

STATE FRAGILITY AND HUMAN SECURITY CHALLENGES IN SOUTH SUDAN

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the question of state fragility and human security issues related to South Sudan. It shows that South Sudan is in a profound fragility because of the continual conflict that undermined its internal stability, the high rate of refugees that fled from it, the inability of the state to provide basic services to the population, the ineffectiveness of its institutions and the socioeconomic inequalities that the South Sudanese citizens face. As a result, this state fragility became an obstacle to the population's well-being by contributing to human insecurities related to economy, food, health, environment, personal safety, inter-communal relations, and political stability.

Keywords: South Sudan, Human Security, State Fragility, Freedom from want, Freedom from fear

INTRODUCTION

Immediately after World War II, the question of state security constituted the most central dimension of the international system, as the creation of the United Nations served as the ultimate effort of nations to promote peace and security between themselves. The occurrence of the Cold-war emphasized the cruciality of states, considering that the bipolarity of the world led the West and the Soviets to increase their ideological alliances through satellite-states. Afterward, the demise of the Soviet Bloc and hence the official end of the Cold-war led some scholars to optimistically assumed that the world would be liberated from its antagonistic contradictions of opposing forces (Atlas, 1989). In this regard, one could only think that peaceful relations and dynamics of stability would prevail in the international system and within nations. Unfortunately, while the powerful nations perceived to be more stable than ever at many levels, Third World nations started facing more pressing and devastating challenges, such as humanitarian disasters, economic crises and, above all, internal armed conflict with even sometimes genocidal dynamics. This ultimately rose the question of state fragility and human security in the international agenda, because not only states were facing threats coming from within but also humans inside these states were being affected tragically.

State stability and human security are, in fact, inextricable conditions for peace and prosperity in countries and constitute an important aspect of international development and security challenges nowadays. They cannot be separated as they have a complementary relationship with each other (Krause, 2007:7). Since their independence after the decolonization process, African states, in general, couldn't achieve a satisfactory level of development and security, they constituted a major focus of the international organizations on the questions of state fragility and human security. The end of the Cold-war and the growing instability observed in these states pushed the international community to devote more attention to these pressing matters in terms of policy-making and actions.

In our article, we focus on the case of South Sudan, as an example of countries facing insecurity on both the state and the citizens' levels. The importance of the South Sudanese case lies in the fact that not only it's the most recent independent African country, but also it is facing an internal armed conflict affecting both the state stability and the population safety. In fact, after gaining its independence, South Sudan fell into a civil war that lasted for years.

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The promise of a peaceful and democratic country quickly let place to a political decay that became problematic to the survival of the state itself and the security of the population. So, what factors could explain the fragility of the South Sudanese state? And what are the implications of that fragility on human security in that country? To examine these questions, our paper will be as follows: first, to tackle a theoretical framework on state fragility and human security; afterward, to study the possible elements characterizing state fragility in South Sudan; finally, to analyze the potential challenges of human security, firstly, from the perspective of “freedom from want”, and subsequently, from the aspect of “freedom from fear”.

1. EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF STATE FRAGILITY AND HUMAN SECURITY

1.1. Understanding state fragility

In early 1990, the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kawczyńska, 2013:169) and the Somali civil war (Lee Hogg, 2008) increased the interest of international organizations and major aid donors in issues related to state fragility. The crisis occurred in these countries, its effect on the international level, led the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in organizing a program called ‘*Linking Rehabilitation to Development : Management Revitalization of War-torn Societies*’, to rethink security as the precondition of development in countries fragilized by war (Grimm, 2014:199).

But what radically changed the perception of fragile states is the event of 9/11. After the terrorist attacks on American soil, the United States National Security Strategy redefined small and fragile states as a potential threat for its national security. The capability of small countries like Afghanistan to host terrorist networks like Al-Qaeda able to undermine the US internal stability has been perceived by the US policymakers as dangerous as the terrorist groups themselves (Grimm, 2014:199-200).

According to a report made for the US Congress on the security threats of weak states, state capacity is measured through four main areas: peace and stability, effective government, territorial control and borders, and finally economic sustainability. In other words, any state in a situation of permanent conflict, at risk of instability any moment, disrupted by bad governance and corruption, incapable of assuring the security of its borders, and finally lacking the ability of achieving of a durable economic development, is a weak state (Wyler, 2008:4-5).

