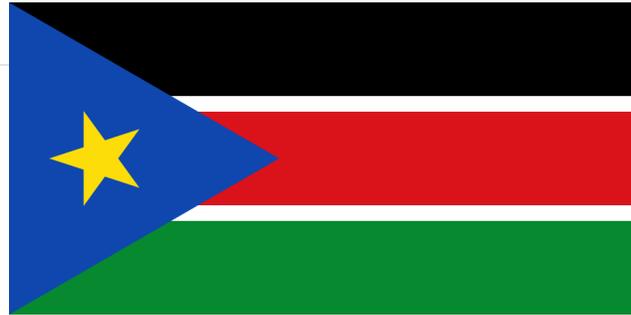


South Sudan Country Profile

August 2016



Key mixed migration characteristics

- South Sudan is a major refugee producing country and ranks among the countries with the highest levels of conflict-induced population displacement globally.
- UNHCR estimates that nearly one in four South Sudanese citizens are displaced within its borders or to neighbouring countries
- More than 930,000 South Sudanese are displaced in neighbouring countries (both pre and post December 2013), with the majority being hosted in Uganda (299,238) followed by Ethiopia (280,221), Sudan (246,809), Kenya (88,032), Democratic Republic of Congo (15,103), and Central Africa Republic (4,103) as of 7 August 2016.
- More than 1.61 million South Sudanese were displaced in various parts of the country as of 31 July 2016, of which 170,000 were sheltered in UN Protection of Civilians sites.
- South Sudan is also destination country for migrants, asylum seeker and refugees from neighbouring countries despite frequent conflict and instability that is affecting the country.
- There were a total of 259,796 refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan as of July 2016 with the majority of refugees coming from Sudan and lesser numbers from Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Central African Republic.
- The US Department of State's 2016 Trafficking in Persons report places South Sudan on Tier 3. According to the report, South Sudan is a source and destination country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking

As a mixed migration origin country

South Sudan is predominantly a country of origin for refugees and asylum seekers who seek refuge in neighbouring countries in Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. The Republic of South Sudan, the world's newest nation, gained independence from Sudan on July 09, 2011, after a referendum held in January 2011 in which the majority voted in favour of secession. Prior to this, Sudan experienced long civil conflict and war from 1955 to 2005, between the Arab Khartoum government and southern Sudan in which more than 2.5 million people lost their lives, mostly civilians, due to starvation and hunger.¹

As a new nation, South Sudan faces the dual challenge of dealing with the legacy of more than 50 years of conflict and continued instability and fighting. In December 15, 2013, a power struggle between President Salva Kiir and his deputy Riek Machar took place. The independence political party, Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), divided into two main factions and conflict broke out between government and opposition forces. The conflict led to a humanitarian crisis in the country including loss of lives and displacement of more than 2.2 million people. An internationally mediated peace agreement was signed in August 2015, based on a power-sharing principle and in April 2016, the leader of the SPLM opposition faction, Riek Machar, returned to Juba to form a transitional government of national unity and was sworn in as the first Vice- President with Salva Kiir as the president.²

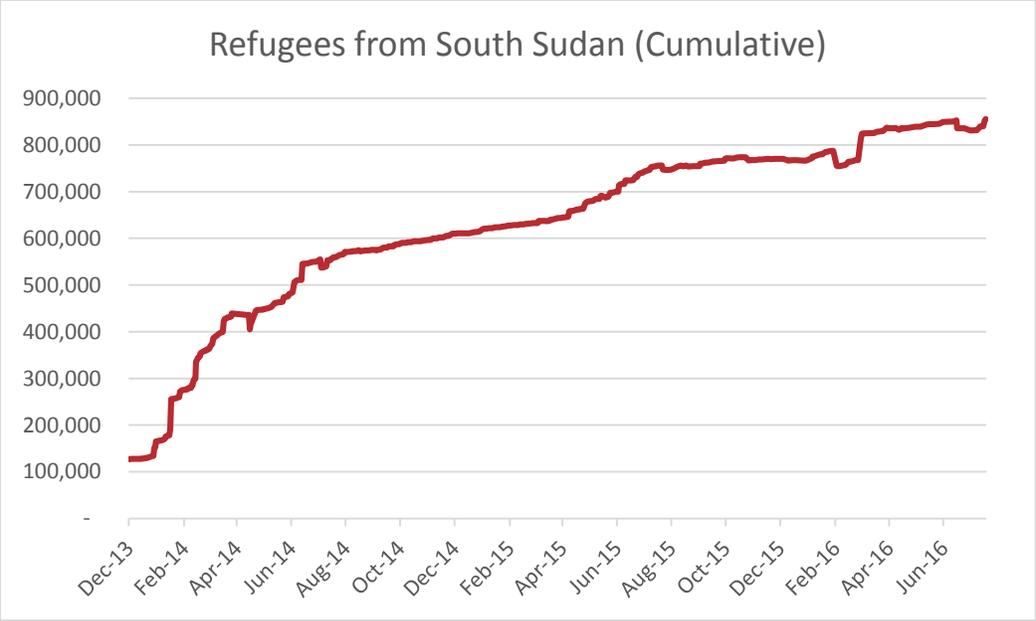
However on the eve of South Sudan's fifth anniversary of independence on July 08, 2016, heavy fighting erupted in the capital Juba between the two SPLM factions resulting in loss of lives and further displacement of people. According to UNHCR, about 4,000³ South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers were recorded entering Uganda on a daily basis immediately after conflict erupted in Juba and nearly 54,000 fled to Uganda in July 2016⁴, a higher figure than total arrivals reported in the first six months of 2016 (or 33,838).



