

## UNDERSTANDING CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT: HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES HELP?

### **South Sudan: Will the World's Newest Country Survive?\***

South Sudan was established in 2011 after breaking away from Sudan following a protracted civil war fueled by religious and ethnic divisions (see Map 9.5). The creation of the country, larger than Spain and Portugal combined, brought together former rebels who had fought against one another. The many years of fighting were not easy to overcome and left the country well-armed. In December of 2013, a civil war broke out when the President of the country, Salva Kiir, a member of the country's larger Dinka ethnic group, accused his deputy, Riek Machar, from the Nuer ethnic group of an attempted power grab and fired him.

The action divided the army into two sides that have taken the country into chaos. There are extensive oil reserves in South Sudan that account for the majority of the government's revenues and both sides want control of them. As a result of the ongoing conflict, more than one third of the population is facing starvation and there is a growing outbreak of cholera.

There have been several attempts to broker a peace agreement between the warring factions with only limited success. The UN has troops on the ground but has not been able to contain the violence due to the size of the country. They have also sought aid from international donors to address the looming humanitarian crisis, but without a cease fire, these efforts will be limited in their effect. These tragedies have led to speculation that South Sudan may be another failed state.

\*Conflicts: South and South Sudan. Enough: The project to end genocide and crimes against humanity. <http://www.enoughproject.org/conflicts/sudans>