

LIVING IN FEAR

*Wars, conflict and natural resources in the
heart of Africa*



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CONTENTS



<i>Prologue</i>	7
1. The Quest for Wealth	12
2. Minerals and Wars at the Great Lakes: Wealth, Death and Massive Poverty in the Heart of Africa	20
3. South Sudan: The Oil Way	41
4. Seven Million	79
<i>Index</i>	86

PROLOGUE



Conflicts and natural resources

Sudan's history of oil production has been a history of violent conflict. Soon after the discovery of oil in the southern region in the late 1970s, the second Sudanese civil war broke out.¹

South Sudan today is going through a civil war, and in parallel it is in the middle of ongoing conflicts with Sudan for control of oil rich areas in the Northern parts of the country.

A study made for the African Development Bank concludes that in the past 40 years there has been more violent conflicts in Africa than on the other continents. Moreover, the wars in Africa have lasted longer and have been deadlier.² Libya, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Central African Republic ... So many wars ... So many conflicts ... So much suffering...

¹ Bonn International Center for Conversion. 2013. 'Oil investment and conflict in Upper Nile State, South Sudan'. Brief 48.

² Hoessler. 2008. 'Dealing with the consequences of violent conflicts in Africa'. Background paper for the African Development Bank. <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ball0144/consequences.pdf>

Natural resources, wars and conflict

Wars and armed conflicts are the major illnesses of the humankind. Since the birth of humankind, we have not been able to stop killing each other. Thousands of years after, we continue creating wars and armed conflicts.

Why is that? Today, natural resources like oil and minerals are at the heart of many conflicts around the world and so-called “high-value natural resources have been associated with dozens of armed conflicts, millions of deaths, and the collapse of several peace processes”.³ Numerous reports and statistical evidence confirm that those resources have been “sparking and fueling armed civil conflicts”.⁴ The United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) also affirms that “natural resource have been shown to play a key role in the conflicts that have plagued a number of African countries over the last decade, both motivating and fuelling armed conflicts”.⁵ Moreover, some scholars affirm that “when internal conflict occurs in a region that has oil reserves, it lasts twice as long as conflicts that occur in areas without oil reserves, and combatant deaths are twice as high”.⁶

Corporations working with natural resources have been complicit in many conflicts. For instance, during the Sudan war, oil corporations have allowed their facilities to be used

³ Lujala *et al.* 2011. ‘High-value natural resources: a blessing or a curse for peace?’ *Sustainable Development Law and Policy*. Vol. 12.

⁴ Lujala *et al.* *Ibidem.*

⁵ United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. 2006. ‘Natural resources and conflict in Africa: transforming a peace liability into a peace asset’. Conference Report.

⁶ Lujala *et al.* 2011. ‘High-value natural resources: a blessing or a curse for peace?’ *Sustainable Development Law and Policy*. Vol. 12.

PROLOGUE

for military purposes that led subsequently to attacks on civilians. One example is the case of the Heglig airstrip within the territory of the concession of the Canadian corporate Talisman:

the military use of Heglig airstrip has been more or less constant since May 1999 (...) flights clearly linked to the oil war have been a regular feature of life at the Heglig airstrip, which is adjacent to the oil workers' compound. It is operated by the consortium, and Canadian chartered helicopters and fixed wing aircraft which use the strip have shared the facilities with helicopter gunships and Antonov bombers of the Government of Sudan. These have armed and re-fuelled at Heglig and from there attacked civilians.⁷

Natural resources have also been associated with the increase of military spending on the continent. Military expenditure in Africa is on the rise, experiencing the highest progression in the world from 2002-2011.⁸ Algeria tops the list of military spending in Africa with over \$10 billion.⁹ They were followed by Angola with \$6 billion, and then South Africa with a bit more than \$4 billion in 2013.¹⁰ The increase of Africa's expenditure is mainly due to the oil revenues from countries

⁷ Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2000. 'Human Security in Sudan: The report of Canadian Assessment Mission'. <http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2000/Human%20Security%20in%20Sudan.pdf>

⁸ LAVDC. 2014. 'Les quatre puissances militaires regionales d 'Afrique'. <http://www.lavdc.net/portail/les-quatre-puissances-militaires-regionales-dafrique/>

⁹ The Economist. 2014. 'Arms and the African'. <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21633901-continents-armies-are-going-spending-spree-arms-and-african>

¹⁰ *The Economist*. 2014. *Ibidem*.

LIVING IN FEAR

like Algeria and Angola. Angola's military spending rose by over 36% in just one year. Another oil producer that has made significant outlays on military spending is Ghana, which almost tripled its arms budget from \$109 to \$306 million between 2012 and 2013.¹¹ Not surprisingly, DRC also recently augmented significantly their spending by 34%.¹²

Causes of conflicts

Often, there is a trend to simplify one main cause for a particular conflict such as religious, ethnic or tribal or economic/political power struggles. For example, very often the conflicts in Sudan have been described as religious wars between Northern Muslims and Christian/animists from the South. Our analysis in Chapter 3 will illuminate a different perspective. In general, wars and conflicts tend to be surrounded by multiple factors and causes, some with more dominance than others. It is precisely in that complexity of elements and factors that we can find the reasons why a country has embarked in wars and conflicts. However, at the same time, there is often one cause, that is, the prevalent and dominant one in each conflict. This will also be examined in the forthcoming chapters.

Every conflict is unique

While conflicts may have similar elements, every one of them is unique in its own way.¹³ This book explores the general relation between wars, conflicts and natural resources, focusing in particular on two African countries: Democratic

¹¹ LAVDC. 2014. Les quatre puissances militaires regionales d'Afrique.

¹² LAVDC. 2014. Les quatre puissances militaires regionales d'Afrique.

¹³ Bongani. 2012. 'Natural resources and conflict: unlocking the economic dimension of peace-building in Africa'. Briefing n. 74.

PROLOGUE

Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan. Both countries have gone through some of the bloodiest wars and conflicts in recent decades in the world. Peace efforts have been made at the UN level to try to minimize the conflict situations. In 2014 both countries had UN peacekeeping operations mandated by the UN Security Council to promote, protect and monitor human rights in DRC and South Sudan.¹⁴ We aim to provide a succinct but comprehensive overview of both conflicts and show their relation with natural resources.

¹⁴ In 2014 there were ongoing 17 peacekeeping operations under the UN. There were DRC and South Sudan –Abyei-. See Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/Pages/PeaceMissionsIndex.aspx>

1

The Quest for Wealth

“Dan Gertler is essentially looting Congo at the expense of its people.”¹⁵

If there is wealth in DRC, Dan Gertler has found a good piece of it. The 41-years-old Israeli-born Dan Getler has a declared fortune estimated at \$1.44 billion. While he is formally based in Bnei Brak, Israel, he has made his billion dollars fortune in the mining sector of DRC. He is also very well known for being a close friend of President Joseph Kabila.¹⁶ Gertler is criticized over his way of doing business, and has been accused by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to have obtained mining assets on the cheap by cavorting with politicians.¹⁷ Congolese NGOs have said about him for example that “he has political connections, so state companies sell him mines for low prices and he sells them on for huge profits.” The quest for wealth attracts many Gertler-like types to the African continent, one of the wealthiest places of the planet.

¹⁵ Affirmation of Jean Pierre Muteba, head of a group of NGOs that monitor mining in DRC at *The Washington Post*. 2012. Dan Gertler earns billions as mine deals fail to enrich Congo.

¹⁶ Forbes profile of Dan Getler: <http://www.forbes.com/profile/dan-gertler/>

¹⁷ Forbes. *Ibidem*.

Wealth for whom?

Everybody wants to be wealthier, however, not everybody shares the same definition of wealth.¹⁸ One definition of wealth is that it is a “tangible or intangible thing that makes a person, family, or group better off”.¹⁹ Under this definition oil or a mineral would be considered wealth if it makes a person, family or group better off. Certainly, a person like Mr. Getler is obviously doing better off in terms of money with his work, and therefore he is wealthier under those terms. However, the resources that make Getler wealthy have not necessarily benefited Congo’s people. Minerals or oil, as said by Patrice Lumumba belongs to the people of DRC, it is the responsibility of the State to manage its benefits and to share it among the population. The wealth of a country is the wealth of their people.

However, the wealth of natural resources revenues does not frequently bring benefits to the majority of the population, but rather, a handful of elites. The United Nations office of the Special Adviser on Africa affirmed that the riches derived from the “exploitation of natural resources are not only used for sustaining armies but also for personal enrichment and building political support”.²⁰ In addition, the office added that “control over natural resources and their revenues often stay in the hands of a small elite and is not used for broader development of the country”.²¹

¹⁸ CNBC. 2013. what is wealthy? \$5 million and plenty of cash.

¹⁹ See the business dictionary: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/wealth.html>

²⁰ United Nations office of the Special Adviser on Africa. 2006. Natural resources and conflicts in Africa: transforming a peace liability into a peace asset. Conference Report.

²¹ United Nations office of the Special Adviser on Africa. 2006. *Ibidem*.

Africa's wealth: blessing or curse?

The resource curse

In a sea of wealth, there are often oceans of poverty. Resource-rich countries are often accompanied by slower than expected economic growth, poor economic diversification, gloomy social welfare indicators, devastating environmental impacts, rampant corruption, high inequality, huge impoverishment, bad governance and as said before wars and conflicts.²² This situation has been termed the theory of “resource curse”, which term was used first in 1993 by Richard Auty.²³ In 1995, the theory of the “resource curse” was popularized thanks to an article of Sachs and Warner.²⁴ Both authors showed in their paper that “economies with a high ratio of natural resource exports to GDP in 1971 tended to have low growth rates during the subsequent period 1971-1989”. From there, a vast number of literature has been written on this matter, and is divided between those that believe exploitation of natural resources is a curse, and those that believe that it can promote growth and

²² Mildner *et al.* 2011. ‘Scarcity and abundance revisited: a literature review on natural resources and conflict’. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*. Vol. 5; Karl. 2005. ‘Covering oil: a guide to Energy and Development’. Understanding the resource curse: open society institute.

²³ *Time*. 2010. Brief history: the resource curse. <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1997460,00.html>

²⁴ Sachs and Warner. 1995. ‘Natural resources and economic growth.’ Harvard Institute for International Development.

development in developing countries.²⁵ Others, for instance, prefer to use different terminology, like Exxon corporate, which has said “we don’t like to call it the oil curse, we prefer governance curse. We are private investors, and it is not our role to tell governments how to spend their money”.²⁶

Africa’s wealth

Africa is full of natural resources, and there are many countries considered as having a huge wealth. Oil, gas, minerals, timber, fertile land, water are often mentioned as the riches of the continent. However, oil and minerals are the favourites of some of the top leaders of the continent: Angola with oil and diamonds; Nigeria with oil; Guinea Equatorial with oil; Algeria with plenty of oil and gas deposits; DRC with minerals; and South Sudan with oil, just to name some of them.

Many would think that all those States with lots of oil and mineral are very wealthy. The truth is that although the States are wealthy, the countries are paradoxically full of poverty, and their populations are not benefiting from those resources. Moreover in many cases, the wealth derived from

²⁵ Pedro (undated). ‘Mainstreaming mineral wealth in growth and poverty reduction strategies’. Economic Commission for Africa Policy Paper; Ross. 1999. ‘The political economy of the resource curse’. World Politics n.51; Hodler. 2004. ‘The curse of natural resources in fractionalized countries.’ Economic department, University of Bern, Switzerland; Swilling. 2012. ‘Beyond the resource curse: from resource wars to sustainable resource management in Africa’. Paper presented at the Winelands Conference on Integrity and Governance, Stellenbosch; Pendergast *et al.* 2008. ‘Corruption and the curse of Natural resources’. Department of Economics, University of Victoria; Davis. 2012. Replicating Sachs and Warner: the 1997 Working Paper. Colorado School of Mines; Neumayer. 2004. Does the resource curse hold for growth in genuine income as well? World Development, vol. 32.

LIVING IN FEAR

oil and minerals mostly fuel wars and conflicts. While some die, while some are displaced, while some are injured or rape. Some, on the contrary, are making money, lots and lots of money ... and while they make money, they just put a blind eye on the horrors occurring outside the fence. This is well described in the Harker report on the Sudanese war and the role of oil corporations: “If the oil companies don’t know what’s going on, they’re not looking over the fences of their compounds”.²⁷

Although some may believe that the importance of the oil and mineral sectors is the creation of jobs for the population, this has been denied by several authors:

The oil, gas and mining sectors are notoriously poor when it comes to job creation. An offshore platform tapping deep-sea reserves will create few, if any, positions for locals. Only recently, protests were reported outside Rio Tinto’s QMM mineral sands operation in the south of Madagascar due to high local unemployment. The best way to convert natural resource wealth into jobs is to take the proceeds and invest in other, more labor-intensive industries such as agriculture or manufacturing.²⁸

Nigeria provides a good example where communities living in the Niger Delta have not benefited from oil extraction, which on the contrary has created serious conflicts, as seen in Box 1.

On the question of whether oil is a blessing or a curse to Africa, the African Development Bank, concluded that it is a

²⁶ *The Economist*. 2005. ‘The paradox of plenty’.