In general, the criteria of state fragility are around five main elements (Grand & UK:7). The first characteristic of state fragility is related to conflicts. A fragile state is in a constant situation of conflict, or at least presents constantly conditions of a violent crisis. The eventual occurrence of conflict not only has the potential to disrupt the legitimacy of the state, but it could also hamper the latter’s ability to fulfill its responsibilities and even weaken the economy. The second aspect of a fragile state is the high rate of displaced persons that it displays. The displacement of persons is caused, most of the time, by extreme poverty, state persecution, war situation, or even increased unemployment (Grand & UK:8). Another component of state fragility is related to access to basic services. The inability of a state to deliver the basic needs of its citizens is a sign of its fragility. The incapacity to provide basic services means that a state is failing the very responsibilities for which it exists. This inability leads to a vicious circle; if a state doesn’t provide basic services it becomes fragile, and if it becomes fragile it won’t either be able to provide basic services. The fourth condition of state fragility is related to the institutions’ unsustainability (Grand & UK:9). Weak states tend to have weak institutions. The existing institutions are characterized by a lack of legitimacy and

central authority. They face challenges from non-state actors, or they rely on a "*traditional system of patronage*" to sustain their clients' loyalty. The last characteristic of state fragility is related to social inclusion (Grand & UK:9). In principle, every state is based on the equality of all its citizens. But when individuals are excluded from the social welfare, based on their ethnic or religious group, their ideas, and ideologies, then inequalities increase. The increased inequalities lead to frustration and then opposition to the state. This situation progressively leads to state fragility.

1.2 What is human security?

Human security takes a different stance on security by enlarging the traditional approach of security, which was limited to state security, to a new approach by focusing on population security (Gómez, 2013:2). It is fundamentally related to the protection of vulnerable individuals from threats they face in their environment.

Human security aims "*to safeguard the vital core of human lives from critical pervasive threats, in a way that's consistent with long-term human fulfillment*" (Alkire, 2003:2). Human security is about saving people's lives when threats are beyond their control. According to Alkire (2003:3), human security is human-centered, which makes it different from the traditional perspective of security which prioritizes state stability. While human security aims to preserve humans from threats, it is not built on long-term human fulfillment project because it deals with immediate needs that should be addressed. But it should not be undertaken in a way that will be an obstacle to the long-term human development of the population in need (Alkire, 2003:4).

In 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published a report on Human Development highlighting four main characteristics related to human security (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 1994, 22-23). First of all, human security is universal. Threats affect people's lives both in poor societies and in rich countries. They are multiple and diverse and no country in the world is safe from them. The second idea is the interdependence of human security problems. The world is no longer indifferent when a disaster like an earthquake happens in a corner of the world. Nations are more likely to feel concerned because the spillovers of a catastrophe in a country can also affect them, like transnational terrorism or international drug trafficking. The third idea is that emergencies constitute the main focus of human security. Nations are more effective when they offer aid more immediately. The longer we wait, the deeper the disaster can become. Finally, human security is human-centered. It is about how people are living their daily life. Are they in security? Do they have the basic needs to survive?

Human security is also related to the concepts of "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" (Hanlon & Christie, 2016:4-5). Freedom from fear expresses the idea of people living without any physical danger threatening their existence. As for freedom from want, it is related to the satisfaction of fundamental human needs such as access to food, shelter. These two concepts cannot be separated from human security.

For a state to guarantee its citizens well-being, it must take into consideration seven categories related to human security in general and freedom from want and freedom from fear in particular: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security (UNDP, 1994:24-25)

Freedom from want takes into consideration the following human security dimensions: economic security, food security, and health security. Economic security expresses a situation

where people feel secure when their basic income is assured. Finding a job may be a challenge in places where job opportunities are low. Those who find jobs can also have difficulty in keeping their jobs due to the sociopolitical situation of the country they live in, in a case, for example, of an economic crisis or high unemployment rate. In developing countries, this can lead to political instability or ethnic tensions (UNDP, 1994:25). Food security is related to the availability of food and access to it. Access to basic food is one of the most fundamental needs in every society. Unfortunately, in conflict-affected zones access to food can be a luxury that everybody cannot afford (UNDP, 1994:27). Finally, health security deals with the spread of diseases and the ability to access to basic healthcare. Contrary to industrial countries, Third-World countries face greater difficulties when it comes to health. Health security is crucial as there is a correlation between the quality of health infrastructures of a state and its population physical condition (UNDP, 1994:27).