South Sudanese refugees arrive at a UNHCR collection centre on the South Sudan border in Egelo, Uganda. Photo credit: UNHCR/Swanson

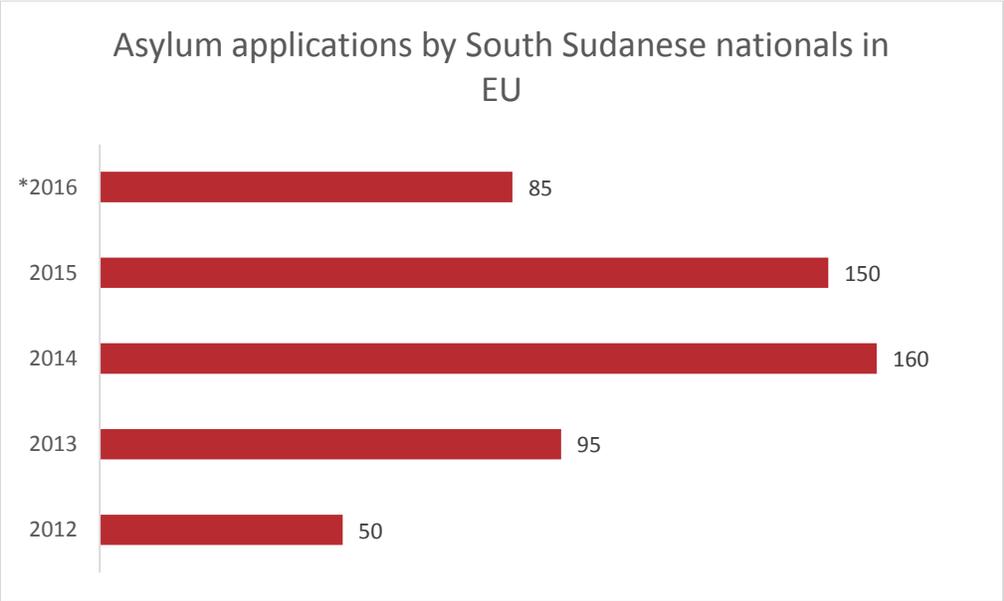
South Sudan ranks among the countries with the highest levels of conflict-induced population displacement globally and UNHCR estimates that nearly one in four South Sudanese citizens are displaced within its borders or to neighbouring countries.⁵ The agency projects that the total number of South Sudanese refugees could exceed one million in 2016 due to sporadic conflict and instability that continue to be reported in various parts of the country.