²⁷ Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2000. Human Security in Sudan: The report of Canadian Assessment Mission. <http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2000/Human%20Security%20in%20Sudan.pdf>

²⁸ Africa progress panel. 2013. Africa’s mineral wealth: eternally cursed <http://www.africaprogresspanel.org/africas-mineral-wealth-eternally-cursed/>

“huge blessing”.²⁹ It justifies that with the following analysis:

We estimate that Africa has 120bn barrels of oil reserves, no less than half of Saudi Arabia, and 600 million hectares of uncultivated arable land, half of the world total. We at the African Development Bank (AfDB) estimate that the continent’s natural resources will contribute over \$30bn per annum in government revenues over the next 20 years.³⁰

Box 1. Oil is a curse for the Niger Delta people

Most people think of oil states as wealthy states. But Nigeria proves that sometimes the opposite is true. It is Africa’s leading oil producer, and yet it is one of the world’s 20 poorest countries. What’s more, the people living in the Niger Delta, the country’s oil-producing region, are among Nigeria’s most impoverished communities, with a large percentage of the population having to survive on less than one dollar a day. For these people, ‘black gold’ has not brought prosperity or development. Instead, it has increased corruption, social problems, environmental damage and armed conflict. The many billions of US dollars in oil revenue that have poured into the country during its oil industry’s 50-year history have completely bypassed these communities. Source: Petra Hannen. 2011. ‘Blessing our Course’. GIZ magazine akzent.

²⁹ African Development Bank. 2013. ‘Africa’s mineral wealth: a blessing or a curse.’ <http://www.afdb.org/en/blogs/afdb-president-this-is-africas-hour/post/africas-mineral-wealth-a-blessing-or-a-curse-12336/>

³⁰ African Development Bank. 2013. Africa’s mineral wealth: a blessing or a curse. <http://www.afdb.org/en/blogs/afdb-president-this-is-africas-hour/post/africas-mineral-wealth-a-blessing-or-a-curse-12336/>

Africa continues the exploitation of its natural resources

Most of the African Governments that discover natural resources in their territory eagerly move forward with the exploration of those. Therefore, natural resources are explored all over the continent: oil in Ghana, manganese in Gabon, gas in Mozambique, just to name a few. Often, there is little consideration of the destruction or the conflicts these extractive activities bring. For instance, according to the BBC in March 2015, the Congolese Government considered modifying the boundaries of the Virunga National Park, home of gorilla mountains and World Heritage site, to permit oil exploration activities.³¹

DRC and South Sudan as well are exploring a joint project now. DRC has a frontier with South Sudan in the Northeast part of the country. While historically both – referring also to Sudan – did not often have a common grounds, after the Independence of South Sudan in 2011 it appears possible that natural resources may unite them more closely. Irene Muloni, Minister for Energy and Minerals Development from Uganda, announced in an interview in February 2015 that South Sudan and the DRC have expressed interest in the construction of an oil pipeline of over 1000 km to the Kenyan coast.³² Although yet to be implemented, there have been discussions and plans to construct a pipeline that would unite

³¹ BBC. 2015. DR Congo seeks Virunga park boundary. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31876577> See also *New York Times*. 2014. Oil dispute takes a page from Congo's bloody past. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/16/world/oil-dispute-takes-a-page-from-congos-bloody-past.html? r=1>

³² Platts. 2015. South Sudan, DR Congo interested in Ugandan crude oil export pipeline: minister. <http://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/kampala/south-sudan-dr-congo-interested-in-ugandan-crude-26025080>

1 THE QUEST FOR WEALTH

oil production and distribution in several African countries, including South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and maybe others.³³

The forthcoming chapters will develop more elements around this topic in order to conclude some final remarks with the particular case studies of DRC and South Sudan.

³³ *The Economist*. 2013, Pipeline poker. <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21578402-east-africa-danger-throwing-away-part-its-new-found-oil>

2

Minerals and Wars at the Great Lakes: Wealth, Death and Massive Poverty in the Heart of Africa

Our internal difficulties, tribal war and the nuclei of political opposition seemed to have been accidentally concentrated in the regions with our richest mineral and power resources. We know how all this was organised and, in particular, who supports it today in our house.

Our Katanga because of its uranium, copper and gold, and our Bakwanga in Kasai because of its diamonds have become hotbeds of imperialist intrigues. The object of these intrigues is to recapture economic control of our country.

Patrice Lumumba, speech in Leopoldville in August 25th, 1960. ³⁴

³⁴ Speech at the opening of the All-African Conference in Leopoldville in 1960. See: <http://www.assatashakur.org/forum/shoulders-our-freedom-fighters/42970-collected-speeches-writings-patrice-lumumba.html>

Lumumba, the first democratically elected Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo, gave a speech in 1960 that was remarkably prescient of the fate of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) today. Conflict, minerals and “tribal wars” go hand in hand in the DRC history’s past decades. Lumumba was planning to get the DRC’s related difficulties under control, however, he was executed a few months after the speech by a firing squad in January 1961. The US, through the CIA, the United Kingdom through the M16 and Belgium were all blamed for their involvement in his death.³⁵ Paradoxically, “the assassinations were made by the orders of those who proclaim themselves to be champions of democracy and respecters of human rights”.³⁶ External meddling and intervention in Congo’s affairs by foreign countries is another of the concurrent and repeated situations that continue in recent history of the DRC.³⁷

Wars and minerals: peace at last?

... The heart of Africa is bleeding ...

Two wars raged in DRC from 1996-1997 and from 1998-2003. Contrary to what some affirm, these were not ethnic conflicts, but resource wars.³⁸ No coincidence that the

³⁵ BBC. 2013. M16 and the death of Patrice Lumumba. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22006446>

³⁶ VVAA. 1992. Congo (Zaire): Democratie neo-coloniale ou deuxieme Independance. Ed. l’Harmattan.

³⁷ *The Guardian*. 2011. Patrice Lumumba: the most important assassination of the 20th century, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jan/17/patrice-lumumba-50th-anniversary-assassination>

³⁸ See Friends of the Congo website: <http://www.friendsofthecongo.org/resource-center/congo-primer.html>. See also Lanotte. 2003. RDC: guerre sans frontieres. Editions Complexe.

LIVING IN FEAR

country possesses extraordinary mineral wealth with some of the most valuable and strategic minerals on earth, such as coltan, diamond, cobalt, copper, gold, tin, zinc, manganese, timber and others. The highest concentration of mining activities exist in the Eastern part of the country. To illustrate the predominance of mining here we would underline the affirmation of the Katanga Minister of Planning, who said that 72% of the territory of Katanga is devoted to mining. No surprise why the IMF has named DRC one of the world's mining giants of today.³⁹ The magazine, *African Business*, stated in 2009 that, "the total mineral wealth of the DRC was estimated to be some \$24 trillion".⁴⁰ As Lumumba indicated back in 1960, the same scenario repeated in recent years – minerals and conflicts continue to go hand by hand.

DR Congo possesses some 80% of the world's coltan ore reserves.(...) Additionally, the DR Congo produces significant quantities of diamonds, gold, cassiterite, copper, cobalt (of which it has the world's largest reserves, although the trade is largely controlled by Zimbabwe), oil, tin, zinc, gold and coffee. The country has large reserves of uranium: it was Congolese uranium that was used for the Manhattan Project that produced the world's first atomic bombs dropped on Japan. The vast country also has more than half of sub-Saharan Africa's timber stocks.

Source: *African Business*

³⁹ IMF 2013. DRC: Poverty reduction strategy paper. N. 13/226.

⁴⁰ *African Business*. 2009. DR Congo \$24 trillion fortune.

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

The casualties over the years are overwhelming. While everybody is familiar with the death toll during the genocide in Rwanda, estimated between 500,000 and 800,000 people, there is much less awareness about the conflict situation in Congo. The International Rescue Committee has estimated that the conflict and humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo has taken a death toll of 5.4 million people from 1998 to 2007.⁴¹ A CNN correspondent in trying to give an illustration of the heavy toll, made the following comparative analysis:

The wars in that country – RD Congo – have claimed nearly the same number of lives as having a 9/11 every single day for 360 days, the genocide that struck Rwanda in 1994, the ethnic cleansing that overwhelmed Bosnia in the mid-1990s, the genocide that took place in Darfur, the number of people killed in the great tsunami that struck Asia in 2004, and the number of people who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki — all combined and then doubled.⁴²

Rwanda and Uganda were actively involved in the invasion of Congo in both wars. The second war was known as the *Great War of Africa*, involving nine countries, and more than 20 armed groups. According to Cynthia Ann McKinney, a U.S. Congresswoman from the Democratic Party and an

⁴¹ IRC. 2007. IRC study shows Congo's neglected crisis leaves 5.4 million dead. <http://www.rescue.org/news/irc-study-shows-congos-neglected-crisis-leaves-54-million-dead-peace-deal-n-kivu-increased-aid-4331> Some groups put the death toll much higher. See Global Research webpage: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-war-that-did-not-make-the-headlines-over-five-million-dead-in-congo/7957>

⁴² CNN. 2012. Why the world is ignoring Congo war. <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/27/opinion/congo-war-ignored-vava-tampa/>

LIVING IN FEAR

expert on the Great Lakes issues, while invading DRC in the Second Congo War, the US continued providing financial support to the governments of Rwanda and Uganda.⁴³ How was this allowed? U.S President Bill Clinton was personally in Rwanda in March 1998, only a few months before the Rwandese army invaded Congo.⁴⁴ President Clinton was in Africa at that time addressing its presidents including Presidents Kagame and Museveni as leaders of the “African Renaissance”, and seeing a bright future for Africa.⁴⁵ There, Clinton made an important call to embrace peace. How was it possible to talk about peace while these allies were directly engaging in war? Moreover, with the experience of the genocide in Rwanda how could it be that foreign powers closely involved in the region, particularly the United States, let this occur again? How did they allow wars and conflicts that killed millions of people? How could they allow what many called another genocide in Congo?

On a positive note at last, in recent months the calls for peace have been growing from many different stakeholders. In May 2014, U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry after a meeting with D.R.C. President Kabila, stated that “achieving a lasting peace in the DRC is a priority of President Obama”. He added: “Now I can’t emphasize enough how important that process is in identifying and resolving the root causes of the conflict in the DRC as well as in the entire Great Lakes region”.⁴⁶ Not a minor task, going to the roots causes

⁴³ Order of Indictment from Juzgao de instruccion numero Cuatro, Audiencia Nacional. Case 3/20008-D. 6-2-2008.

⁴⁴ See CBS News: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/text-of-clintons-rwanda-speech/>

⁴⁵ Schaefer. 2000. The Keys to an African Economic Renaissance. <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2000/05/the-keys-to-an-african-economic-renaissance>

⁴⁶ See US Dept. of State. 2014. Press Availability on the D.R.C. and the Great Lakes Region. <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/05/225587.htm>

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

of those problems in the Great Lakes. Indeed, achieving peace and reconciliation in the Great Lakes Region, in countries that had suffered like DRC, is a difficult and cumbersome task, and making it by finding the “real” root causes can be a very complex and lengthy exercise, taking decades or longer.

The situation remains tense. We recall that in 2006 the UN Security Council issued a resolution condemning “the activities of militias and armed groups operating in the Great Lakes region”.⁴⁷ Almost a decade later, those armed groups are still there, and despite the efforts made, the situation remains tense and insecure. A report of the Group of Experts on the RDC published in 2015 by the United Nations Security Council concludes that in DRC despite a defeat of one of the rebel groups – the Movement of 23 March – at the end of 2013, this “failed to translate into significant gains in security and security and stability in 2014”.⁴⁸ For example, in the beginning of 2015, a rebel group from Uganda, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), created havoc in North Kivu, where 17 people were hacked to death with machetes.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ UN Security Council. 2006. Resolution 1653 (2006). S/RES/1653

⁴⁸ UN Security Council. 2015. Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC. S/2015/19.

⁴⁹ UN Security Council. 2015. March 2015 monthly forecast. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2015-03/democratic_republic_of_the_congo_7.php#.VP-BX5Sm4ag.mailto

Armed groups, militias and criminal networks within the military structure: making a lucrative business out of minerals

The UN has solidly demonstrated that natural resources are used to finance armed groups and therefore to fuel war in the region.⁵⁰ The UN concludes that “armed groups continue to control many mining sites and to profit from mining and the minerals trade”.⁵¹ Later on those minerals, particularly tin, tungsten and tantalum are smuggled to neighbouring countries. For example, one of the armed groups, the Movement of 23 March (M23), responsible for taking Goma at the end of 2012, was financing its organisation from natural resources in Eastern Congo. In relation to this particular case the UN asserts that “several traders have contributed to financing M23 rebels using profits resulting from the smuggling of Congolese minerals into Rwanda”.⁵²

Besides the rebel groups, a criminal network within the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) was involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources. The types of involvement include illegal taxation, protection rackets and indirect commercial control, to more direct coercive control.⁵³

For some top army officials, their military work was converted into economic businesses. Indeed, the existing

⁵⁰ UN Security Council. 2014. Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

⁵¹ *Ibidem.*

⁵² *Ibidem.*

⁵³ UN Security Council. 2010. Letter dated 26 October, 2010 from the Group of Experts on the DRC addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant resolution 1533 (2004). S/2010/596

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

practices made the UN qualify the war as a “lucrative business”:

illegal exploitation of resources by Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda took different forms, including confiscation, extraction, forced monopoly and price-fixing. The first two forms reached proportions that made the war in the DRC a very lucrative business. There are strong indications that, even if security and political reasons were the professed motivation to move into the eastern DRC, some top army officials clearly had economic and financial objectives.⁵⁴

The most UN recent reports affirm that “many armed groups in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have derived their revenue from the production of and trade in natural resources.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ UN Security Council. 2001. Security Council condemns illegal exploitation of Democratic Republic of Congo’s natural resources. Press Release. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2001/sc7057.doc.htm>

⁵⁵ UN Security Council. 2014. Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC. S/2014/42

Insecurity still booming in Eastern Congo

As already mentioned, the momentum created by the defeat of the Movement of 23 March in November 2013 failed to translate into significant gains in security and stability in 2014 in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. A military operation against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) significantly weakened, but did not defeat the sanctioned armed group. An expected military operation against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) did not materialize and, as of the end of November 2014, efforts to negotiate the disarmament of this sanctioned armed group failed to produce meaningful results. In addition, numerous Congolese and foreign armed groups contributed to instability in Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu and Katanga provinces.

