد فكرة ترك الوطن. وأنا مستعد أن أقضي حياتي كلها في مدينة جوبا. لكن إذا لم يكن هناك الاستقرار، يمكن أن أهاجر إلى أي مكان آخر أو أن أجد نفسي مهجراً بالقوة.»

أزرق بول دينق، جوبا، جنوب السودان

“I think in five years time I will be an independent person, standing on my own two feet and able to support my parents.”

Khamis Emmanuel Napoleon, Student, Kampala, Uganda.

“I want to go back to school to do my master’s degree and get married within five years. I would hope that I get a baby as soon as am married too.”

Vicky Liang, Kampala, Uganda.

“In five years from now, I shall be in the south provided the situation improves. I have repeatedly thought of migration. I am ready to move to any country that can secure my living, job and dignity. Our leaders have failed to govern. But still, I’ll be in South Sudan after five years.”

Melli Isaaq, Juba, South Sudan.

“I was born in Juba and have lived in Khar-toum. I am proud of my nationality and will never leave my country. I will not move to any other country within the coming five years unless I have been forced away by war. South Sudan will be peaceful and stable.”

Hayat Winston, Juba, South Sudan.

“In five years, I believe that the South will be safe and will have good politicians who are aware of the people’s issues.”

Chol Gaj Chol, Juba, South Sudan.

“My aim is to give South Sudan the best I can. In five years from now, I’ll be in Juba because the south will be a developed country. It will be difficult for me to leave my country and go elsewhere.”

James Obwaj, Juba, South Sudan.

“It is difficult for me to decide where I will be in five years – everything will depend on the country’s situation. If it is stable, I’ll discard the migration option and will be ready to spend my life in Juba. Otherwise, I may migrate or be displaced.”

Azrag Paul Deng, Juba, South Sudan.

“I cannot predict how South Sudan will be in the next five years time due to the ongoing wrangles but I hope that we will be at peace and harmony for the better of the nation and a peaceful South Sudan, this is where I see myself.”

Mary Adut, Juba Resident, South Sudan.

“In five years I will be far in terms of music. I hope to be living in a peaceful country, in a nation that’s free from rebellion, tribalism and hatred. All we need now is peace.”

Joyce Jidayi aka Pretty Joy Cox, mother and artist, Juba, South Sudan.

“Two years ago I said I want to accomplish certain things. But I didn’t..., because the civil job I work pays me little, not enough to pay all my bills. So until things go well and the economy improves, I can’t think of making any plans. Right now I live for today, and will wait to face tomorrow.”

Isabella, Civil Servant, Yei, South Sudan.

“I’m singer of mostly educative songs of a high quality and I will be one of the biggest artistes in South Sudan.”

Samuel Sedit Emmanuel, aka Samse, Musician, Yei, South Sudan.

“I have no clue about what will happen in five years! I only wish for a good future for my daughter. As for myself, I am going with the flow. Depending how you see the situation in the country, that is either good or bad.”

Mary Kadi Manoah, Mother, Kampala, Uganda.

“I see myself as full-time pastor in a church with a children’s home to cater for the very many parentless kids in this country. I want to run other developmental projects, too, as part of my contribution to nation building.”

Elias Seme, Pastor, Yei, South Sudan.

“In five years I see myself as professional and vocal journalist.”

Daniel Friday, Student, Kampala, Uganda.

“I’m sorry, but I have got no answer!”

Viola Rentensia, Kampala, Uganda.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

by Martha Agama, Francis Michael, Akim Mugisa, Davis Mugume, Nosa Sidahmed



All we need is stability in South Sudan. I believe that over the next five years, I will have opened at least three more workshops in the country. These will give employment opportunities to some youth. You know, to live happy in Juba you need money, I believe that by then I should have gotten enough money to live a happy life in my country South Sudan.”

Engineer Oneka James, Auto Mechanic, Juba, South Sudan.

“In five years time I will have finished my engineering course and I hope to be working with big construction companies in South Sudan. I also want to have established a poultry business in my native Kajo Keji. I want my country to be the best place for me and my friends so we can live in peace like in other countries that we have visited.”

Pita Mule Harry, Civil and Environmental Engineering student, Uganda Christian University (UCU), Mukono, Uganda.

“If the current impasse continues then South Sudan might have to shape her own destiny but if the peace stands, the future of our country is very bright. I hope peace will prevail so I can achieve my goals.”