As for freedom from fear, it encompasses human security dimensions such as environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. First, environmental security deals with the different challenges of natural disasters or man-made environmental catastrophes that endanger human livelihood and survival (UNDP, 1994:28). Second, personal security represents a central dimension of human security, as individuals value their safety more than anything (UNDP, 1994:30). The origins of threats to personal security are multiple, as individuals' safety can be endangered by the state, criminal organizations, a community or even their own family. Third, community security expresses the idea of safe belonging to a social or cultural group (UNDP, 1994:31-32). Belonging to a community not only gives them a sense of identity but also can provide them protection from threats coming from outside. However, communities can also perpetuate violent practices that affect negatively their members. One of the most visible aspects of community security is related to conflicts between different ethnic groups. In worse cases, violent confrontation between communities leads to brutal results, such as ethnic cleansing. Finally, political security is about people able to enjoy their basic human rights (UNDP, 1994:32). Political insecurity happens when citizens tend to be less free when they constantly face state repression. In such a case, their ability to exercise their freedom and rights is completely silenced by violent methods (UNDP, 1994:32). And instead of being used as means for law and order, police serve as "agents of repression", while freedom of ideas and information becomes under the control of the state (UNDP, 1994:33). Political insecurity can also be evaluated through the ratio of military spending to social investment (UNDP, 1994:33). It increases when the government tends to give more priority to military strength which it could use to repress its people, rather than investing in basic services such as health and education.

2. ASSESSING STATE FRAGILITY DYNAMICS IN SOUTH SUDAN

Located in East-Central Africa, South Sudan is the youngest nation to gain its independence in the African continent. After years of the conflict opposing it to Sudan, South Sudan gained its independence in 2011, closing the chapter of what was considered to be "Africa's longest-running war" (BBC, 2018). The gaining of independence brought relative stability in the country, but a dispute between the South Sudanese president Salva Kiir and his former vice-president Riek Machar led the new-born state to what will be the beginning of national chaos. The legitimacy of the government being contested by the former Vice President Riek Machar, a military confrontation then started between the regime forces and the opposition forces, causing a civil war. The civil war started in December 2013, and despite the many attempts for a peace talk, each group failed to respect the ceasefire. What started as a struggle for political power turned South Sudan into a war-torn country. Recently, a new peace deal has been signed, but there is no guarantee at all that it will keep the country

from falling into a new military confrontation between the rebellion and the regime in power (Burke, 2018). The fact that until now attempted peace talks failed shows that the conditions for a conflict relapse are still present. It is also the existence of the state itself that is challenged, since, because of the rebellion, the government failed to have, in the Weberian perspective, the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force.

The number of displaced persons in South Sudan is essentially very high. The situation of war, poverty and the harsh conditions of living pushed a tremendous number of South Sudanese to flee from their country (The United Nations Refugee Agency [UNHCR]). The displacement of persons is indeed related mainly to the ongoing violence. People run in fear for their life because of the war, but the displacement can also be explained by the total lack of opportunities for education, employment. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, the number of South Sudanese refugees is estimated up to more than two million, third in the world behind Syria and Afghanistan. A large part of these refugees is under 18 years old. Although many succeeded in refuging themselves in neighbor countries, a large number remained in the country after fleeing their houses (UNHCR).

South Sudan has enormous difficulties to provide basic services. First, the government failed to provide security, because, as we mentioned early, the country turned into a war-torn zone. The constant resurgence of violence annihilated any notion of safety and security for the people. Besides the failure to deliver security to the citizens, both education and health system are nearly in a state of collapse. The civil war worsened the education system that was very fragile from the beginning. So, there is a huge disproportion between the infrastructures available and the educational needs of the people. There are up to 2.2 million children out of school (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2018). The country also failed to build a proper healthcare system, due mainly to the prolonged internal armed conflict (World Health Organization [WHO], 2016).