ADF, FDLR, Nduma Defence for Congo (led by sanctioned individual Sheka Ntabo Ntaberi) and other armed groups continued to recruit, train and use child soldiers in 2014. Armed groups also committed a variety of other abuses, including torture, enslavement and sexual violence. There were mass killings in June in Mutarule (South Kivu) and in October and November in Beni territory (North Kivu).

Source: United Nations Security Council. 2015.⁵⁶

One of the problems the existing insecurity and conflicts have created is the proliferation of internally displaced people, estimated in September 2014 at 2.7 million people.⁵⁷

UN peacekeeping operation in Congo

In July, 1999, Heads of State of Angola, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe signed the Lusaka agreement focusing on the establishment of a ceasefire as one of the other components necessary for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force.

The first UN Peacekeeping operation in DRC was established in November 1999 after the Lusaka Ceasefire agreement. It was called the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC). In 2010 it was renamed the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).

Ten years later, despite the deployment of MONUC the security challenges in DRC – particularly in the Eastern Part of the country – remain high.⁵⁸ There is still a strong presence of armed groups, chronic humanitarian crisis, continuous human rights violations and continued illegal exploitation of natural resources. In the light of this context, the UN created an “Intervention brigade” with a key objective of neutralizing armed groups.⁵⁹ As of today, the MONUSCO and the intervention brigade are operational, but are there significant security changes?

⁵⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁵⁷ See global humanitarian assistance webpage: <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/democratic-republic-of-congo>

⁵⁸ UN Security Council. 2010. Resolution 1925.

⁵⁹ UN Security Council. 2013. Resolution 2098.

Legitimate exports or smuggling conflict minerals?

It is well known that many of the minerals in Eastern Congo are smuggled and do not follow legal channels. For instance, the UN estimates that 98% of the gold produced in DRC is smuggled out of the DRC, making the country lose millions of dollars in tax revenue.⁶⁰

In December 2014, numerous media covered a story on Rwanda and coltan. *PR Newswire* affirmed that “Rwanda has become world’s largest coltan exporter”.⁶¹ The data provided concluded that in 2013, Rwanda exported around 2,500,000 kg of tantalum which constituted 28% of the total 8,807,232Kg of tantalum produced globally. The overall revenue from the coltan was estimated at around \$140 M.⁶²

Rwandese President Paul Kagame was quoted as affirming that the production was local and dismissed all possible allegations of plundering the coltan from Congo. He affirmed “Rwanda has not only enough coltan but of a very high quality (...) we can even pay for a ticket, give them a visa and take them to the mines”.⁶³

Contrary to such statements there are many reports that coltan is smuggled from Congo to Rwanda, and that Rwanda does not have significant coltan mining on its own. For

⁶⁰ UN Security Council. 2014. Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC. S/2014/42

⁶¹ *PR Newswire*. 2014. Rwanda has become world’s largest coltan exporter. <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/rwanda-has-become-worlds-largest-coltan-exporter-reports-kt-press-300010371.html>

⁶² *PR Newswire*. 2014. Rwanda has become world’s largest coltan exporter.

⁶³ Africa Briefing. 2015. Rwanda has abundant deposits of best quality coltan, Kagame affirms. <http://africabriefing.org/?p=478>

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

instance, a 2012 report prepared by a European Foundation affirmed that “Rwanda does not house any industrial coltan mines which would suggest legitimate Rwandan coltan production”.⁶⁴ A US governmental agency, which analyzes the mining sector in Congo made a table with coltan exported from Rwanda qualifying it as “conflict minerals”, as seen in Table 1.⁶⁵ Since there is no known conflict in Rwanda it can only refer to Rwanda exports of minerals originating from an external conflict zone, the DRC.

Table 1: Estimates of exports of conflict minerals from Rwanda for Fiscal years 2009-2013, in Metric Tons

Year	Tantalum
FY 2009	958
FY 2010	827
FY2011	915
FY2012	1139
FY 2013	2466

Source: Based on United States Government Accountability Office. 2014

⁶⁴ Van Teeffelen. 2012. The EU raw materials policy and mining in Rwanda. Evert Vermeer Foundation.

⁶⁵ United States Government Accountability Office. 2014. Conflict minerals: stakeholder options for responsible sourcing are expanding, but more information on smelters is needed.

LIVING IN FEAR

In this particular situation, either somebody is wrong, or somebody is lying. Hopefully future events will unveil the truth around the nature of the coltan exports from Rwanda, to clarify whether they are a legitimate export or the consequence of smuggling conflict minerals.

Greed for minerals: everybody wants a piece of Congo⁶⁶

What is at the origin of those wars and instability of the Congo? While there could be diverse factors for conflict, there is one that seems to be always recurrent and is recognized by most authors and by relevant UN reports: the race for minerals and natural resources. The UN recognized that in the Second Congo War minerals were the coveted trophy, and that all actors “built up a self-financing war economy centred on mineral exploitation”.⁶⁷ The conflicts that continued after the Second Congo War, like those in Kivu and Ituri provinces are recognized as well to be fuelled by trade in minerals. Along the same lines, Palou underlines the causes of the conflict, by stating that “although from that time until the present day the Rwandan regime has expressed its concern about the security of its border with the then Zaire, objectively the reality is that control over this strategic area, – Eastern Congo – and its valuable mineral resources has

⁶⁶ See video at Congo Justice: <http://congojustice.org/>

⁶⁷ UN. 2002. Final report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2002/1146.

proved to be at the heart of two wars that have left a huge number of victims”.⁶⁸ In conclusion, a 2001 UN report asserted that “the conflict of DRC has become mainly about access, control and trade of five key mineral resources: coltan, diamond, copper, cobalt and gold. The wealth of the country is appealing and hard to resist in the context of lawlessness and the weakness of the central authority”.⁶⁹

Congolese and regional elite have also profited from this situation as well, and the appalling quantum of the plunder are reflected in the following report from UN:

The elite network of Congolese and Zimbabwean political, military and commercial interests seeks to maintain its grip on the main mineral resources — diamonds, cobalt, copper, germanium — of the Government-controlled area. This network has transferred ownership of at least US\$ 5 billion of assets from the State mining sector to private companies under its control in the past three years with no compensation or benefit for the State treasury of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.⁷⁰

Funds that could have been used for public services have been diverted from the public coffers by fraud or by the excuse of war effort.⁷¹ The Congolese population has paid

⁶⁸ Palou. 2010. International Justice, plunder in war, human rights and multinationals.

⁶⁹ UN Security Council. 2001. Report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2001/357

⁷⁰ UN Security Council. 2002. Final report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2002/1146.

⁷¹ *Ibidem.*

LIVING IN FEAR

dearly in this situation. In terms of human development it is instructive that the UNDP estimated in 2013, that R.D.C. was in the low human development category – positioning the country at 186 out of 187 countries and territories.⁷²

The Role of Transnational Corporations (Tncs) and the private sector

Other key players involved in the conflict are Transnationals and the private sector. A UN Report, published a few years after the Second Congo War started, affirmed that “the role of the private sector in the exploitation of natural resources and the continuation of the war has been vital”.⁷³ The report also added that “a number of companies have been involved and have fuelled the war directly, trading arms for natural resources”.⁷⁴ Other observers share the view that “Western Multinationals have been one group responsible for the pillage and illegal exploitation of Congo mineral resources”.⁷⁵

There are a large number of big foreign corporations involved in mining in DRC, including those from Canada, South Africa, UK, USA and others. Despite the opacity of most of the activities of the private sector, numerous examples have been reported of how TNCs are responsible for human rights abuses and other illegal activities. There are also many reports of the dangerous connections established with the political and military elite in order to facilitate their businesses. These are some examples:

⁷² UNDP 2014. Sustaining human progress: reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience. Congo (Democratic Republic of the). http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/COD.pdf

⁷³ UN. 2001. Report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2001/357

⁷⁴ UN. 2001. *Ibidem*.

⁷⁵ Palou. *Ibidem*.

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

- Glencore Anglo-Swiss giant in the raw material sector with a turnover of US \$ 239.7 billion in 2013 was being accused in 2014 of adopting a military-style response to the problem of artisanal mining close to its mines: “on several occasions over the past 18 months, mine police have fired live ammunition in pursuit of artisanal miners on Glencore’s site resulting in deaths and serious injuries”.⁷⁶ They are as well responsible for contamination of the water supply with acid content and very high and concentrations of copper and cobalt. Finally, the company operates some of its concessions inside a reserve — something that, in principle, is illegal according to the RDC Mining Code.⁷⁷
- An independent investigation unveiled that two mining companies, Glencore and the Eurasian Natural Resources Corporation were involved in underpricing assets in complex deals featuring offshore companies, causing losses to the DRC of no less than \$1.36 billion. Intermediary companies in the deals were linked to Dan Gerler.⁷⁸ In addition, the DRC public prosecutor reportedly told mining companies that they had to reimburse \$3.7 billion in taxes, duties and fines.⁷⁹
- AngloGold Ashanti, part of the AngloAmerican corporation, was accused of establishing links and

⁷⁶ Peyer *et al.* 2014. PR or Progress? Glencore’s corporate responsibility in the DRC. Bread for all; RAID; Fastenopfer.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁸ CRS. 2014. Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and U.S. Policy.

⁷⁹ Reuters. 2014. Disputed Congo report says miners owe \$3.7 billion in tax, fines. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/30/us-congo-democratic-mining-idUSBREA0T12L20140130>

LIVING IN FEAR

supporting one armed group, the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI).⁸⁰

- In 2004, fighting between soldiers and rebels in Kilwa ended in serious human rights violations against civilians, including summary executions, arbitrary arrests, rape and torture. Anvil Mining operated the Dikulushi copper mine near Kilwa, and was accused of providing vehicles and planes to the Congolese armed forces during this event. The legal case ended in the Canadian Supreme Court in 2012, which ruled that it would not hear the plaintiff's appeal – they were led by the Canadian Association Against Impunity (an association representing survivors of the incidents in October 2004).⁸¹
- In May 1997, Citibank NY, a financial institution has been accused of giving \$5 million loan to a Congolese militia allied with Rwanda.⁸²
- American Mineral Fields (AMF) cut a \$1 billion deal with Kabila immediately after his forces captured Goma. The negotiations were led by “Kabila’s US-trained finance minister,” who gave “AMF exclusive exploration rights to zinc, copper, and cobalt mines in the area. Mike McMurrrough, a friend of US President Bill Clinton, was then the chair of AMF.⁸³

⁸⁰ Human rights watch. 2005. DRC: Gold fuels massive human rights atrocities. <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2005/06/01/dr-congo-gold-fuels-massive-human-rights-atrocities>

⁸¹ Business and human rights resource center. 2012. Anvil Mining Lawsuit (re DRC). <http://business-humanrights.org/en/anvil-mining-lawsuit-re-dem-rep-of-congo>

⁸² Global research. 2008. Congo Resource wars. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/congo-resource-wars/8310>

⁸³ Global research. 2008. *Ibidem*.

UN and some other independent reports generally make broad statements about the role of corporations, including citing some of the companies, however they fall short of providing details of the modus operandi of those companies, and in establishing or suggesting concrete measures to stop the conflicts and solve the negative impacts on the DRC population and environment. A 2002 UN Report listed 85 companies considered by the Panel to be in violation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.⁸⁴ Very little has been done after the UN report was published.

A poor country? Until when?

In 1969, World Bank President, Robert McNamara, embarked on a trip to Africa to try to discover “what are the requirements for development”.⁸⁵ At that time, the World Bank, in its information document, described the country as rich in natural resources but at the same time poor and with a strong mining sector:

In spite of its rich natural resources and great potential, the Congo is still a poor country (...). Mining and metallurgy play a leading role in the economy.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ UN. 2002. Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2002/1146

⁸⁵ Records of President Robert S. McNamara. Travel briefs, Congo Kinshasa (01/02/1969-03/03/1969). 1772506. Reference Code: WB IBRD/IDA 03 EXC-10-4540S. World Bank Group archives, Washington D.C. United States.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*.

LIVING IN FEAR

More than forty years later, not much has changed as updated data shows. In DRC, seven out of ten households are poor.⁸⁷ Most of its nearly 60 million people are “desperately poor, living on less than \$1 a day”.⁸⁸ DRC is a least developed country, a fragile State that has been in the top 10 recipients of humanitarian assistance in nine of the last 10 years. Between 2003 and 2012 DRC received US\$17.6 billion in official development assistance (ODA), making it the 10th largest recipient.⁸⁹ In 2012, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) received US\$2.86 billion in net official development assistance.⁹⁰

With so many natural resources, isn't there money to get people out of poverty? The mining sector is often acknowledged as being capable of contributing to poverty reduction. However, those mineral benefits are often creamed off by powerful interests and do not get to the hands of the majority of the population. According to DFID, “fiscal receipts from the minerals sector are siphoned off by powerful interest groups instead of being used in the public sector”.⁹¹

The analysis of Mr. Antonino Giambrone sheds more light about the earnings and who profits from mining:

While the average Congolese worker earns \$10 per month, the average Congolese coltan-miner earns anywhere from \$10 to \$50 per week. Uganda,

⁸⁷ IMF. 2013. DRC: Poverty reduction strategy paper. N. 13/226.

⁸⁸ DFID. 2008. Democratic Republic of Congo Country Plan.