Nagib Boro, Director at HASS Petroleum Ltd., Juba, South Sudan.



الاسم: هبة محمد
العمر: ٢٠ سنة
المهنة: طالبة علوم طبيعية في جامعة
الخطوم
مكان اللقاء: آثار النبعة

«لطالما كان الناس العاديون خارج دوائر النفوذ.»



ترعرعتُ في مدينة حجر العسلي التي تقع على بعد ٢٠ كيلومتر شمال الخطوم، وتطل على نهر النيل. هي مكان يرسل إليه بدو النبعة شبه الرثل قطعانهم للراعي في الفصول الحافة. لولا خيرات نهر النيل الوفيرة، لما ظهرت الحضارة الكوشية القوية وعاصمتها مروبي الأرية أو مدينة النبعة المزدهرة على سطح الأرض. اعتقد أن ملوك وملكات كوش هم أسلافنا. المواقع الأثرية تظهر أنهم كانوا يعيشون في نظام مثل نظامنا: كان الملوك والملكات قصورهم ووراثتهم الذين يبعونهم، وكان الناس العاديون خارج تلك الأماكن.



الاسم: معدي الزاكي
العمر: ٢٠ سنة
المهنة: بائع أحذية ومساعد سائق
مكان اللقاء: الطريق السريع بالقرب من
النبعة

«حلمت بأمريكا.»



أنا أصلاً من الأبيض، وأساعد ابن عمي في شحن صفائح الحديد من بورسودان إلى دارفور. كان حلمي الهجرة إلى الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، لكنني لم أفر يا صيبي بطاقة الإقامة، والآن أحب أن أعمل في الطبيعة مزارعاً لجزء من السنة، وأرعى ماشيتنا ليأفي الوقت.