As of 7 August 2016, there were a total of 933,506 South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers displaced in neighbouring countries (both pre and post December 2013).⁶ Uganda hosts the majority of South Sudanese refugees (299,238) followed by Ethiopia (280,221), Sudan (246,809), Kenya (88,032), Democratic Republic of Congo (15,103) and Central Africa Republic (4,103). The large presence of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda is attributed to the favourable refugee regime which allows refugees to integrate within communities, work and move freely within the country enabling them to pursue better socio-economic opportunities.⁷



Source: UNHCR

Contrary to migrants and asylum seekers from other countries in the region, South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers are not engaged in onward mixed migration movements to Europe. Eritreans, Somalis and Sudanese nationals accounted for 13%, 7% and 6% respectively of total arrivals to Europe via the Central Mediterranean route in the first six months of 2016.⁸ Between 2012 and June 2016, a total of 540 South Sudanese asylum application were received in the 28 countries of the European Union, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.⁹



Source: Eurostat
 * Data up to June 2016

A feature article by RMMS published in June 2016 explores some of the reasons why South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers remain in neighbouring countries instead of joining mixed migration flows to Europe and other developed nations. South Sudanese people have a strong sense of nationalism and retain close ties to their homeland as a form of identity. They lack adequate resources to finance expensive migration journeys to Europe, which may cost up to USD 10,000 to reach Italy. Furthermore, many South Sudanese are not prepared to abandon their cultural lifestyles to live in European cities and most South Sudanese men have remained in their country taking care of cattle or belongings or involved in fighting, while women and children seek refuge in neighbouring countries.¹⁰

Even though South Sudanese are hardly found in irregular movements to Europe, there has been a significant number of South Sudanese refugees who have been resettled to Western countries mainly to the US, Canada, Australia and the UK. World Bank's database on bilateral migration stocks indicate there are 25,466 South Sudanese nationals in United States, 15,381 in Australia, 8,138 in Canada, 2,491 in the Netherlands, 1,533 in France and lesser numbers in other countries such as Austria, Denmark, Ireland and Norway.¹¹

As a mixed migration destination country

Despite the instability and sporadic conflict, South Sudan is a destination country for migrants, asylum seeker and refugees from neighbouring countries. According to UNHCR, the majority of refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan come from Sudan followed by Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Central African Republic (see figures in the section on refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs below). Refugees from Sudan fled conflict in Darfur, Eastern Sudan, and the so-called Three Areas (Abyei, Blue Nile State, and Southern Kordofan/Nuba Mountains). Frequent conflict and instability in Central African countries also displace refugees and asylum seekers to South Sudan and other neighbouring countries. The presence of Sudanese, DRC and CAR refugees in South Sudan and South Sudanese refugees presence in Sudan, DRC and CAR, indicate there is continuous and bi-directional cross-border population displacement between South Sudan and the three countries.¹²

South Sudanese refugees also return to their country. At the time the country attained independence in 2011, hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese returned home from neighbouring countries, Sudan in particular. Some of the returnees settled in urban areas in the country, while many continue to be internally displaced since they could not find durable solutions upon return.

Finally, South Sudan is also a destination country for (irregular) migrant workers from neighbouring countries although the instability and conflict has slowed down these migration flows. Before the civil war, a growing demand for goods and services, and an absence of local industry or a skilled national workforce had become pull factors for entrepreneurial migrants from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, the DRC and Sudan's Darfur region, who were being drawn to the growing number of economic opportunities available in South Sudan. The perceived oil-driven economic boom in South Sudan in a context defined by the near-absence of state regulation, attracted many labour migrants determined to make fortunes. Between 2011 until the outbreak of conflict in December 2013, it was estimated that there were 500,000 to 1.2 million labour migrants in South Sudan.¹³ Most migrant workers were found in Juba, Yambio, Wau, Nimule (close to Ugandan border) and Renk (close to border with Sudan). Many migrant workers returned to their home countries after civil war broke out in December 2013. Additional large numbers of migrant workers from Kenya¹⁴ and Uganda¹⁵ were evacuated from South Sudan by their respective governments after conflict broke out again in the country in July 2016.

As a mixed migration transit country

There is little information about South Sudan being used in mixed migration flows as a transit country. Given the instability and sporadic violence reported in various parts of the country and the options of other countries in the region this is not surprising and is unlikely to change. In October 2015, there were media reports that about 74 Somalis had been arrested in Northern Bahr al Ghazal State transiting through the state with the intention of crossing into Sudan.¹⁶

Refugees, Asylum-seekers and IDPs in South Sudan

Even though South Sudan is a major refugee producing country as a result of conflict and instability, the country also hosts a large number of refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries. There were a total of 259,796 refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan as of July 2016.¹⁷ The Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) collaborates with UNHCR and humanitarian partners to deliver assistance and protection services to refugees and asylum seekers.