⁸⁹ View global humanitarian assistance webpage: <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/democratic-republic-of-congo>

⁹⁰ CRS. 2014. Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and U.S. Policy.

⁹¹ DFID. 2008. Democratic Republic of Congo Country Plan.

2 MINERALS AND WARS AT THE GREAT LAKES

Rwandan and Congolese rebels have earned many millions of dollars in sales of coltan, which they have used to finance their war efforts in the Congo. Between 1999 and 2000, the Rwandan army alone earned at least \$20 million a month from coltan.⁹²

Food insecurity is often a consequence of poverty. One of the causes of existing food insecurity is the abandonment of the agriculture sector, partly due to conflicts. The government stated that it would like to strengthen the smallholders, “while ensuring at the same time the protection of the country’s natural resources”.⁹³

War impacts on the environment

The wars have had devastating impact on the environment. National parks for instance, home of many endangered species, are also affected by the exploitation of minerals.⁹⁴ There are numerous reports on the precarious situation of wildlife in the region. For instance, between 1995 and 1999, 4000 out of 12000 elephants were killed in the Garamba Park in North-eastern DRC.⁹⁵ The situation was also serious in other parks. For instance, in Kahuzi-Biega Park, a zone rich in coltan, only 2 out of 350 elephant families remained

⁹² Giambone. 2006. The extraction of natural resources as a source of conflict. Etfo voice.

⁹³ IMF. 2013. DRC: Poverty reduction strategy paper. N. 13/226.

⁹⁴ See: <http://www.lennotech.com/environmental-effects-war.htm#ixzz3CuGZqE3M>

⁹⁵ UN. 2001. Report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. S/2001/357

LIVING IN FEAR

in 2000.⁹⁶ Mountain gorillas are also under threat due to continued civil unrest, and the presence of armed militias makes survey and conservation work difficult in the DRC's protected areas.⁹⁷

Deforestation is also one of the common impacts. *Worldwatch* explains the implication of having refugees population inhabiting RDC degraded forest areas:

For two years beginning in late 1994, for example, about 720,000 Rwandans inhabited refugee camps on the fringes of Virunga National Park. They all needed wood for cooking fires and for building shelters, and some also earned extra money by manufacturing charcoal. As a result, up to 80,000 people entered the park and carted away up to 1,000 tons of wood every day. By mid-1996, 105 square kilometers of forest had been affected to one degree or another by their activities; 35 square kilometers had been stripped bare.⁹⁸

Besides the need for fuelwood by refugees, movement of military hardware through forests and woodlands also cause serious damage to forests and the landscape generally.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁷ See WWF webpage: http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/endangered_species/great_apes/gorillas/mountain_gorilla/

⁹⁸ *Worldwatch*. 2008. War and Environment. <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5520>

3

South Sudan: The Oil Way

“If we had no oil ... we would not be attacked.”

Nyak, a 27-year-old sitting outside her hut in Bentiu, South Sudan, 2012.⁹⁹

In April 2014, Bentiu, the capital of the oil producing Unity State, was the scenario of one of the worst massacres of the civil war between South Sudanese forces.¹⁰⁰ Hundreds of people were killed in the fighting that took place between the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and anti-government forces in the oil-rich State.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ *Washington Post*. 2012. ‘South Sudan civilians are trapped in conflict over oil’ .http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/south-sudan-civilians-are-trapped-in-conflict-over-oil/2012/05/01/gIQAUX6buT_story.html

¹⁰⁰ See UN Mission in South Sudan web page: <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2014/04/south-sudan-bentiu-massacre/>

¹⁰¹ Reuters. 2014. Bentiu massacre is game-changer in South Sudan conflict, says UN official. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/22/bentiu-massacre-south-sudan-united-nations>

Civil wars and conflict

Since its independence in 1956, Sudan has been at war and conflict for most of its modern history. Specialists in conflict and security have described the history of modern Sudan as “an unremitting sequence of wars punctuated by oft-violated peace agreements”.¹⁰² The First Sudanese Civil War (1955–1972) was followed by a Second Sudanese Civil War (1983–2005) with barely 11 years breathing space of tenuous security.

The Second Civil War ended when both sides signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. That agreement gave autonomy to South Sudan within Sudan. However, a referendum held in January 2011 moved the region toward secession and then in July 2011 independence was achieved and South Sudan became an autonomous nation.¹⁰³ The process that led to South Sudan’s independence was strongly supported by the US government, which backed Juba in its two decades struggle against Khartoum.¹⁰⁴ It should be noted that even during the 11 years of supposed peace there were conflicts on a regular basis, particularly in the border areas between South Sudan and Sudan.¹⁰⁵ Two years after the independence, the first South Sudanese Civil War started in December 2013. The civil war erupted as a result of a power

¹⁰² Cox and Snapper. 2013. *The Strategic Importance of South Sudan*. Tel Aviv University.

¹⁰³ National Geographic. 2013. South Sudan: oil, the environment and border conflicts. <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2013/03/22/86550/>

¹⁰⁴ See webpage:<http://www.workers.org/articles/2014/01/01/south-sudan-yet-another-oil-war/>

¹⁰⁵ International Crisis Group. 2006. Sudan: Saving peace in the East. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/horn-of-africa/sudan/102-sudan-saving-peace-in-the-east.aspx>; BBC. 2015. South Sudan Profile. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14019202>

struggle between president Salva Kiir from the Dinka ethnic group and his deputy, Riek Machar from the Nuer ethnic group, whom he had sacked. As at the time of this writing the civil war continues.

Sudan vs. South Sudan

The tensions and conflicts after the independence of South Sudan from its neighbour Sudan did not stop in 2011. Top leaders from both sides accuse and threaten each other in numerous occasions. For instance, Sudanese President Bashir promised to teach South Sudan a “final lesson by force”.¹⁰⁶ South Sudan President firmly swore that “whether Umar al-Bashir likes it or not, one day, Abyei will rejoin the south”.¹⁰⁷

Abyei

Abyei is traditionally the home of the Ngok Dinka, a subdivision of the Dinka tribe with strong links to the Dinka in South Sudan. Besides the Dinka, Misseriya herders are members of nomadic Arab tribes that seasonally cross Abyei and other nearby areas with their cattle in search of water and pasture.¹⁰⁸

Since the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM, the dispute over

¹⁰⁶ *The Washington Post*. 2012. ‘Sudanese president vows war against South Sudan’. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/sudanese-president-threatens-force-against-south-sudan-over-oil-field/2012/04/19/gIQAJO8ST_story.html

¹⁰⁷ The Global Intelligence Files. 2013. Sudan- President Kiir says Abyei will “rejoin” South Sudan. <https://search.wikileaks.org/gifiles/?viewemailid=674314>

¹⁰⁸ Enough Project. 2013. What is the Abyei Area and why is it disputed. <http://www.enoughproject.org/blogs/enough-101-what-abyei-area-and-why-it-disputed>

LIVING IN FEAR

the future status of the Abyei area has been one of the big barriers to stability in the region.¹⁰⁹ Abyei is an oil-rich area disputed by Sudan and South Sudan and stands out as the hotspot of bigger tension between Sudan and South Sudan nowadays.

The conflicts over Abyei have a history of more than 50 years. After the First Civil war, the parties signatories to the peace pact agreed that Abyei would hold a referendum to determine whether they would be part of Sudan or a newly region in the South. The second war commenced in 1983 and the foreseen referendum was not done.

In 2009, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague ruled on Abyei territory giving concessions to the Government of Sudan and the Southern Sudan. Heglig and other closer oil-fields remained out of Abyei area, while the rest of the Abyei region remained under control of the Ngok Dinka, an ethnic group close to Southern Sudan and keen on voting to join the South in a future referendum.¹¹⁰ Another referendum was scheduled to be done in parallel with the South Sudan referendum in 2011, but once again this never took place.

Although a series of temporary security arrangements were agreed in January and March 2011,¹¹¹ in May, Sudanese Army tanks entered the town of Abyei and by the 22nd of May they seized control of the town.¹¹² The government of Sudan launched numerous military attacks in the disputed

¹⁰⁹ UN Security Council. 2011. Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei. S/2011/451.

¹¹⁰ *New York Times*. 2009. 'Court redraws disputed area in Sudan'. http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/23/world/africa/23sudan.html?_r=1&

¹¹¹ UN Security Council. 2011. Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei. S/2011/451.

¹¹² Reuters. 2011. North Sudan seizes disputed Abyei, thousands flee. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/22/us-sudan-abyei-north-idUSTRE74L14L20110522>

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

border of area, where much of Sudan 's remaining oil fields are situated.¹¹³ Two years later, the fighting remains intense in parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile.¹¹⁴ More than 2 million people have been internally displaced or severely affected by the conflict since 2011.¹¹⁵

In addition to military attacks, other actions contributed to the tension. There have been cattle raids by the Missiriya –Arab nomadic cattle herders inhabiting the area – on the Ngok Dinka –a subdivision of the Dinka tribe inhabiting this area. In occasions more than 200 cows were stolen, with a large part of it recovered by the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). These raids increase further the already tense situation in the region, and in particular the very tense situation among the Missiriya and the Ngok Dinka.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *The Conversation*. 2012. Oil fuels the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan –and it keeps getting hotter.

¹¹⁴ OCHA. 2014. South Kordofan and Blue Nile: population movements fact sheet. <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South%20Kordofan%20and%20Blue%20Nile%20Population%20Movements%20Fact%20Sheet%20-%2019%20May%202014.pdf>; Reuters. 2013. Khartoum says rebels based in South Sudan caused oil pipeline blast.

¹¹⁵ OCHA. 2014. *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ See Human Security baseline assessment for Sudan and South Sudan webpage: <http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/de/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/abyei.html>

An oil-centered conflict

“The violence underscores the extent to which oil is at the heart of the dispute. Khartoum, which controls the pipelines that take oil out of South Sudan, depends heavily on oil transit fees. South Sudan, which depends on oil for 98 percent of its revenue, has refused to pay the fees, which it says are exorbitant.

Khartoum responded by seizing oil tankers carrying South Sudanese oil and imposing economic blockades. That prompted South Sudan to shut down its entire oil production in February. That month, Sudan allegedly bombed an oilfield in South Sudan that was nine miles from the border”.

Washington Post. 2012

Missiriya attacks continue as of today. UNISFA reported that in March 2015, 100 armed Missiriya killed several people and burnt over 20 houses in a village in the southern part of Abyei.¹¹⁷ Many of those attacks occur despite the presence of UN peacekeepers in the zone.

In this context, a UN force was deployed in 2011 with more than 4000 personnel, mostly Ethiopian, with the objective of ensuring the demilitarization of the Abyei area, and particularly checking the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army. Interestingly, the UN forces had also the task to provide security for oil infrastructure in the Abyei Area in cooperation with the Abyei Police Service.¹¹⁸ In February 2015, the Security Council extended

¹¹⁷ *Sudan Tribune*. 2015. South Sudan condemns deadly clashes in Abyei. <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54191>

¹¹⁸ UN Security Council. 2011. Resolution 1990 (2011). S/RES/1990 (2011)

the mandate of the UNISFA again until July 2015.¹¹⁹ The Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) decided in May 2013 that Abyei should adopt a status as weapons-free area, and that only UNISFA would be authorized to carry weapons in the area.¹²⁰

The situation in the area is still very fragile.¹²¹ For instance, various resolutions have called for the redeployment of all military personnel from Abyei including those protecting its oil infrastructure. However, the Sudanese Government keeps at the Diffra oil complex around 150 Sudan oil police, in a clear violation of an agreement and Security Council resolutions adopted in 2011.¹²² The UN Security Council in a recent resolution:

Condemns the presence of Diffra Oil Police units deployed in the Abyei Area, as well as the repeated entry of armed militias into the territory, and reiterates its demands that immediately and without preconditions the Government of Sudan redeploy the Oil Police in Diffra from the Abyei Area (...).¹²³

Conflicts escalating over oil: Heglig battles

In 2012, despite the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling,¹²⁴ which placed Heglig oilfields in the Sudanese territories,

¹¹⁹ UN News Center. 2015. Security Council extends UN peacekeeping force in Abyei through July 2015.

¹²⁰ UN Security Council. 2015. *Ibidem*.

¹²¹ UN Security Council. 2015. Security Council, adopting resolution 2205 (2015), extends interim force in Abyei until 15 July, voicing concern over delays in Borde Mechanism's operation. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11800.doc.htm>

¹²² UN Security Council. 2014. Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei. S/2014/518

¹²³ UN Security Council. 2015. *Ibidem*

¹²⁴ See Permanent Court of Arbitration webpage: http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc_news?disp3_l205401463_text

LIVING IN FEAR

the South Sudanese army launched an attack over Heglig.¹²⁵ South Sudan's army took control of the oil-producing town of Heglig. The South Sudan move did not enjoy sympathy from many countries, including its allies such as the US and Britain.¹²⁶ The African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council considered Sudan's occupation of Heglig as illegal.¹²⁷ At the end, after a few days, South Sudan pulled back its troops from Heglig even though President Salva Kiir still claims that Heglig is a part of South Sudan and is expecting international arbitration.

Oil and geopolitics

The implications of the oil economy are self-telling. Prior to the separation of Sudan from South Sudan in 2011, the unified Sudan was the second-largest non-OPEC oil producer in Africa in 2010. When they separated, Sudan and South Sudan's production diminished, and together they ranked as the fourth-largest non-OPEC African oil producer in 2013. Particularly, the split of the country in oil revenues economic terms, was a huge blow to Sudan with its crude oil export revenues falling from almost \$11 billion in 2010 to around \$1.8 billion in 2012.¹²⁸ It has been estimated that oil contributes 98% of South Sudan government income, more than for any other government in the world.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ *Wall Street Journal*. 2012. Sudan escalates fight over oil. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304444604577339461981143808>

¹²⁶ *The Guardian*. 2012. South Sudan to withdraw from disputed oil town. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/20/south-sudan-withdraw-oil-town>

¹²⁷ IRIN. 2012. Sudan-South Sudan: Heglig and the border.