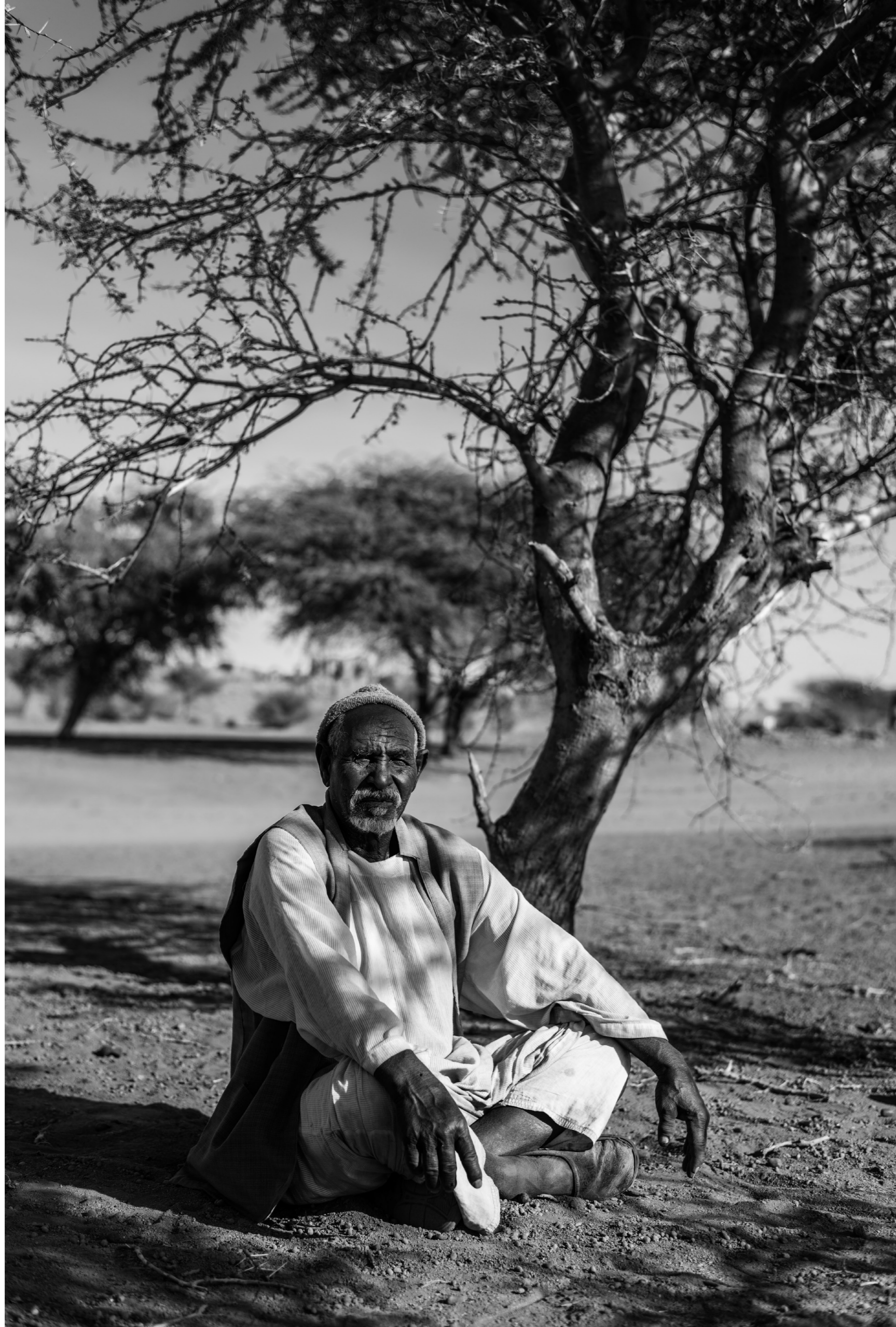


الاسم: إقبال محمد
العمر: ٣١ سنة
المهنة: بائعة شاي
مكان اللقاء: منطقة خدمات شندبي

«هجرتُ زوجي في عتم الليل.»



أعمل بائعة شاي منذ أن أتيت إلى شندبي قبل عامين. أنا أصلاً من الدنج، وهي مدينة جميلة تقع في جبال النوبة. فررت من زوجي بعد سنوات من معاملته السيئة لي. فررت بدم الذهب إلى الخرطوم، لأنه قد يحدث هناك ويفتلي. ذهبت إلى مكان أبيع واستقرت في هذا المكان التالي. كنت واثقة أنني قادرة على كسب عيشي هنا بسبب مرور السياح على الطريق السريع بين الخرطوم وعطبرة. جلبت معي ابنة أختي لتساعدني في عملي هنا. عمرها ١٢ عاماً. أما ابني الذي يبلغ عمره ١٧ عاماً، فلا يزال يعيش مع والديه.



الاسم: الأمين البقر
العمر: ٨٠ سنة
المهنة: حارس الموقع الأثري في النقعة
مكان اللقاء: آثار النقعة

«الوضع الأمني جيد لأننا متحدون.»

أعمل حارساً للنقعة منذ عام ١٩٧٦، أي قبل عشرين عاماً من بدء التنقيب في الموقع. لا تكاد تواجه أي مشاكل أمنية منذ ذلك الحين. نحن، قبيلة الشايقية، قريبون جداً من بعضنا ومتناسكون. كانت الأشجار تغطي أرضنا في الماضي، وكانت الغاية موالد حيوانات تير الرعب في نفوس أطفالنا ومناشيتنا. كان الناس جاهلين، ويؤمنون بالخرافات. لم يكونوا يعرفون كيف يخلون أو يحفظون آيات من القرآن. كانوا يروون أساطير مثل قصة أبو لمية، الذي اعتقدوا أنه كان يظل غير العارفين بالصحراء ليلاً باستخدام ضوء غامض.

الاسم: أهدي جبريل
 العمر: ٢٧ سنة
 المهنة: عامل تفقيب، عامل في مناجم
 الذهب، فزارع، راعي ماشية
 مكان اللقاء: آثار النعقة

« قصيدة لجمالي.»

أعمل أنا وصديقي أحمد لدى المشروع
 الفطري السوداني في مدينة النعقة
 الملكية. لا يدم موسم الشقبي سوى
 ثلاثة أشهر فقط، ولذلك فنحن نحاج إلى
 عمل إضافي لتغطية نفقاتنا. لقد درست
 حطب الصف الأول فقط.
 أحمل أوقات حياتي أفضها وأنا بالقرب من
 جمالي، وأيضاً عندما أكون في المنزل مع
 عائلتي وأصدقائي، بحيث نغني ونستذكر
 الشعر. هذه قصيدة عن جمالي:
 شجار الغروب الليلة أمسى يعوم
 ناقصة علفتو ناوين يهيو شيووم
 غاب المردوم ففاه من وسط محروم
 دعما وحيسا قالم وكانا رادما ردوم



النعقة الآن

مراسلون من موقع التيلان سافروا من العاصمة السودانية الخرطوم إلى المواقع الأثرية في النعقة. أتنا عشر لقاء
 عبر رحلة العودة إلى جذور ثقافتهم.