The total refugee and asylum seeker population in South Sudan, June 2016

Country of Origin	Refugees and asylum seekers
Sudan	238,636
Democratic Republic of Congo	14,726
Ethiopia	4,528
Central African Republic	1,878
Other nationalities	28

Source: UNHCR

Most refugee camps in South Sudan are located in the north of the country in Upper Nile and Unity States. One of the largest refugee settlements is Yida refugee settlement (not a refugee camp) in Unity State which hosts Sudanese refugees mainly from Boram, Heban and Umdoreen Counties in Sudan. The settlement had a population of 59,442 refugees as of July 2016 even though significant numbers of refugees have been relocated to Ajuong Thok which hosts a total of 38,539 refugees as of July 2016. There are plans to relocate more refugees from Yida due to overpopulation and security concerns, however, Nuba refugees have protested the relocation citing potential conflict with armed nomadic pastoralists in Ajuong Thok and proximity to a Sudanese army base.¹⁸ Continuous movement in and out of the settlement has been reported and nearly 9,000 new arrivals were registered in the first seven months of 2016. 90% of the new arrivals were women and children, with unaccompanied minors and separated children accounting for 10% of new arrivals. The most common reasons cited by refugees and asylum seekers fleeing to South Sudan from Sudan's South Kordofan and Blue Nile states were hunger, aerial bombardments and ground attacks.