¹²⁸ U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2014. Country analysis brief: Sudan and South Sudan. <http://www.eia.gov/countries/analysisbriefs/Sudan/sudan.pdf>

¹²⁹ *Global Witness*. 2009. Fuelling mistrust.

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

Although oil exploration started at the end of the 1950s, however no success was achieved with the activities of Italian oil company Agip.¹³⁰ Discoveries were found in the years to follow. The first oil discovery was made in 1979, when the American company Chevron found oil near the Darfur-Kordofan boundary. Three years later, Chevron made two larger discoveries: the Heglig and Unity oilfields, which as of today are the most productive. However, by 1984, Chevron stopped its operations when some of its workers were killed by an armed group. By 1988, the company dismantled all of its operations in Bentiu and Unity provinces.¹³¹

As a landlocked country all the oil in South Sudan had to be extracted and exported via a pipeline. The pipeline was constructed by China National Petroleum Corporation and it covered a length of around 1,600 kilometers.¹³² It transports the oil from South Sudan to the Red Sea. The cost of the pipeline was estimated at \$1 billion and it was finished in 1999.¹³³ At the time of the construction of the pipeline, Sudan provided less than 1% of China's oil imports but a few years later by 2009, the investments of China totalled more than \$8 billion.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Understanding Sudan. 2009. Fact sheet two: A history of oil in the Sudan. <http://understandingsudan.org/Oil/OilResources/L2FS2-HistoryofOilinSudan.pdf>

¹³¹ Understanding Sudan. *Ibidem*.

¹³² *The Conversation*. 2012. Oil fuels the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan –and it keeps getting hotter.

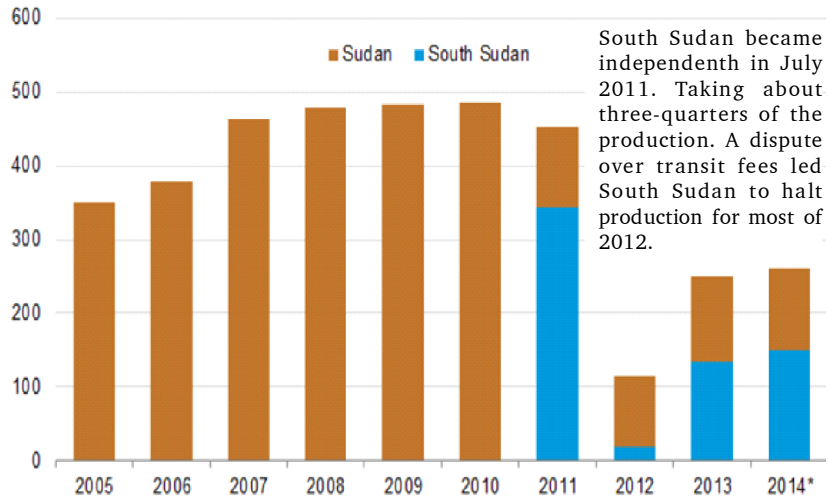
¹³³ Sitarek. 2001. The human price of oil. ICE Case Studies Number 83. <http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/sudansanctions.htm#16>

¹³⁴ *The Conversation*. 2012. *Ibidem*.

LIVING IN FEAR

Oil production in Sudan and South Sudan

thousand barrels per day



Source: *US Energy Information Administration. 2014*

Main oil companies in Sudan and South Sudan

While initially many companies involved were of Western origin, most of the companies now involved in the oil sector are from China and Malaysia.

Table 2: Main oil companies in Sudan and South Sudan

Consortium/Subsidiary	Company	Country of Origin	Share (percent)
Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC)	CNPC	China	40
	Petronas	Malaysia	30
	ONGC	India	25
	Sudapet*	Sudan	5
	Nilepet*	South Sudan	5
Dar Petroleum Operating Company (DPOC)	CNPC	China	41
	Petronas	Malaysia	40
	Nilepet	South Sudan	8
	Sinopec	China	6
	Egypt Kuwait Holding	Egypt	3.6
	Other partner(s)	--	1.4
Sudd Petroleum Operating Company (SPOC)	Nilepet	South Sudan	41.9
	Petronas	Malaysia	33.9
	ONGC	India	24.1
Petro Energy E&P	CNPC	China	95
	Sudapet	Sudan	5
Star Oil	Ansan Wikfs	Yemen	66
	Sudapet	Sudan	34

Note: * Sudapet holds a 5% share in GNPOC's operations in Sudan, and Nilepet holds a 5% share in GNPOC's operations in South Sudan.

Source: *US Energy Information Administration. 2014. Country analysis Brief: Sudan and South Sudan.*

Row over oil tariffs

By 2011 both countries did not agree on how much South Sudan should pay to export its oil through the pipelines in Sudan. Sudan requested a fee of 33 dollars a barrel, while South Sudan said the highest fee they could afford was 2

LIVING IN FEAR

dollars a barrel.¹³⁵ Following this lack of agreement, South Sudan halted crude oil production in early 2012.

This decision worsened the economic situation in both countries as both depend hugely on money from oil exports for their revenues. However, an agreement was reached and in April 2013 South Sudan restarted oil production.¹³⁶

Causes of the Sudanese Civil War

Wars in Sudan have been often portrayed quite simplistically as an Arab/Muslim north versus and an African/Cristian south. While certainly ethnicity and religion played a role, the conflict has been mainly fought over natural resources.¹³⁷

Today oil is the country's main natural resource and it has been estimated that it accounts for 98% of South Sudan's revenue.¹³⁸ The multibillion potential of their revenue however has not translated into wealth and benefits for the majority of the population of South Sudan. First of all it has not solved the problem of security, as since the very inception of the State of South Sudan in 2011 there were conflicts in many areas of the country, particularly in the borderline with Sudan. A 2013 report from the World Bank illustrates this by asserting that "despite South Sudan's great resource wealth, its population is one of the most deprived due to decades of neglect and war and the distortions of the oil

¹³⁵ *IPS*. 2011. South Sudan: rows over exorbitant fees for pipeline use.

¹³⁶ Reuters. 2013. South Sudan resumes oil output after ending row with Sudan over transit fees.

¹³⁷ Caas. 2007. Natural resources and conflict in Sudan.

¹³⁸ See World Bank webpage:<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview>

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

economy”.¹³⁹ Indeed, oil reserves sitting on a disputed border between Sudan and South Sudan, have not translated yet into wealth for the majority of citizens of South Sudan. Instead, most of the inhabitants of the country remain deeply poor and do not enjoy even basic rights to access potable water and adequate sanitation.¹⁴⁰

Oil has been a main cause for the war and conflicts in Sudan. For instance it influenced the end of the peace agreement obtained after the first civil war. This first civil war ended in 1972 with the Addis Ababa Agreement. The agreement established a system of peaceful co-existence with a single country by guaranteeing a Northern based government, but granted at the same time autonomy in the South. This however was not going to last long, as the discovery of oil at the end of the 1970s in Southern Sudan changed the “coexistence” idea. In 1978, Sudanese President Nimeiry decided to embark on oil exploration project that would lead to the finding of oil in commercial quantities. In order to control the oil within the hands of the Northern based Government, military force was used and in addition to imposing Islamic law, which led to the new civil war starting in 1983.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ World Bank. 2013. Interim Strategy Note (FY 2013-2014). http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/02/07/000333037_20130207110223/Rendered/PDF/747670ISNOP1290OfficialUseOnly090.pdf

¹⁴⁰ National Geographic. 2013. South Sudan: oil, the environment and border conflicts. <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2013/03/22/86550/>

¹⁴¹ Sitarek. 2001. The human price of oil. ICE Case Studies Number 83. <http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/sudansanctions.htm#16>

LIVING IN FEAR

Numerous authors have identified natural resources as having a direct correlation with wars and conflicts.¹⁴² An analysis by Ross of the University of California (UCLA) of thirteen wars and conflicts concluded that, in the case of Sudan, oil was one of the key causes of the second civil war and an incentive for advancing the independence of South Sudan.¹⁴³ Ross describes his conclusion in the following manner:

War in Sudan began in 1983 when Sudanese President Nimeiry took a series of measures that upset the delicate balance between the predominantly Muslim north and the heavily Christian and Animist south; among these measures was his decision to place newly discovered oil in the country's south under the jurisdiction of the north, and to build an oil refinery in the north instead of the south. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) subsequently complained that the north was stealing the resources of the south, including oil; demanded that work cease on a pipeline to take oil from the south to the refinery in the north; and in February 1984, attacked an oil exploration base, killing three foreign workers and bringing the project to a halt.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Varisco. 2010. 'A study on the inter-relation between armed conflict and natural resources and its implications for conflict resolution and peace building'. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, issue 15; Ross. 2003. How do natural resources influence civil war? Evidence from 13 cases. <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/HowDoesNat3.pdf>

¹⁴³ Ross. *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁴ Ross. *Ibidem*.

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

Even when the different parties were discussing an agreement on “no attacks on civilians or civilian objects” oil was playing a central role. It is instructive to note that the Sudanese government desired language in the text stating that oil installations were “civilian objects” while the SPLA wanted the contrary.¹⁴⁵

Human Rights Watch reached the same conclusion that oil without doubt has been a key fuel for war, particularly since the end of the 90s when crude oil was first exported from Sudan in 1999.¹⁴⁶

Oil became the main objective and a principal cause of war (...) The large-scale exploitation of oil by foreign companies operating in the theatre of war in Southern Sudan has increased human rights abuses there and has exacerbated the long-running conflict in Sudan, a conflict marked by gross rights abuses –two million dead, four million displaced since 1983 –and recurring famine and epidemics.¹⁴⁷

Also the UN makes clear statements on the issue. Special envoy Leonardo Franco expressed in a report that oil exacerbated the conflict:

the economic, political and strategic implications surrounding oil exploitation in western Upper Nile, which have seriously exacerbated the conflict, thereby causing a deterioration in the overall

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem.*

¹⁴⁶ *Human Rights Watch*. 2003. Sudan, oil and human rights.

¹⁴⁷ *Human Rights Watch*. 2003. Sudan, oil and human rights.

LIVING IN FEAR

situation of human rights and respect for humanitarian law and narrowing the slim chances for peace.¹⁴⁸

Indeed multiple causes and elements contributed to the conflicts. It was recognized that ethnicity and religion were important elements, however the key dimension is control over natural resources particularly oil. Added to this are also tensions over land and resources, and the promotion by the government of crops like cotton and sugar, which displaced certain groups of people.¹⁴⁹ Similar conclusions were reached years back by a Canadian Government Mission in Sudan, which fully recognized some ethnic disputes, as well as disputes over other natural resources, however oil was the key factor which made things really dramatic:

¹⁴⁸ UN. 2000. Interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on human rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. A/55/374. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/55/a55374.pdf> See also UN. 1999. Situation of human rights in Sudan. UN Doc A/54/467.

¹⁴⁹ University of Massachusetts (undated). Modern conflicts: conflict profile. Sudan. <http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/Sudan1.pdf>

The Harker mission pointed out that while there have always been pressures on the Dinka in the Heglig- Ruweng area as a result of inter-tribal fighting with Arab nomads for grazing areas and dry-season water, the situation had worsened with the beginning of oil exploration and had continued to deteriorate over the years because of the periodic offensives launched by the Government and its allies, resulting in destruction and mass population displacement.¹⁵⁰

South Sudan has one of the largest oil reserves in Sub Saharan Africa and the commodity is the lifeline of the country's economy, accounting for 98 percent of the government's financial resources.

Whoever controls South Sudan's oil, therefore, could seize the upper hand in the battle for power.

Source: *France 24*. 2013. 'Battle for oil adds new dimension to South Sudan conflict'.

Whoever controls South Sudan's oil, therefore, could seize the upper hand in the battle for power.

The same scenario applies to the South Sudan Civil War, which initially was also portrayed along ethnic line. The Dinka ethnic group of President Salva Kiir, has fought rebels allied with former vice president Riek Machar of the Nuer

¹⁵⁰ UN. 2000. Interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on human rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. A/55/374. *Ibidem*.

LIVING IN FEAR

ethnic group. However, increasingly “the focus of the fighting is shifting to the battle to control the country’s most important natural resource – oil”.¹⁵¹ The oilfields have literally become the battlefields.

Consequences of war and conflict

The damage inflicted on people as a consequence of war is huge. Back in 2001, US Secretary of State, Colin Powell qualified the war in Sudan in the following terms: “There is perhaps no greater tragedy on the face of the earth today than the tragedy that is unfolding in the Sudan”.¹⁵² First, there is a large number of deaths due to war and war related causes, and also a huge number of displaced people. The death toll derived from the Second Civil Sudanese War is estimated at two million. The US Committee for refugees asserted that “this massive loss of life surpasses the civilian death toll in any war since World War II”.¹⁵³ In the most recent civil war, the South Sudanese Civil War that started in December, 2013, by April 2014 the death toll was estimated to be at 10,000.¹⁵⁴

Besides the death toll there are estimated more than four million people of the Southern Sudanese population forced

¹⁵¹ France 24. 2013. Battle for oil adds new dimension to South Sudan conflict. <http://www.france24.com/en/20131227-battle-oil-adds-new-dimension-south-sudan-conflict/>

¹⁵² *Human Rights Watch*. 2003. *Ibidem*.