موقع التيلان هو مشروع تدريبي لـصحفيين وصحفيات من السودان وجنوب السودان تنفذه مؤسسة الإعلام في
 التعاون والشحول بموئيل من وزارة الخارجية الألمانية.



٢٠ التيلان

خمسة أيام في ملكال

يصف المراسل الإذاعي فرانسيس مايكل خوفه وصدمته عندما اندلع القتال في ملكال، وكيف حولها إلى مدينة أشباح.

فرانسيس مايكل
جوبا، جنوب السودان

وفي عام ٢٠١١ انشقت قوات ميليشية من الجيش السوداني عند فك الارتباط. وقتها كنت في الإذاعة التي تبعد أقل من ٣٠٠ متر من معسكر الجيش، وقضيت ليلة كاملة في الإذاعة. هاتان الحادثتان لم تصلا إلى درجة الرعب الذي بقينا فيه حتى الساعة السادسة والربع صباحاً، إذ بدأت الأوضاع تهدأ.

في صباح يوم ٢٤ كانون أول/ديسمبر وعند الساعة صباحاً خرج المواطنين للشوارع. تعود سكان مدينة ملكال على إطلاق النار في المدينة، حيث كانت الأوضاع تهدأ في نفس اليوم. بالفعل هدأت الأوضاع وبدأ السكان ينتقلون من الشحال إلى الجنوب ومن الغرب إلى الشرق، ولكن كانت حالة عدم الاستقرار مازالت محسوسة. قصد معظم السكان مقر الأمم المتحدة طالين الحماية، بينما ذهب البعض الآخر إلى قرى مجاورة. في مساء نفس اليوم ذهبت إلى مقر الأمم المتحدة من أجل الاطلاع على أوضاع المواطنين. وجدت حالتهم سيئة جداً، فقد كانوا في العراء وفي حاجة شديدة إلى الماء، إذ كانوا يشربون مياه الجداول حول المقر، التي كانت مختلطة بمياه الصرف الصحي.

بعد إجراءات مشددة من رجال الأمن في المقر، حاولت الاتصال مع مسؤولة الأمم المتحدة في ملكال ديورة شين، وبمساعدة أحد موظفي البعثة المحليين وصلت إليها. سألتها عما ستفعله البعثة فيما يخص المواطنين المتواجدون خارج أسوارها، خصوصاً وأن عملية إطلاق النار العشوائية مستمرة. قالت إنهم ينتظرون التعليمات من جوبا وليس باستطاعتهم إدخال الناس إلى مقر الأمم المتحدة. استطاع بعض المواطنين «المحظوظين» دخول المقر مع أسرهم بواسطة عدد من العاملين هناك. أما المئات الآخرون فظلوا خارج البعثة، منذ صباح ذلك اليوم حتى الساعة السابعة مساءً، نتيجة إطلاق النار العشوائي مات طفل ورجل مسن وجرح ثلاثة مواطنين من بينهم طفل في الخامسة من العمر.

في صباح يوم ٢٦ كانون أول/ديسمبر قررت البعثة أن تخرج إلى المدينة لجلب الطعام والخيم من مخازن منظمة الغذاء العالمي، بعد ان تم إقرار هدنة بين الحكومة والمتمردين. كنت واحداً من ضمن العمال المستعدين للخروج إلى المدينة. كان هديفي الأساسي معرفة ما يجري، فبعد أن اكتملت ترتيبات الهدنة، بدأ إطلاق النار من جديد وأصيب شخصان خارج المقر.

في نفس ذلك اليوم دار جدال بيني مع موظفة دولية في البعثة، وهي المسؤولة عن شؤون الإغاثة جنسيتها أوغندية، بعد أن رفضت نقل الخيم خارج المخيم لإيواء المواطنين المحتاجين لحماية.