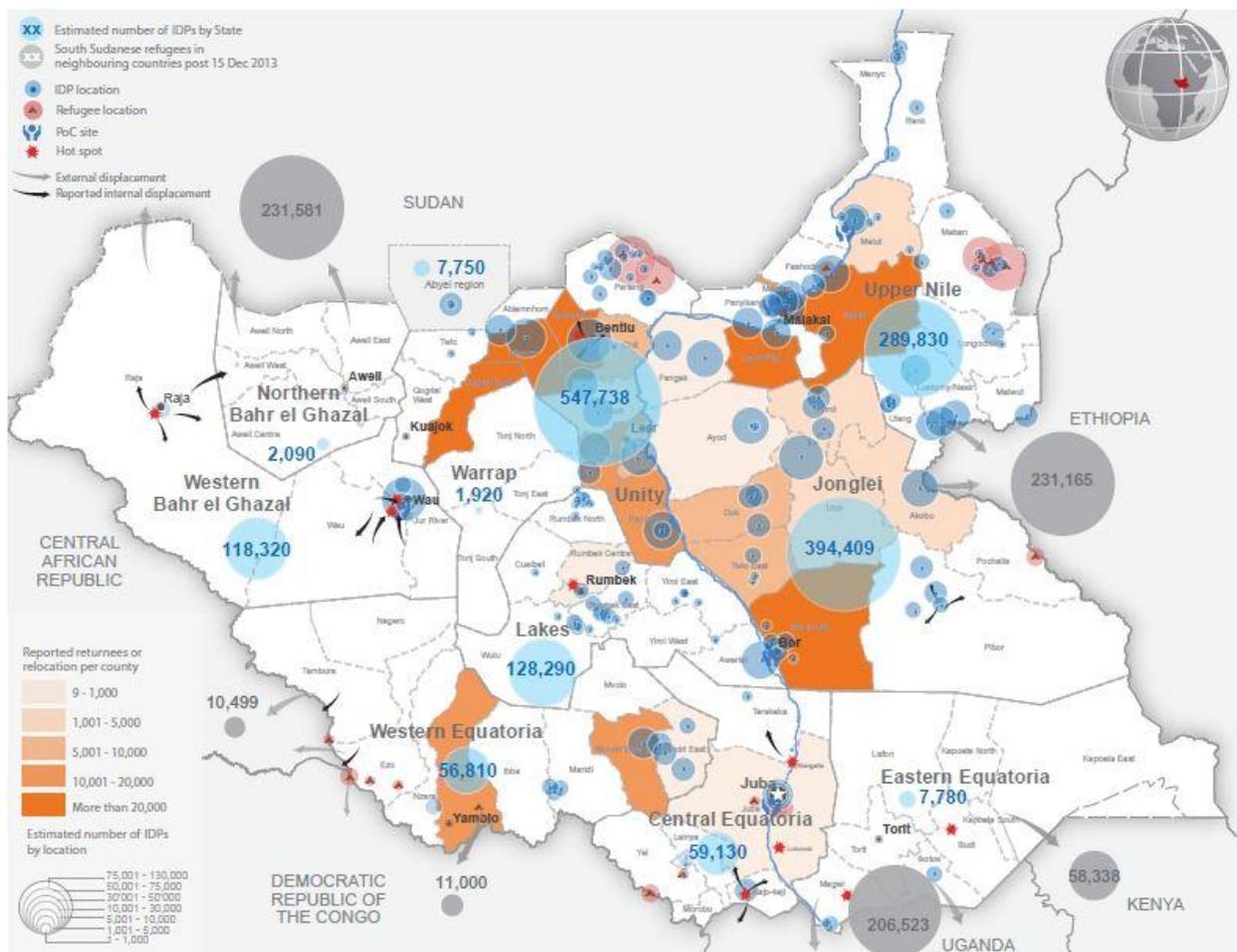


Aerial view of Yida refugee settlement. Photo credit: Robin Denney

Internal displacement

Despite the signing of a peace agreement in South Sudan in August 2015, multiple and renewed conflicts, violence and general insecurity continues to be reported across various parts of the country resulting in loss of lives and displacement of populations within and outside the country. Further compounding the situation are a number of factors, including widespread hunger and malnutrition which left more than 3.9 million people severely food insecure and a further 3.6 million considered to be ‘stressed’; the economic crisis driven by the rapidly depreciating value of the South Sudanese Pound (SSP) and the resultant increase in market prices in the highly market dependent nation, and outbreak of diseases such as malaria and cholera especially in displacement sites where malnutrition and poor immunity renders young children and pregnant mothers vulnerable.¹⁹

According to UNHCR, there were more than 1.61 million internally displaced persons in South Sudan as of 31 July 2016, out of which 170,000 were sheltered in UN Protection of Civilians (POC) sites. The majority of IDPs are believed to be living in dispersed settings in rural or hard to reach areas accessible only by air or by foot.²⁰ The map below shows the estimated numbers and locations of IDPs in South Sudan.



Majority of IDPs in South Sudan are located in Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile States. Source: OCHA, 2016

Protection issues and vulnerable groups

South Sudanese refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs face significant protection risks within their country, during their journeys to and upon arrival in neighbouring countries. Since conflict erupted in the country in December 2013 between SPLA army (SPLA) and SPLA in Opposition (SPLA-IO), initially in the Greater Upper Nile region, consisting of Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states, UN and human rights organizations have documented and expressed concern over disturbing trends of violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law in the country.

The UN report on State of Human Rights in the Protracted Conflict in South Sudan, published in December 2015²¹, indicates that the scale, intensity and severity of human rights violations and abuses in South Sudan increased with the continuation of hostilities which spread to other states across the country, causing massive displacement of population both within and outside the country. The report documents incidents of large scale extra-judicial killings, sexual violence, abductions and enforced disappearances, forced displacement, looting, livestock-raiding and the burning of houses. In addition, cases of indiscriminate attacks on civilians, forced recruitment, including of children, and extensive destruction of private property have been reported with indications that this was a deliberate strategy by warring factions to forcefully displace and destabilize large sections of the population.

Continued fighting, general insecurity and instability in South Sudan has further weakened state institutions such as security and judicial institutions, affecting the ability of the government to protect civilians and provide basic services. Food insecurity is a major concern in the country, and in the Greater Upper Nile region, where intense hostilities have been reported, more than 70% of schools and a third of medical facilities had been closed as a result of conflict.²²

Human rights violations and abuses on civilians, including internally displaced persons were reported again when fighting erupted between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those of his deputy vice-president, Riek Machar in Juba in July 2016. Human Rights Watch documented incidents of targeted killings, rapes and gang rapes, beatings, looting, harassment along ethnic lines in which at least 73 civilians were killed, including some people seeking refuge at UN POC camps and more than 200 women were raped.²³

Further displacement of civilians both within and outside the country as a result of July fighting has been reported even after the government announced a ceasefire on 11 July 2016 and the president appointed Taban Gai as vice-president on 23 July 2016, replacing Riek Machar. South Sudanese refugees arriving in Uganda indicated that armed groups operating on roads to Uganda were restricting movement of people fleeing to Uganda and forcibly recruiting young men and boys into their ranks. More than 85% of refugees fleeing to Uganda are children and women under the age of 18 years and cases of severe malnutrition particularly among very young children are on the rise among South Sudanese arrivals in both Uganda and Kenya. In the face of worsening South Sudanese displacement, UNHCR has warned of critical funding shortages for refugees and IDPs in South Sudan and in the six countries of asylum, resulting in suspension of many activities in favor of providing critical life-saving support to new arrivals particularly in Uganda, Sudan, DRC, Central African Republic and Ethiopia. Having received only 20% of the USD 608 million needed as of August 2016,²⁴ UN warns that the inability to provide urgent and sustained humanitarian assistance may increase and prolong the vulnerabilities of South Sudanese refugees.