¹⁵³ See US Committee for Refugees webpage in 2001: <http://web.archive.org/web/20041210024759/http://www.refugees.org/news/crisis/sudan.htm>

¹⁵⁴ International crisis group. 2014. South Sudan: a civil war by any other name. [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/south%20sudan/217-south-sudan-a-civil-war-by-any-other-name.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/south%20sudan/217-south-sudan-a-civil-war-by-any-other-name.pdf)

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

to flee their homes at one time or another. It has also been argued that the development of oilfields has led to the forced removal of the local population. In the words of the late John Garang, oil was a “killer ... it’s evicting our civilian population”, claiming 100, 000 people displaced due to this cause.¹⁵⁵

Children are some of the main victims of conflict, being recruited for instance for war and suffering sexual violence. From March 2011 to September 2014, the UN estimates that there were 1243 incidents affecting 68776 children.¹⁵⁶ UN reports indicate that both armed groups have used children “on a large scale and committed other grave violations, including killing, maiming and sexual violence”.¹⁵⁷ For instance in 2015 an incident was reported where close to 100 children were abducted, some as young as 13. Armed soldiers were advancing house to house looking for boys and taking them by force.¹⁵⁸ According to UNICEF, this occurred in Wau Shilluk, close to the city of Malakal in Upper Nile State.¹⁵⁹

Not surprisingly, as put by a high UN representative, people are desperate for peace:

¹⁵⁵ BBC. 2001. Garang: Oil firms are targets. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1393481.stm>

¹⁵⁶ UN Security Council. 2014. Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in South Sudan. S/2014/884.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁸ *The Guardian*. 2015. South Sudan gunmen kidnap at least 89 boys from village near Malakal. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/22/south-sudan-gunmen-kidnap-89-boys-village-malakal-child-soldiers>

¹⁵⁹ *The Guardian*. 2015. South Sudan gunmen kidnap at least 89 boys from village near Malakal.

LIVING IN FEAR

People are desperate for peace. They are tired of living in fear. Many have had to flee several times. They are exhausted. They lack water; they are extremely worried for their children, who are not in school and at risk of being recruited into armed groups. Sexual violence is rife. All people want is to live in safety, security and stability.¹⁶⁰

Wars have also an impact on food security and nutrition. As of February 2015 there was an alert that the food situation was critical in South Sudan for more than 2.5 million people.¹⁶¹ This was famine related to war. Ulrika Blom, Country Director for Norwegian Refugee Council in 2015 succinctly stated: “There is an urgent need for a solution on the conflict so that people are able to resume their daily lives in dignity and not be dependent on massive food assistance”.¹⁶²

The harsh consequences of war are inevitable and occur from a systematic destruction of infrastructure, erosion of the human capital, and weakening of essential institutions:

Besides causing an appalling loss of life, Sudan’s long civil war eroded the capital base. The war depleted the labour force, while roads, irrigation systems, and other key components of rural

¹⁶⁰ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos remarks to the press Juba, South Sudan, 9 February 2015. <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-1>

¹⁶¹ UN Security Council. 2015. Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan. S/PV.7392

¹⁶² Norwegian Refugee Council. 2015. Conflict a cause of hunger in South Sudan. <http://www.nrc.no/?did=9192498>

infrastructure were destroyed, damaged or neglected. It also weakened institutions, diverted financial capital from economic development and undermined interpersonal trust, which is critical to productive business dealings.¹⁶³

Some have tried to put a figure on the costs of war. A recent report estimates that the cost of the civil war may be between \$22.3 and \$28 billion over the next five years for South Sudan alone if the factions fail to bring peace to the world's newest country.¹⁶⁴

UN peacekeeping operations

In July 2011, the Security Council determined that the situation in South Sudan constituted a threat to international peace and security in the region and established the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).¹⁶⁵ The key elements of the mandate is to consolidate peace and security. However after the civil war broke in July 2013, in the light of significant human rights violations, the large-scale displacement of persons, the UNMISS mandate was reshaped and a focus was given to the protection of civilians and creation of the conditions for delivery of humanitarian assistance.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ IFAD. 2013. Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty in South Sudan.

¹⁶⁴ *Frontier Economics*. 2015. South Sudan: the cost of war. <http://www.frontier-economics.com/documents/2015/01/south-sudan-cost-war.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ UN Security Council. 2011. Resolution 1996

¹⁶⁶ UN Security Council. 2014. Resolution 2155

LIVING IN FEAR

In June 2011, a month before the establishment of UNMISS, a second UN peacekeeping operation was established in the disputed border between Sudan and South Sudan. The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) was created in a context of escalating violence and tensions and population displacement.¹⁶⁷ One of the top objectives was to achieve the demilitarization of the Abyei from any force other than UNISFA and the Abyei Police Service; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid; strengthen the capacity of the Abyei Police Service; and in cooperation with the police provide security for oil infrastructure in the Abyei area.¹⁶⁸

Corporations and conflicts with communities

Since the conclusion of the 2005 Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM), negative impacts of oil exploration and extraction have continued to ignite mistrust among local communities towards the oil companies. Many problems from the oil activities were identified such as water pollution and uncompensated dispossession of land. However, oil companies or the government did little to assess, correct and reduce such impacts.¹⁶⁹ In this context many communities chose the “path

¹⁶⁷ UN Security Council. 2011. Resolution 1990.

¹⁶⁸ UN Security Council. 2011. Resolution 1990

¹⁶⁹ ECOS. 2014. Scrutiny of South Sudan's oil industry. http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2014/Scrutiny_of_South_Sudans_Oil_Industry.pdf

of confrontation with oil companies”.¹⁷⁰ For instance, by blocking and interfering in oil operations by truck blockages and other stoppages.¹⁷¹

Resentment of local communities against oil companies

The negative consequences of oil development have been causing deep resentment against oil companies in many oil-rich parts of Southern Sudan. Arriving in any oil area where active exploitation is ongoing, one is often confronted with persistent complaints from local people about poor management of “produced water”, which is blamed for pollution of the environment. This is often linked to unexplained deaths of animals and strange or new human ailments. Moreover, the oil infrastructure, such as oil roads, wells and pipes, are frequently blamed for disrupting the means of livelihoods of local people as well as destruction of property.

Source: ECOS

¹⁷⁰ ECOS. 2014. *Ibidem*.

¹⁷¹ ECOS. 2014. *Ibidem*.

Lundin Oil Consortium facing war and violence in their work territory

In 2010, the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan (ECOS) requested an investigation on the activities of the Lundin Group and its connection with the conflict in Sudan and the possible “complicity in the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity”.¹⁷² During the Second Civil War in 1997, a consortium of oil companies led by the Swedish oil company Lundin Oil AB (“Lundin”) signed a contract with the Government for the exploration of oil in the concession area called Block 5A, that was not at that time under full Government control. The other members of the Consortium were Petronas Carigali Overseas Sdn Bhd (“Petronas”) from Malaysia, OMV (Sudan) Exploration GmbH (“OMV”) from Austria, and the Sudanese state-owned oil company Sudapet Ltd.

Before the start of explorations, the area around Block 5A was relatively peaceful. When the oil exploration started the escalation of violence and war followed suit.¹⁷³ According to the European Coalition on oil in Sudan, Block 5A “became the scene of intense fighting and gross human rights violations as soon as the Lundin Consortium started oil exploration activities on the ground”. Right from the beginning, there are reports of significant war and violence

¹⁷² ECOS. 2010. Unpaid debt: The Legacy of Lundin, Petronas and OMV in Sudan, 1997-2003 . Press Release. http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2010/Press_release_UNPAID_DEBT/

¹⁷³ ECOS. 2010. Unpaid debt: The Legacy of Lundin, Petronas and OMV in Sudan, 1997-2003 http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2010/UNPAID_DEBT_textonlyweb.pdf

where villages and towns were burnt and looted. Tens of thousands of people in Block 5A were also moved out from the exploration areas.

In 1999, the Lundin Group discovered major reserves of oil. This accelerated the Government desire to control all the areas surrounding the well, and the infighting intensified. Lundin's explorations in Block 5A had to be suspended twice due to insecurity.¹⁷⁴

The consequences of all the violence towards the population, which were in the middle of the power battle for controlling Block 5A were severe abuse of all human rights and war crimes. More than 10,000 people were killed; almost 160,000 displaced with thousands of people permanently uprooted from their villages; hundreds of thousands of cattle lost or looted; destruction of churches, schools, markets, medical clinics and many other; incalculable moral damage and immense loss of income.¹⁷⁵

Talisman Energy accused of complicity with forced displacements

A Canadian company, Talisman Energy, which at that time was considered to be the largest independent oil and gas company in Canada, has been accused of indirectly helping to exacerbate the war and of being complicit in human rights abuses and crimes against humanity.¹⁷⁶ Talisman has a 25%

¹⁷⁴ HRW. 2003. *Ibidem*

¹⁷⁵ ECOS. 2010. Unpaid debt. *Ibidem*. See also Medecins sans frontieres. 2002. Violence, health and access to aid in Unity State/western upper Nile, Sudan. http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/sites/usa/files/sudan_04-2002.pdf

¹⁷⁶ Africa files. 2000. Corporate immunity for oiling repression? Talisman in Sudan. <http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=621>

LIVING IN FEAR

stake in the Greater Nile Oil Project Company (GNOPC), an initiative located in south-central Sudan, with three additional partners: the national petroleum company of China (40%), the national oil company of Malaysia (30%), and the national petroleum company of Sudan (5%).¹⁷⁷

There were many allegations that people were forcefully displaced in the area of the oil field ran by Talisman. UN reported that accusations were made on Talisman of “being accomplice of human rights abuses in Upper Nile so as to guarantee security for its oil operations”.¹⁷⁸

Moreover, a report from the Canadian Foreign Affairs Ministry –the Harker Report – which undertook a mission to Sudan described with concern that fighting was intense in the areas of oil development in general, and that oil extraction may have contributed to relocation of civilians by force:¹⁷⁹

Violence, and the fear of it, impact immediately on the people’s use of the land, and result in food insecurity, which in turn propels movement, or displacement.

Contradicting that oil is at stake in the displacement issue, Talisman explained that displacement was a result of an inter-tribal issue. Once again, the Harker report concluded that the displacement was because of oil:

¹⁷⁷ Africa files. 2000. Ibidem.

¹⁷⁸ UN Security Council. 2000. Interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. A/55/374.

¹⁷⁹ Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2000. Human Security in Sudan: The Report of Canadian Assessment Mission. <http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2000/Human%20Security%20in%20Sudan.pdf>

“For Talisman, so very much seems to be explained as merely an inter-tribal problem, but displacement has gone on, and is still going on, and in Ruweng County, it is hard to deny that displacement is now, and has been for some time, because of oil.”¹⁸⁰

Talisman Energy, decided in 2002 to end its controversial four-year investment in Sudan by selling its 25 percent stake in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company to an Indian firm. Most of the rumours is that the reasons for this was the strong pressure from the U.S. particularly to end its work in Sudan in order to stop indirectly supporting the Government in Sudan with its oil revenue.¹⁸¹

The oil way: developing what?

Sharing the wealth with the Sudanese people? The resource curse again?

As said before, 98% of the government’s revenue comes from oil production royalties, and South Sudan sits on the third-largest oil reserves in Africa.¹⁸² It was estimated in 2011 that South Sudan controlled 75% of the overall oil production of Sudan and South Sudan altogether –around 500,000 barrels per day. However, South Sudan remains dependent on the North for processing, refinement and export to the Red Sea.

¹⁸⁰ Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2000. *Ibidem*.

¹⁸¹ *New York Times*. 2002. Talisman to sell its stake in company in Sudan. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/31/business/talisman-to-sell-its-stake-in-company-in-sudan.html>

¹⁸² Africa Business Initiative. 2011. Investment climate upate: Sudan. https://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/legacy/international/africa/files/16920_AfricaNewsletter_Sudan.pdf

LIVING IN FEAR

Paradoxically, South Sudan is considered a fragile State. Sitting on oil, as has occurred to many other countries across Africa and abroad, does not guarantee wealth for the majority of the population. A 2013 report concluded that “over the last decade Sudan has been the largest recipient of humanitarian assistance by some distance, receiving US \$10.6 billion over the period”.¹⁸³ 90 per cent of the population earn less than a dollar a day.¹⁸⁴

Oil money through the State budget is expected to serve to finance all the key governmental activities of the State such as agriculture, health, infrastructures, and education. Despite the fact that the benefits from oil are substantial, there are numerous questions arising about the destiny of all the oil money. For instance, how could it be explained that one of the sectors more financed is the military and security apparatus. Since South Sudan's independence, the Government has allocated 38% of oil revenue to the military and security services, with only 10% and 7% in infrastructures and education respectively.¹⁸⁵ In 2012, South Sudan was the among top 8 African countries having military expenditure of almost \$1 billion.¹⁸⁶ For instance, *The Economist* reports that South Sudan bought 100 Ukrainian

¹⁸³ Global humanitarian assistance. 2013. Global humanitarian assistance. <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GHA-Report-2013.pdf>

¹⁸⁴ Kebede. 2014. The role of oil in South Sudan. <https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/31563/1/KEBEDE,%20Solomon%2020145.pdf>

¹⁸⁵ *The Guardian*. 2014. South Sudan is divided by the spoils of oil not ethnicity. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/14/south-sudan-divided-oil-ethnicity-violence>

¹⁸⁶ LAVDC. 2014. Les quatre puissances militaires regionales d'Afrique. <http://www.lavdc.net/portail/les-quatre-puissances-militaires-regionales-dafrique/>

T-72 tanks.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, agriculture and livestock has been completely neglected despite the fact that more than 80% of the population depend on that sector for fulfilling their basic needs.