في ليلة ٢٦ كانون أول/ديسمبر، قررت بعثة الأمم المتحدة في ملكال إدخال المواطنين إلى مقرها لتفادي إصابتهم بطلقات طائشة، بعد أن أفادت المعلومات أن القوات الحكومية ستهاجم المدينة صباح اليوم التالي. كانت تلك أصعب ليلة في المخيم: كان علينا نقل المواطنين المرضى إلى مستشفى داخل المخيم. الجوع والعطش والتعب من الجلوس تحت حرارة الشمس لثلاثة أيام منذ يوم ٢٣ كانون أول/ديسمبر كانت السبب الأول وراء مرض المواطنين. معظم المرضى كانوا من طالبات جامعة أعالي النيل والنساء الحوامل. كنا ننقلهم إلى المستشفى أو نعطيمهم عصيراً وماء فقط، لأننا لم تكن نملك أي طعام. لم يكن لدينا شيء.

كنت أشعر بالجووع، ولكن لم يكن هناك خيار آخر غير التحمل والصبر ومساعدة الناس. هكذا تحولت من العمل الصحفي إلى العمل الإنساني دون أن أخطط لذلك. كنا نقضي ليالينا في المكتبة، يفضل شاب وطني يعمل في قسم حماية الإيدز، الذي أقتع ممثلة الأمم المتحدة بإدخال المواطنين إلى مقرها.

«كانت تلك أول مرة في حياتي

أسمع فيها أصوات النار تطلق

بصورة مذهلة

من رشاشات.»

في صباح يوم ٢٧ كانون أول/ديسمبر، وصلت أصوات المدافع إلى داخل مدينة ملكال. عند الساعة العاشرة اتصل بي وزير الإعلام الولائي من فلوج وأبلغني أن الحكومة سوف تصل ملكال، وأنهم يريدون فتح الإذاعة بعد أن تم طرد قوات التمرد من المدينة، خصوصاً أن ضرراً كبيراً لحق بالإذاعة الحكومية. وبالتالي لم تكن باستطاعته مخاطبة المواطنين عبرها. أبلغته أن المديرية هي المسؤولة عن فتح المحطة، واتفقا على أن نفتح الإذاعة من جديد صباح ٢٨ كانون أول/ديسمبر عند الساعة العاشرة صباحاً. داخل مقر بعثة الأمم المتحدة كانت الوضع سيئاً جداً، لا مياه للشرب ولا غذاء. يومان ونحن بالكاد نحصل على الماء والعصير. كانت هذه أصعب مرحلة. عندما تجاوزناها بعد الحرب، قررت ألا أعود هناك مجدداً، مهما كانت الظروف. في صباح يوم ٢٨ كانون أول/ديسمبر، خرجنا إلى المدينة. وصلنا السوق الكبير الذي تم نهب وحرق أجزاء واسعة منه. على أطراف الشوارع رأيت جثث الناس. كانت تلك أول مرة في حياتي أشاهد جثث الموقى. كنت أحسبهم واحداً بعد الآخر إلى أن توقفت لكثرتهم.

معظم الجثث لأطفال متشردين قُتلوا أمام الدكاكين. كان صديقي الذي يرافقني خائفاً، لهذا قررنا أن نعود إلى معسكر الأمم المتحدة، بعد أن التقطت صوراً لكتابة تقرير لموقع التيلان. لن أنسى عنوان ذلك التقرير: سوق ملكال الرئيسي منهوب وجثث في الشوارع.

عند الساعة الواحدة بعد منتصف النهار، اتصلت بي مديرة المحطة وأخبرتني أن المحطة سوف تفتح الساعة الثالثة، وعلي أن أكون حاضراً. بعد فتحنا للإذاعة تحدث وزير الاعلام، فليب جيبني أوقال، وبدأت مدينة ملكال تشهد عودة المواطنين إلى بيوتهم. أغلقنا الإذاعة عند السادسة مساءً، كنا ثلاثة فقط في الإذاعة: الوزير ومديرة المحطة وأنا، بالإضافة إلى حراس الوزير. خرجنا من المحطة بسيارة الوزير وافترقنا في حي ملكية، فقد قررت أن أعود إلى مقر الأمم المتحدة حيث صديقي. كان هناك مخبز واحد يبيع الخبز للناس، فكرت أن أخذ معي بعض الخبز، لكن الانتظار طال، وأنا أنتظر في الصف حتى بدأ الظلام، فقررت العودة إلى المقر دون خبز.

