

AFRECS E-Blast: November 20, 2013

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**In the church:**

**The Missing Piece: A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins**

The major initiatives confronting the people of South Sudan require support of processes that will bring leaders and people together from all sectors. Whether it is the national program of peace and reconciliation, the formation of a new constitution to replace the unpopular temporary charter, or the ending of horrific tribal violence in Jonglei, we must account for the broad array of voices that need to be heard to allow these efforts at nation building and peacemaking to be successful. A corollary of this reality is the obvious fact that South Sudan lacks the infrastructure that makes communication and movement readily possible. Well-designed programs and bold rhetoric mean nothing and could, in fact, be counterproductive if not matched with resources that foster gatherings of diverse and scattered groups and a cross section of leaders. All of these initiatives are predicated on the participation of sectors and groups whose attitudes will require change and whose understanding of what lies ahead if constructive change does not occur must be broadened.

Funds to support the processes must be available to assist with the transformation necessary if positive outcomes are to happen. A question as to whether adequate funds are available to launch and sustain these initiatives requires an answer. Those advocating for peace and stability in South Sudan should consider the importance of not allowing serious resource constraints to stymie progress in bringing forth a new constitution, advancing peace and reconciliation, and ending tribal conflict in Jonglei.

As has often been mentioned, faith communities could serve as important agents of change where access to remote and isolated populations is a problem. Moreover, the credibility of churches and their leaders can be helpful when complex and controversial issues are before the nation. Yet without resources for building the competence necessary to be effective facilitators of processes that could change behavior and modify attitudes, the potential of churches remains untapped and underutilized. Likewise, the ability to bring people together and to support the hard work implicit in these various initiatives is essential.

While political will is a precursor of moving these initiatives forward, making sure that mechanisms that honor the diversity of sectors and groups that need to be engaged in making change happen must be a priority. Otherwise, hopes for change will be dashed. The vision for a better South Sudan that is behind these major initiatives has a better chance of being realized if resources are available to undertake and sustain the costly task of convening a diverse and emerging nation in the daunting work of forming a new system of government, healing the wounds of decades of violence and displacement, and ending the violence that plagues peace

in parts of South Sudan. Let our prayers and advocacy embrace this understanding and inform it.

### **Bishop Gwynne College**

The Rev. Ellen Hanckel has published a new blog [post](#) from Juba about the coming end of the academic term and Bishop Gwynne College's graduation.

### **Update from the Diocese of Ibba**

Bishop Wilson of Ibba has written to ask for prayers and support. His diocese has identified a group of potential pastors for a number of large unserved parishes; they have a schedule and plan for training and ordination but lack the funds to pay the two trainers who would be coming from a neighboring diocese. The bishop can be reached by email at [bishopkamani@gmail.com](mailto:bishopkamani@gmail.com).

### **The Salisbury Sudan Link**

Anglican News Service has a [video](#) of Ian Woodward talking about the relationship of the Diocese of Salisbury with the Episcopal Church of Sudan. You can [follow](#) Salisbury's Sudan Link on Twitter for daily prayer requests and other news of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and the Salisbury-Sudan Link.

### **Bishop John Zawo of Ezo on the Recent LRA Attack**

Ezo, near South Sudan's borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic, continues to be on the frontline of threat from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which recently attacked Ezo, as Bishop John [reported](#). The Sudan Link retweeted Kate Brankin's post from this past weekend saying that Bishop John confirms that the LRA are still in the area. (Meanwhile, the UN and AU say that the government of Central African Republic has been in communication with LRA leader Joseph [Kony](#), urging him to surrender, but Kony's whereabouts are still unknown, although he is [believed to be](#) in CAR and to be ill.)

### **News from the Diocese of Kajo-Keji**

A new issue of the newsletter of the Diocese of Kajo-Keji, *Voice of Hope*, is available [online](#).

### **A Visit to Wonduruba**

A team from England visited Wonduruba, soon to become a diocese, for a SOMA conference. A [report](#) of the trip, including the conference schedule, is on the Salisbury Diocese website. ([SOMA](#) is a UK-based NGO; the acronym stands for Sharing of Ministries Abroad.)

### **In politics -- the two Sudans:**

## Abyei

John Ashworth has [disseminated](#) the final report of international observers on Abyei along with analysis by Luka Biong Deng. And former Vice President of South Sudan, Riek Machar, has [called on his country](#) to recognize the result of the Dinka Ngok referendum on Abyei that was held last month, resulting in an overwhelming decision to join the Republic of South Sudan. On the ground in Abyei, community leaders are [threatening](#) to take action against any attempted settlements by the Misseriya, saying they are a project of the Sudanese government, unless the UN and African Union step in to resolve the situation in the region.

### In politics -- South Sudan:

#### South Sudan's Rebels

The Small Arms Survey has a [report](#) on "The End of South Sudan's Rebels," which John Ashworth summarizes, with a link to the full report.

#### Report from the UN Mission to South Sudan

Hilde Johnson, the head of UNMISS, gave a [report](#) to the UN Security Council on the situation in South Sudan, highlighting the ongoing problems in Jonglei state. Voice of America has just today posted [video](#) from the visit of UN Assistant Secretary General Kyung-wah Kang.

### In politics -- Sudan:

#### Darfur, Blue Nile, and South Kordofan

The Sudan Armed Forces are launching a [concerted military effort](#) to end the "rebellion" in its south, according to the defense minister. Radio Dabanga reports that the SAF have been [bombing](#) South Kordofan since November 14th. At the same time, the Sudanese government has announced that they and the SPLM-North are set to return to [negotiations](#) in Addis Ababa based on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 and the UN Security Council's resolution 2046; however, the SPLM-N [denies](#) that this is the case. In Darfur, conflicts between [farmers and herdsman](#) complicate the already troubled Central and West Darfur states, and [intertribal conflict](#) plagues South Darfur. A coalition of government forces [attacked](#) an IDP camp in South Darfur today, and the Sudan Air Force [bombed](#) a car carrying a bomb and two women, one of whom was pregnant, killing all three.

#### Yellow Fever

Sudan is reporting a yellow fever outbreak, with [20 cases](#) in West Kordofan. For the latest stats from the UN, see the November 19th [report](#) from reliefweb.

## Polio

Despite plans with the UN, the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-North [did not cooperate](#) to allow for a four-day polio immunization campaign beginning November 5th. The UN Security Council [took up the matter](#) and still hopes to deliver the immunizations to 165,000 children.

## The September Protests

*The Niles* looks at the [outcome](#) of the September protests and discusses the reasons they ended so abruptly. The BBC also looks at the political [situation](#) in Sudan following these protests.

## Bread Lines

Al-Jazeera English [explains](#) the economic context that has led to grain shortages and bread lines in Khartoum. A government official attributes the shortage to an [administrative glitch](#).

## Young Entrepreneurs

The BBC has a story on a [Sudanese TV show](#) in which young entrepreneurs compete for money and investors. The story highlights the economic difficulties in the country.

**PRAY:** Pray for the needed support and funding to make important initiatives in South Sudan successful, especially development of a new constitution, an end to the violence in Jonglei state, and the advancement of peace and reconciliation throughout the new nation. Pray for theological education and the deployment of pastors in Ibba Diocese. And pray for all who are in harm's way in Sudan and South Sudan, especially those in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile, where Sudan's armed forces are directing a strong effort to eradicate rebellion. For a daily reminder to pray in turn for the dioceses of the ECS, subscribe to [the Sudan Link on Twitter](#).