Where the money goes?

Daniel Wuor Joak, former MP in South Sudan Legislative Assembly and Minister of Education, Science and Technology in Upper Nile State claims that between 2005 and 2014, both the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) and the Republic of South Sudan (RSS) have been receiving on average not less than two billion of USD per year. Some have already manifested the unclarities over the destiny of all that money, as described by Mr. Wuor Joak:

Since 2005 upwards, both the GOSS and RSS have been receiving no less than 18 billion USD in oil revenues without implementing any major developmental projects like roads network linking different States in South Sudan, conducive learning schools from basics to universities level, referral medical facilities, clean drinking water in remote areas throughout the country, setting up vibrant and credible institutions which can adhere to rules of law. All these things have not been implemented due to poor system of governance under leadership of Salva Kiir Mayardit. Most of the counties have

¹⁸⁷ *The Economist*. 2014. Arms and the African.

LIVING IN FEAR

no roads linking them with their State capitals and lack schools, health centres, clean drinking water, etc. South Sudanese population in the rural areas throughout the country are still living in the same conditions as they were under Khartoum's rule in terms of scarcity of development.¹⁸⁸

Speaking more directly, Kebede made firm remarks about the overall situation in South Sudan:

In general, poverty, corruption, bad governance and violence characterized the resource curse in South Sudan. A relatively small group of elite captures vast wealth, while leaving much of their society without access to the minimum resource necessary for long term wellbeing. As a result, South Sudan remains one of the world's least-developed countries despite its oil. (...) ...much of the oil revenue has been squandered.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Wuor Joak. 2014. Major Causes of the Current Conflict in Sudan. South Sudan News Agency.

¹⁸⁹ Kebede. 2014. The role of oil in South Sudan. <https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/31563/1/KEBEDE,%20Solomon%2020145.pdf>

Even before the current tensions, Bentiu saw little benefit from oil. The streets are unpaved and covered with trash; electricity is scarce, reserved for those with private generators (...) Most expect more violence. Bentiu has become more militarized, with armed soldiers placed at check points and at the bridge. Troops are constantly moving to the front. Weapons are being flown into the airport.

“The oil is a curse, “Mohammed Abdurahman Kili, 56, mumbled from his hospital bed, his body covered with burns. He was inside his shop in a crowded market on the edge of town when a Sudanese warplane attacked, killing a 9-year-old child and another person, and setting his shop on fire.

Washington Post. 2012

President Salva Kiir recognized in 2012 that corrupt officials had stolen from the people of South Sudan, and the amount lost or, taken by lead government and military officials might be as much as \$4 billion.¹⁹⁰ Kiir sent a letter to 75 South Sudanese officials or individuals close to the government asking them return all the amount lost. The letter described in general terms how the money got “lost”:

An estimated \$4 billion are unaccounted for or, simply put, stolen by current and former officials, as well as corrupt individuals with close ties to government officials. Most of these funds have been taken out of the country and deposited in foreign accounts. Some have purchased properties, often paid in cash.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹¹ Paanluel Wel: South Sudanese bloggers. <http://paanluelwel.com/2012/06/01/letter-from-president-kiir-on-corruption-4-billion-dollars-stolen/>

¹⁹² *Sudan Tribune*. 2013. South Sudan’s Kiir accuses army of corruption.

LIVING IN FEAR

A year later, Kiir accused the armed forces of being corrupt. He said that despite the big budget allocations made to the army there were even no “vehicles to transport soldiers on missions”.¹⁹² Two years later, the issue remained unclear and the names of the officials referred to in the letter were yet to be disclosed. However, Kiir accused Machar of being responsible for a lot of corrupted activities in the country.¹⁹³ Machar responded to Kiir by saying that his claims were unfounded and then also accusing him of such practices.¹⁹⁴

It seems South Sudan epitomises all the features of the *resource curse*, argued in Chapter 1.¹⁹⁵ How can the corruption be prevented? How can the money go to the people? It is also important to note that the oil sector provides little employment to the people of South Sudan. Most of the household income and employment is generated in the agriculture and farming sector primarily.¹⁹⁶ Would investing in other sectors, like agriculture, that provide real wealth to the people make a difference?

¹⁹³ *Sudan Tribune*. 2014. South Sudan rebel leader should face corruption charges: Kiir.

¹⁹⁴ *Sudan Tribune*. 2014. South Sudan: Machar’s Rebeñs dismiss corruption accusations, no spiritual powers. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201407221384.html>

¹⁹⁵ Kebede. 2014. The role of oil in South Sudan. *Ibidem*.

¹⁹⁶ Tizikara *et al.* 2012. Post-conflict development of Agriculture in South Sudan: perspective on approaches to capacity strengthening. http://www.erails.net/images/fara/secretariat/kigali-movement/file/Kigali%20Movement/Post-Coflict%20Agriculture_South%20Sudan.pdf

Environment

As experienced in oilfields in other parts of the world, the oil fields here are also leaving a significant impact on the environment and local communities. A three year study in Thar Jath and Mala fields in Unity State show that groundwater is very polluted making the water unsafe for human consumption.¹⁹⁷ The study made by a team of South Sudanese and German geologists concluded that water used by 180,000 people was too salty to drink and contain dangerous amounts of heavy metals.¹⁹⁸

In many occasions, the oil fields that cause environmental pollution are even abandoned due to the war. Some observers identified that oil pipelines damaged during the conflict were leaking.¹⁹⁹

South Sudan must produce for its needs

In 2015, the Minister of Finance of South Sudan, David Deng Athorbei, made a statement saying that the country should be self-sufficient in agriculture terms, and in addition, it needs to increase its non-oil revenue and to achieve peace.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Rueskamp *et al.* 2014. Effect of oil exploration and production on the salinity of a marginally permeable aquifer system in the Thar Jath-, Mala- and Unity Oil fields, Southern Sudan. *Zbl. Geol. Palaont. Teil I*, J.

¹⁹⁸ Radio Tamazuj. 2015. Study: Direct link between oil exploration and water pollution in Unity. <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/study-%E2%80%98direct-link%E2%80%99-between-oil-exploration-and-water-pollution-unity>

¹⁹⁹ Star Africa. 2014. South Sudan: Oil leaks cause pollution fears. <http://en.starafrika.com/news/ssudan-oil-leaks-cause-pollution-fears.html>

²⁰⁰ Bloomberg. 2015. South Sudan Finance Minister says food output can offset oil. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-01-20/south-sudan-finance-minister-says-food-output-can-offset-oil-1->

LIVING IN FEAR

He also made a call for a reduction of the country's reliance on agriculture imports, particularly in the context of an economy affected by the plunge in global oil prices.²⁰¹

Peter Biar Ajak from the Center for Strategic Analysis and Research in Juba, illustrates the macroeconomic weaknesses of South Sudan today because of its oil dependence:

South Sudan's oil-dependent economy is nearing catastrophe. The production of crude oil has dropped by about 35 percent since the conflict began. That, combined with a drop of roughly 45 percent in global oil prices since the summer, has meant a substantial reduction in the government's oil revenues, and enormous fiscal and budgetary resures.

Since South Sudan exports almost nothing aside from oil and imports almost everything else, trade and monetary policy have also been buffeted by falling oil revenues. Access to foreign currency has become extremely limited. The prices of many imported goods have risen. There are shortages of petrol, which must be imported because South Sudan has no refinery.²⁰²

Indeed, a dynamic agriculture sector may be key for peace and development in South Sudan. More than 95% of the country's population is dependent on farming, fishing or herding to meet their daily food needs, and income as well.²⁰³

²⁰¹ *Bloomberg*. 2015. *Ibidem*.

²⁰² Biar Ajak. 2015. Sanctions for peace in South Sudan. *The New York Times*. January 7th.

²⁰³ FAO in emergencies. <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/countries/detail/en/c/147627/>

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

South Sudan has good soil and climatic conditions and more than 70% of its land area is suitable for crop production. There are many that believe that the investment in the agriculture sector has more potential than oil, however, this thinking has not received due attention from local and foreign investors.²⁰⁴ Efforts towards making agriculture work are vital for peace and stability in the country. It is urgently needed to work on this area, particularly when at present there are 2.5 million in Sudan at risk of starvation,²⁰⁵ and around one third of the population are food insecure, plus more than a million displaced.

The dependency on income from natural resources leaves fragile states vulnerable. It exposes them to shocks in commodity prices – as demonstrated by the sudden fall in commodity prices in 2009 following the 2002-2008 boom. Neither is it a sustainable source of income. South Sudan's oil production, for instance, is projected to decrease steadily in future years and become negligible by 2035.

*Source: OECD*²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ *Business Daily*. 2011. South Sudan's vast agricultural sector potential untapped.

²⁰⁵ Norwegian Refugee Council. 2015. Conflict a cause of hunger in South Sudan. <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/conflict-cause-hunger-south-sudan>; OCHA. 2015. South Sudan Crisis. Situation report n. 74. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South_Sudan_Situation_Report_No_74.pdf

²⁰⁶ OECD. 2014. Fragile States 2014: Domestic revenue mobilisation in fragile states. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/FSR-2014.pdf>

US fallen dream?

In 2015, the UN imposed a travel ban and assets freeze against individuals or entities which engaged in or provided support for acts that threaten peace, security and stability of South Sudan.²⁰⁷ The US was behind the draft and the submission of the resolution. This resolution prompted an angry reaction from the South Sudanese. The South Sudanese presidency was said to be extremely disappointed about the US led move.²⁰⁸

In the past, the relationship between the US and South Sudan was completely different. The United States was the main promoter and supporter of the world's newest nation. The *Washington Post* for instance asserted that "South Sudan owes its existence to the United States".²⁰⁹ The expectations created were high before its started its independence, and some believed that Sudan would be able to manage the country breaking the so-called "African model of petty rivalries, corruption and oppression".²¹⁰ Despite all the hopes put on the young nation, as of today no solution has been found to the ongoing war.

²⁰⁷ UN Security Council. 2015. Resolution 2206. S/RES/2006(2015).[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2206\(2015\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2206(2015))

²⁰⁸ *Sudan Tribune*. 2015. South Sudan unhappy with US support for sanctions. <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article54232>

²⁰⁹ *Washington Post*. 2014. U.S. appears unable to pull South Sudan back from the brink of civil war. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/us-appears-unable-to-pull-south-sudan-back-from-the-brink-of-civil-war/2014/05/03/d9280bda-386b-4249-94e0-b5292610e5bb_story.html

²¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

3 SOUTH SUDAN: THE OIL WAY

The US was the largest donor to Sudan in the years prior to independence, providing 33.9% of the total aid to Sudan between 2000 to 2009.²¹¹ The United States (US\$472 million) was the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to South Sudan in 2012, followed by the United Kingdom (US\$96 million).²¹² For many years, Sudan was the third largest recipient of US aid, only after Iraq and Afghanistan.²¹³

The intelligence and information systems of the Americans on the ground in Sudan seemed to have been relatively good²¹⁴... however, how come they did not foresee that South Sudan was quickly descending once again on the avenue of a country at civil war? For instance, the problems between President Salva Kiir and his deputy were not new. Already more than two years before the civil war started, in June 2011, in a speech in Juba, the President accused his Deputy Riek Machar “of running a parallel government within the government”.²¹⁵ Couldn’t they have prevented another conflict? Why did they fall into ridiculous contradictions as the one recently revealed via wikileaks suggesting that the US was funding both armies in

²¹¹ Development initiatives (undated). Sudan Aid Factsheet 1995-2009. <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Sudan-Aid-Factsheet-2011.pdf>

²¹² See global humanitarian assistance epage: <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/south-sudan>

²¹³ *The Atlantic*. 2011. U.S. played key role in Southern Sudan’s long journey to Independence.

²¹⁴ The Global Intelligence files. 2013. Sudan/US/MIL – SPLA trying to get US to hook it up. <https://search.wikileaks.org/gifiles/?viewemailid=5047664>

²¹⁵ *Sudan Tribune*. 2011. Salva Kiir exposes his rift with Machar over South Sudan transitional constitution. <https://search.wikileaks.org/gifiles/?viewemailid=3831682>

LIVING IN FEAR

contention, the Government force of Salva Kiir and the rebels of Riek Machar.²¹⁶ Why are both paid by the US?... to do what? As one reporter questioned: why are they “paid to kill each other?”²¹⁷

²¹⁶ RT. 2015. US officials tussle over arms embargo, sanctions in oil-flush South Sudan. <http://rt.com/usa/226387-south-sudan-sanctions-war/>

²¹⁷ RT. 2015. *Ibidem*.

4

Seven Million

“A peaceful DR Congo could transform Africa almost overnight, but is there a way out?”²¹⁸

There is always a way out. However, peace is not an easy thing, particularly under certain circumstances. When you have lost your father, your mother, your uncle, your sister, what else can you lose? Can you still believe in peace? Two of the bloodiest conflicts in recent decades in the world have occurred in Africa. The Second Civil War in Sudan has left approximately two million casualties and the conflict in DRC is estimated to have snuffed life out of no less than five million people.

How many more?

How does one begin to quantify the dead when they are in the hundreds of thousands? No less than seven million lives of Congolese and South Sudanese were taken away due to wars and conflicts, fuelled by natural resources. How many

²¹⁸ *African Business*. 2009. DR Congo \$24 trillion fortune.

LIVING IN FEAR

more? How many more before the world wakes up to act effectively towards ending all those conflicts?

Probably unless you are one survivor from those experiences you would never be truly able to understand what it means to lose entire families and friends, you would never be truly able as well to understand what it means to feel fear for your life and the life of your close relatives.