UNHCR notes that refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan settlements and refugee camps remain extremely vulnerable due to insecurity which has prevented aid agencies from being able to access the camps/settlements to provide humanitarian assistance/services.²⁵

Detention of migrants

There is scanty information about migrant detention in South Sudan. Media reports indicate that in October 2015, about 74 Somalis (55 men and 19 women) between the ages of 21 and 30 years were arrested in Northern Bahr al Ghazal State and transferred southwards to Western Bahr al Ghazal State to be processed by national authorities and returned to Somalia. There were conflicting reports whether the group intended to join international terror networks or were migrants en route to Europe through Sudan and Libya via the Central Mediterranean Route. No further information is available on how long the Somalis were detained or whether they were deported back to their countries.

Human Rights Watch has expressed concern and documented cases of arbitrary arrests, detention, torture and enforced disappearance of civilians in South Sudan by the SPLA military and National Security Service (NSS).²⁶ The human rights organization indicated that security forces detain perceived government opponents in unofficial detention facilities for lengthy periods of sometimes up to 10 months without charges or involvement of judicial authority. Foreign nationals have not been spared and the UNMISS report on the human rights situation in South

Sudan documents the arrest, detention and torture of an Eritrean man in Aweil town in November 2014 and a Ugandan national in Juba in October 2014.²⁷

Conditions of prison facilities in South Sudan are described as unacceptable, poor and overcrowded, with insufficient medical supplies and late referrals to medical facilities, lack of sanitation and adequate access to water and food.²⁸ Conditions of South Sudan's prison facilities are likely to worsen due to deteriorating economic situation and peace instability.

Detention of South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries of asylum has also been reported. In April 2016, Ethiopian authorities detained 41 South Sudanese refugees in the country's western region of Gambella, where the majority of South Sudanese refugees are hosted. The arrests were made amid retaliatory attacks between South Sudanese refugees in Jawi refugee camp and host communities which sparked after an Ethiopian driver reportedly struck and killed two children from Nuer ethnic tribe near the camp. In revenge, a group of refugees attacked Ethiopian neighbourhoods around the refugee camp killing at least 14 Ethiopians with scores being wounded.²⁹

In early April 2016, UNHCR reported on the arbitrary arrests of South Sudanese refugees in Khartoum, Sudan.³⁰ More than 1,000 were detained for alleged lack of documentation and charged a fine of 1,000 SDG (approx. USD 167) despite most being in possession of registration cards issued by Sudanese Directorate of Passports and Immigration (IPP). Some 300 South Sudanese were released following intervention by UNHCR, however many remained in detention and as of 15 June 2016, further arrests of South Sudanese continued to be reported. The arrests follows a government directive in mid-March 2016 that South Sudanese were to no longer be considered as 'brothers and sisters' but rather as foreigners and a later announcement that Sudan was officially closing its border with South Sudan amid allegations that the South Sudanese government was arming militia groups in its territory.

Trafficking

The US Department of State's 2016 Trafficking in Persons report places South Sudan on Tier 3.³¹ South Sudan is not a party to the 2000 UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol. According to the report, South Sudan is a source and destination country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. South Sudanese women and girls, especially those from rural areas or internally displaced, are vulnerable to domestic servitude in Yei, Bor, Wau, Torit, Nimule, Juba and other parts in the country. Child sex trafficking in South Sudan remains a problem and corrupt law enforcement officials have been cited as being complicit in the vice.

Women and girls from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Democratic Republic of Congo migrate willingly to South Sudan with the promise of legitimate work and many are forced to work for little or no pay or are subjected to sex trafficking or forced labour. Organized human trafficking networks operate freely in South Sudan and beyond borders with protection/assistance from authorities.