في الطريق إلى مقر الأمم المتحدة لاحظت أن شوارع المدينة خالية تماماً. كنت أسير لوحدي. أنا هنا بين مقر البعثة والمدينة. تشمتت أفكاري في تلك اللحظة، ولخطورة الطريق بسبب انتشار أفراد الجيش بأسلحتهم في مواقع الارتكاز، قررت العودة إلى حي ملكية الأقرب لمكاني آنذاك، لعلي أجد مكاناً أنام فيه. كان الظلام دامساً والخوف يطوقني. طرقت باب منزل وطلبت منهم مكاناً للنوم. رفضت الأسرة استقبالي، فواصلت محاولاتي، نصحتني امرأة مسنة أن أبحث عن مكان أنام فيه بدلاً من السير في الليل. طرقت باب منزل آخر، وأخيراً وجدت من رحب بي. قضيت تلك الليلة مع غرباء قبلوا أن أنام تحت سطح منزلهم. في صباح اليوم التالي، واصلت مشواري إلى أن عدت إلى الإذاعة. عملت بعد ذلك في الإذاعة لثلاثة أيام متتالية وحيداً، دون زملائي. كانت أيام عصيبة في مدينة ملكال منذ أن بدأت هذه الأحداث اللثيمة. في ظرف خمسة أيام تغيرت ملامح مدينة ملكال، حيث أصبحت مهجورة تماماً؛ دكاكين السوق خالية، جثث الناس في الشارع. ترك معظم السكان المدينة آنذاك، ولكنني قررت البقاء بحكم مهنتي كصحفي في آخر المطاف كان علي الرحيل أيضاً. عند الساعة السادسة والنصف يوم 1٧ شباط/فبراير ٢٠١٤، تركت مدينة ملكال، ودارت أسوأ معارك الحرب هناك في اليوم التالي، صباح يوم ١٨ شباط/فبراير.

m'CT

معلومات الاتصال

البلان منشور لمؤسسة الإعلام عبر التعاون وصف النول MICT

رئيس التحرير: سفيان زكر
التصميم: فؤاد باور
التحرير: لينا بخره-ليبت، دومنيك ليبت، جنس سمني
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الشفقة اللان (التعاون) مع معماري رويد شيرفان(
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الصور: هاريك موكل، أوسكوير

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إياد، جنس فاروق، فاطمة عزالى، ماهر أبو دوح، أوشان هاريفشون،

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الصور:

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عبر صور فيبي (ص)، (٣٢)، فاير بور الدين، أ.ب، ب، \ صور فيبي (ص)، (٥٤)،
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السودان، بك السودان المركزي، صنف الشود ريوخ (ص)، (٧٠)، البث ص
طرف رومان ديكوت)

ترجمة: المركز الوثائق السوري الأوربي (SEDD)

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معلومات الاتصال

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سنوات السودان وجنوب السودان

تعال بالباب

أي ادخل من الباب، يقول مثل سوداني معروف. تُظهر هذه الصورة، التي التقطت قبل خمس سنوات خلت لرجل يتسلق سوراً كي يشاهد أول مباراةٍ لمنتخب جنوب السودان لكرة القدم، كيف يمكن للمرء أن يختار طريقاً غير تقليدي. على مدار السنوات الخمس الماضية، سلك كل من السودان وجنوب السودان طرقاً ملتفة غير متوقعة. ومناسبة الذكرى السنوية الخامسة لانفصالهما، ألقى مراسلو النيلان من كلا البلدين نظرةً فاحصةً على ما اتخذه البلدان الجاران من مسارات. صحيح أن كثيراً منها مثيرٌ للقلق، بيد أن بعضها يعرض بادرة أمل. وعلى أي حال، مازال المهمل الذي حملته غلاف أول نسخة مطبوعة للنيلان، والتي نُشرت قبل خمس سنوات، يعبر عن حقيقة ثابتة: «إنه لأحمق من يتجهج وجاره في محنة».

من آنذاك إلى الآن:
الأحداث الرئيسية بين يونيو
حزيران ٢٠١١ ويوليو/تموز
٢٠١٦.
الصفحة ٢

الحدود، البراميل، المتمردين:
القضايا التي تعيق العلاقات
بين الشمال والجنوب.
الصفحة ٨

مفكك وملكال:
حقيقة ما حدث. تقريران
إلهاميان لشاهدي عيان.
الصفحة ١٠

النقعة الآن!
ملف النيلان، كما عُرض في
بينالي البندقية حول الهندسة
المعمارية.
الصفحة ٢٠

النيلان

السبت ٩ يوليو، ٢٠١٦
السنة السادسة، العدد الثامن
www.theniles.org