When you start counting, sometimes you forget that people are not numbers. There are names behind the numbers. A family. A life. As we write this book, people are dying needlessly in the DRC and in South Sudan. Calculating dead people due to conflicts in this part of the world is very difficult due to statistical challenges and so it is conceivable that probably the number of victims is much larger than seven million (7,000,000). When would the volume of bloodshed, the number of lives taken, be enough for the belligerent officials to make real peace? How many more should fall? A thousand more? Another one million? The pain, sadness and destruction that those conflicts generate should not be accepted any more.

Oil and minerals: the main cause of ongoing conflicts and war

Some authors argue that minerals and oil are not a cause of war, but “competition for them could amplify and expedite conflict”.²¹⁹ In this book, as chapter two and three have shown, oil and minerals are the main motor behind the conflict in recent decades in DRC and South Sudan. It would

²¹⁹ UN Security Council. 2013. Natural resource wealth fails to translate into equivalent benefits for people, fuelling conflict to instability Deputy Secretary-General tells Security Council. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11037.doc.htm>

be very difficult, if not impossible, to expect those conflicts if their territories were resource poor. Oil and minerals are full of blood. An activist poet wrote, *We Thought it was Oil but it was Blood*.²²⁰ Although he was writing about the Niger Delta situation we see a universal application in that phrase.

In both countries described, there were other elements and factors to take into consideration, however, it can be said that control over natural resources was the most important cause on both conflicts in DRC and South Sudan. In both cases, oil and minerals fuelled those wars and in many occasions these resources have inspired, fueled and sustained armies operating in the territories of both countries.

A State's wealth means nothing if not shared with the majority of the population

DRC and South Sudan ought to be wealthy countries. Unfortunately, having a wealth of natural resources, does not mean that it belongs to the citizens, or that the wealth would be shared among the population of a given State. A State is a nation or territory considered as an organized political community under one government.²²¹ A good government should be the one that takes care of its citizens and shares the wealth among its citizens and not just distribute it among an elite. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, stated that “in too many countries, a wealth of resources, including timber, oil, coal, diamonds and precious metals, failed to translate into

²²⁰ Nnimmo Bassey. 1998. *We Thought it was Oil but it was Blood*. Ibadan, Kraft Books.

²²¹ See <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/state>

LIVING IN FEAR

equivalent wealth for the people. Only a powerful few benefit.”²²²

The State is expected to perform an adequate implementation of human rights granted by several UN declarations and conventions, including the right to food, right to health, right to shelter, right to clothing, right to work, farmers’ rights, etc. Paradoxically, the violations and abuses of human rights have been constant in DRC and South Sudan. Both countries have suffered from acts of war on civilian population, both have as well a large number of displaced people, with no access to food, without healthcare, without shelter and without any work. Both countries have more than 90% people living below one dollar per day and they are considered among least developed countries and fragile states. Due to this, both are some of the biggest recipients of humanitarian aid. Moreover, both have huge security problems, shown for instance by the presence of UN peacekeeping operations. Out of the 17th worldwide ongoing peacekeeping UN operations, three are in DRC, South Sudan and in Abyeia disputed territory between Sudan and South Sudan.

They possess resources that have a huge monetary value and that in most cases have the involvement of foreign countries and corporations and other stakeholders of the private sector, which are ready to pay enormous sums of money to gain control of the natural resources belonging to other countries. If no war or significant armed conflict takes

²²² UN Security Council. 2013. Natural resource wealth fails to translate into equivalent benefits for people, fuelling conflict to instability Deputy Secretary-General tells Security Council. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11037.doc.htm>

place, common elements among those countries that possess such resources in Africa is the existence of massive poverty and corruption, and in most cases this is contrasted with mega-rich individuals. Let 's take for instance the case of oil-rich Angola, where the president and his daughter possess multibillionaire fortunes, while at the same time the majority of the country population is living on less than two dollars per day.²²³

Greed, power and control over natural resources

It must be noted as well, that often, oil and minerals involve millions, and multibillion profits. With such large sums of money, greed, power and control take the driving seat of whatever country government in the world. When the prospects for such money flow arrives, many leaders and elites start distancing themselves from the majority of the population and stop thinking about the welfare of their own people.

At the centre of most of the conflicts in both countries are struggles for power and control of natural resources. Minerals and oils are the main cause of the ongoing conflicts and wars. Unfortunately, most commentators qualify the recent civil war in South Sudan as a "power struggle" without further qualifications. In South Sudan, who gets the oil gets the power. Therefore, the power struggle is a war over natural resources for control of the oil in the country. A reporter affirmed that "whoever controls South Sudan's oil, therefore, could seize the upper hand in the battle for

²²³ *Forbes*. 2013. Daddy's girl: how an African "princess" banked \$3 billion in a country living on \$2 day. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/kerryadolan/2013/08/14/how-isabel-dos-santos-took-the-short-route-to-become-africas-richest-woman/>

LIVING IN FEAR

power”.²²⁴ In both countries’ non-renewable natural resource took a dominant share of the fiscal revenue of DRC and South Sudan – 82% in the DRC, and 98% in South Sudan.²²⁵ Who controls those resources controls the country.

The case of South Sudan where the president has recognized the disappearance of \$4 billion by corrupt individuals is compelling. President Salva Kiir pinpointed the spirit behind the rot: “Once we got to power, we forgot what we fought for and began to enrich ourselves at the expense of our people”. This might also include him as well, because it is difficult to imagine that such huge amount of money could be stolen without the leader noticing anything at all.

Greed for minerals and oil is at the heart of the massive death toll and impoverishment of the Congolese and South Sudanese people in recent decades. It can be affirmed quite comfortably that if the Eastern part of the DRC would have not sat on huge mineral reserves it would be very difficult to imagine all the conflicts that have occurred in that zone. It can be affirmed as well, that without oil, ongoing wars in South Sudan might most probably never have occurred.

Peace is the only way forward

Achieving peace is a complex issue. To create peace there are many issues to resolve with all stakeholders such as

²²⁴ *France 24*. 2013. Battle for oil adds new dimension to South Sudan Conflict. <http://www.france24.com/en/20131227-battle-oil-adds-new-dimension-south-sudan-conflict/>

²²⁵ OECD. 2014. Fragile States 2014: Domestic revenue mobilisation in fragile states. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/FSR-2014.pdf>

mutual accusations of support to rebel groups,²²⁶ good governance, transparency, demobilisation and disarmament of local militia, etc.²²⁷

A positive but vital first step is that there are calls at very high levels in both countries and at international fora. This must be followed with open debate on the core causes of the conflict and ways of achieving reconciliation. It does not appear that lasting peace can be achieved otherwise. In that process, the people need to be put at the centre of development policies and actions in both countries in order to stop the plunder, reverse environmental degradation and fight poverty. As long as the political, military and corporate elite maintain their control of the natural resources of the country, the devastating plunder will continue to the benefit of only such elite and a handful of corporations.

²²⁶ UN Security Council. 2015. Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan. S/PV.7392.

²²⁷ *The Guardian*. 2014. South Sudan is divided by the spoils of oil not ethnicity. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/14/south-sudan-divided-oil-ethnicity-violence>

INDEX

- A**
Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC), 47
Abyei Police Service, 46, 62
Abyei, 43
-home of the Ngok Dinka, 43, 45
Africa, 18, 20 see minerals
-and wars at the great lakes, 20, 25
-armed groups in, 26
-criminal networks in, 26
-death in, 20
-exploitation natural resources in, 18
-militias in, 26
-minerals in, 20
-poverty in, 20
-wealth in, 20
Africa's wealth, 14
-and resource curse, 14
-blessing or curse, 14
African Business, 22
African Development Bank (AfDB), 16, 17
African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council, 48
Algeria, 15
Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), 25, 28
-in North Kivu, 25
American Mineral Fields (AMF), 36
AngloAmerican corporation, 35
AngloGold Ashanti, 35
Anvil Mining, 36
Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC), 26
Athorbei, David Deng, 73
Auty, Richard, 14
- B**
BBC, 18
Blom, Ulrika, 59
Blue Nile, 45
- C**
Central African Republic, 7
China National Petroleum Corporation, 49

- Citibank NY, 36
 Clinton, Bill, 24, 36
 Conflict minerals, 30 *see*
 Rwanda
 -legitimate exports of, 30
 -smuggling of, 30
 Conflicts, 7
 -and natural resources, 7
 -causes of, 10, 80
 -uniqueness of, 10
 Congolese Government, 18
- D**
 Democratic Republic of
 Congo (DRC), 7-85
 -and (MONUC), 29
 -greed for minerals in, 32
 -UN peacekeeping opera-
 tion in, 29
 Diffra oil complex, 47
 DR Congo, 79
- E**
 Eastern Congo, 28
 -insecurity in, 28
 Eliasson, Jan, 81
 -Deputy Secretary-General
 of the United Nations, 81
 European Coalition on Oil in
 Sudan (ECOS), 63
 Exploration GmbH (OMV),
 64
 Exxon corporate, 15
- F**
 First Sudanese Civil War, 42
 Forces démocratiques de
 libération du Rwanda
 (FDLR), 28
- G**
 Gabon, 18
 -oil in, 18
 Gertler, Dan, 12, 13
 Ghana, 18
 -oil in, 18
 Giambrone, Antonino, 38
 Glencore Anglo-Swiss, 35
 Government of South Sudan
 (GOSS), 69
 Government of Sudan (GoS),
 62
Great War of Africa, 23
 Greater Nile Oil Project
 Company (GNOPC), 66,
 67
 Guinea, Equatorial, 15
- H**
 Hague, 44
 Permanent Court of Arbitra-
 tion in, 44
Human Rights Watch, 55
- I**
 IMF, 22
 International Rescue Commi-
 ttee, 23

LIVING IN FEAR

J

Joak, Daniel Wuor, 69

Juba, 74

-Center for Strategic
Analysis and Research in,
74

Katanga Minister of Planning,
22

K

Kenya, 19

Kerry, John, 24

Kiir, Salva, 43, 84

L

Libya, 7

Lumumba, Patrice, 13, 20

Lundin Oil Consortium, 63

M

Machar, Riek, 43, 57, 77, 78

Madagascar, 16

Mala fields, 73

Malakal, 59

Mali, 7

Mayardit, Salva Kiir, 69

McKinney, Cynthia Ann, 23

-U.S. Congresswoman
from the Democratic Party,
23

McMurrough, Mike, 36

McNamara, Robert, 37

-as World Bank President,
37

Minerals, 20 see Africa

-and death, 20

-and poverty, 20

-and wars at the Great
Lakes, 20

-and wealth, 20

Mozambique, 18

-gas in, 18

Muloni, Irene, 18

N

Nationalist and Integrationist
Front (FNI), 36

Natural resources, 8, 83 see
conflicts

-and conflict, 8

-and greed, 83

-and power, 83

-and wars, 8

-control over, 83

Niger Delta, 16

-oil is a curse for, 16

Non-governmental
organisations (NGOs), 12

Non-OPEC African oil
producer, 48

Norwegian Refugee Council,
59

O

OECD Guidelines for
Multinational Enterprises,
37

Oil, 48

-and geopolitics, 48

P

Peace, 84

INDEX

- as way forward, 84
- Petronas Carigali Overseas Sdn Bhd (Petronas), 64
- Powell, Colin, 58
- PR Newswire*, 30
- President Kabila, 24
- President Obama, 24

- R**
- RDC Mining Code, 35
- Republic of South Sudan (RSS), 69
- Rio Tinto's QMM, 16
- Ruweng County, 67
- Rwanda, 24, 31
 - conflict minerals from, 31

- S**
- Second Congo War, 24, 32, 34
- Second Sudanese Civil War, 42
- Somalia, 7
- South Kordofan, 45
- South Sudan Civil War, 57
- South Sudan, 11, 18, 19, 41
 - Dinka ethnic group in, 43, 57
 - Nuer ethnic group in, 43, 57
 - the oil way, 41
 - UN peacekeeping operations, 61
- South Sudanese Civil War, 58
- Sudan, 79
 - Second Civil War in, 79
- Sudan Armed Forces, 46
- Sudan oil police, 47
- Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), 41, 46, 54, 62
 - civil wars and conflict in, 41
- Sudan vs. South Sudan, 43
 - and Heglig battles, 47
 - and peace agreement, 43
 - main oil companies in, 51
 - oil-centered conflict, 46
 - Row over oil tariffs*, 51
- Sudanese Civil War, 52
 - and Addis Ababa Agreement, 53
 - and Islamic law, 53
 - causes of, 52
- Swedish oil company Lundin Oil AB (Lundin), 64

- T**
- Talisman Energy, 65
- Thar, Jath, 73
- Transnational Corporations (Tncs), 34
 - and the private sector, 34

- U**
- Uganda, 19, 24
- UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)
- UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), 61, 62
- UN Organization Stabiliza-

LIVING IN FEAR

tion Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), 29
UN peacekeeping operations, 11
UN Security Council, 11
UNICEF, 59
UNISFA, 47
United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), 8
United Nations Security Council, 25
United Nations, 13
University of California (UCLA), 54, 55
Upper Nile State, 59, 69
US fallen dream, 76

V

Virunga National Park, 18

W

War and conflict, 58
-consequences of, 58
Wars and minerals, 21
-cobalt, 22
-coltan, 22
-copper, 22
-diamond, 22
-gold, 22
-manganese, 22
-peace at last, 21
-timber, 22
-tin, 22
-zinc, 22
Wau Shilluk, 59
We Thought it was Oil but it was Blood, 81
Wealth, 12, 13
-for whom, 13
-quest for, 12
World Heritage site, 18
Worldwatch, 40