Compliance: The government of South Sudan does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. The government failed to uphold the action plan for the immediate and unconditional release of child soldiers and continued to recruit, often by force, child soldiers. There were reports that militia groups affiliated with SPLA recruited child soldiers in refugee camps across the border in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Prosecution: The report notes that the government made no anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts and did not investigate or prosecute or make convictions for trafficking crimes, including offenses allegedly committed by government officials. Capacity of law enforcement officers in most parts of the country remained limited, and courts lacked adequate human and physical resources to investigate and prosecute crimes, including human trafficking. Existing laws do not prohibit all forms of human trafficking.

Protection of trafficking victims: The government made minimal efforts to prevent trafficking or protect trafficking victims and there were instances when law enforcement efforts were harmful to victims. The government did not formally identify trafficking victims including potential victims among vulnerable populations. There were no specialized services available for trafficking victims neither were there laws or policies to protect victims from arrests and prosecution for crimes committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking. Trafficking awareness remained low among government officials and the public and there were no awareness campaigns or specialized training to rectify this concern.

International and national legislation and migration policies

South Sudan has ratified the following international legislation relevant to mixed migration and protection of human rights of migrants and refugees:

- 1930 Forced Labour Convention
- 1949 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention
- 1951 Equal Remuneration Convention
- 1957 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention
- 1958 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention
- 1973 Minimum Age Convention (Minimum age specified: 14 years)
- 1981 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- 1987 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- 1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention
- 2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- 2006 Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- 2012 AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) (Signed but not yet ratified)

National legislations

- Penal Code 2008 Article 282 (Trafficking in persons across international borders)
- Penal Code 2008 Article 278 & 279 (Abduction for forced labour)
- Penal Code 2008 Article 276 (Child trafficking for sexual exploitation)
- Penal Code 2008 Article 258 (Parents/guardians who cause or allow child sex trade)
- Child Act, 2008 (Protects children, including refugees and internally displaced minors)
- The Nationality Act, 2011
- Passports and Immigration Act, 2011

- Refugee Provisional Order (Refugee Act), 2012

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² Al Jazeera (2016). S Sudan's Riek Machar sworn in as first vice president. Available: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/sudan-riek-machar-sworn-vice-president-160426142802493.html>

³ The Africa Report (2016). 4,000 South Sudanese flee to Uganda daily. Available: <http://www.theafricareport.com/East-Horn-Africa/4000-south-sudanese-flee-to-uganda-daily.html>

⁴ UNHCR (2016). South Sudan Situation: Regional Emergency Update 25 – 31 July 2016. Available: <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/regional.php>

⁵ UNHCR (2016). Flight across border achingly familiar for some South Sudan families. Available: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/5790cb554/flight-across-border-depressingly-familiar-south-sudan-families.html>

⁶ UNHCR (2016). South Sudan Situation: Regional Emergency Update 25 – 31 July 2016. Available: <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/regional.php>

⁷ RMMS (2016). Out of sight, out of mind: Why South Sudanese refugees are not joining flows to Europe. Available: <http://regionalmms.org/index.php/research-publications/feature-articles/item/13-out-of-sight-out-of-mind-why-south-sudanese-refugees-ar>

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⁹ Eurostat (2016). Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex annual aggregated data. Available: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report

¹⁰ RMMS (2016). Out of sight, out of mind: Why South Sudanese refugees are not joining flows to Europe. Available: <http://regionalmms.org/index.php/research-publications/feature-articles/item/13-out-of-sight-out-of-mind-why-south-sudanese-refugees-ar>

¹¹ World Bank (2016). Migration and Remittance Factbook 2016. Available: www.worldbank.org/prospects/migrationandremittances

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¹³ Life and Peace Institute (2015). To and From the Horn of Africa: the Case of Intra-Regional Migration in South Sudan. Available: <http://life-peace.org/hab/to-and-from-the-horn-of-africa-the-case-of-intra-regional-migration-in-south-sudan/>

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- ¹⁸ Dabanga Sudan (2016). UNHCR starts moving 70,000 Sudanese refugees from Yida. Available: <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/unhcr-starts-moving-70-000-sudanese-refugees-from-yida>
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- ²¹ UNMISS (2015). The State of Human Rights in the Protracted Conflict in South Sudan.
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- ²³ Human Rights Watch (2016). South Sudan: Killings, Rapes, Looting in Juba. Available: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/08/15/south-sudan-killings-rapes-looting-juba>
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