As a young country, South Sudan doesn't have a strong democratic and political tradition. Ever since South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan, it has been under a military rule. The respective two leaders of the regime and the opposition, who represent the main political actors in the country, have both a military background. So, while civilians occupy a less important role in the political organization of the country, soldiers have much more impact on both the political and social life in South Sudan (Freedom House). The existing political system is a sort of mixture of party, army, and government. Officials benefit from prosecution, the impunity of soldiers is also rampant to a point that they often defy court orders (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018:11). This institutional weakness is also worsened by widespread corruption. Just in 2018, South Sudan was ranked as the 3rd most corrupted country in the world by International Transparency (Transparency International).

The country, even though very rich in natural resources from which the majority of its revenues derives, is a place where social and economic inequalities are felt by the majority of the population. The availability of natural resources and profits made from it could potentially help sustain the economic needs of the citizens, but the unequal distribution of wealth led the majority of the population to live under extreme poverty. Just in 2015, the oil revenue was up to \$3.38 billions (REUTERS, 2015). Nevertheless, almost 80 percent of the population survives with least than US\$1 per day (United Nations Development Programme). This reveals an economic contrast between the enormous oil revenues the government collects and wealth distribution in the country. This socioeconomic injustice, just in 2012, one year after the independence, was prevailing, as 75 South Sudanese officials were accused to have 'stolen' 4 billion dollars (REUTERS, 2012). It reveals the horizontal inequality existing in

South Sudan: that is to say, while elites monopolize the country's wealth, they exclude the majority of the citizens from benefiting from any social and economic advantages. Besides, there is an overarching lack of social inclusion, as people tend to be identified through their tribal identity, rather than their citizenship which, in theory, represents an inclusive concept that encompasses every member of society regardless of his origins (Bryce, 2013). Two examples seem to confirm this lack of social inclusion in the South Sudanese state. First, the existing corruption is based on a patronage network that captures unfairly the country's resources from which only family members, kinfolk or loyal followers can benefit (Atit, 2016). Second, with the lack of social inclusion, violence-based ethnic discrimination became widespread, especially after the outbreak of the armed conflict. Various ethnic groups, either from the government forces or the rebellion, are victims of armed attacks based on their tribal origins, hence making the notion of common citizenship irrelevant (Civil Rights Defenders, 2017:12).

3. HUMAN SECURITY ISSUES IN SOUTH SUDAN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FREEDOM FROM WANT

Looking at South Sudan, at first, it seems to have very strong economic potentials because of its rich natural resources. It is indeed very rich in oil because 98 percent of its national economic revenues are from oil production. Unfortunately, being an underdeveloped country, it doesn't have enough industries to produce and export goods. Before the outbreak of the conflict, 5 South Sudanese pounds were equivalent to 1 dollar (Byaruhanga, 2015). But after the country fell into civil war, the currency profoundly lost its value. The devaluation of the currency led to the high inflation of goods and products in South Sudanese marketplaces. It affected negatively the purchasing power of the population. In fact, before the conflict, with only 120 South Sudanese pounds, a person could afford a 50kg of a sack of flour (Wudu, 2018). But it takes now 7000 South Sudanese pounds for the same quantity². Economic predictions forecast the poverty rate to be around 89 percent in 2019 (World Bank, 2018:284). This poor economic performance can be explained by the civil war that damaged most of the country's economic life, the devaluation of the South Sudanese pound, the hyperinflation and the unequal distribution of wealth. In this disastrous economic situation, the most affected are the ordinary citizens who are unable to meet the basic economic conditions for their daily needs, because of the lack of job opportunities and basic incomes.

Due to the continual conflict and poor natural conditions, up to 6.1 million people are facing a food crisis, that's to say 59 percent of the entire population is affected by this crisis (U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], 2018). The huge majority of South Sudanese are going through a food crisis, making access to food a real challenge. Recent studies show that at least half of the population is still threatened by a food crisis, despite the slight improvement in food production that the cessation of the armed conflict could bring about (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2019). A poor harvest, difficulties in accessing humanitarian aids and mainly the armed conflict so far represented the disruptive factors that contributed to the food insecurity in South Sudan. (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], 2018). In some regions, large humanitarian assistance was the only way that prevented people from falling into famine (Phiri, 2018).

When it became an independent country, South Sudan was yet to build its healthcare system from scratch, as it had very few health facilities which were located only in specific

² This estimation hinges on the currency fluctuation of the country and therefore can change at any time. It serves only to indicate the depletion of the South Sudanese currency at the time of the writing of our paper.

places. The development of the health sector was relying mainly on donors' aid. The entire country had just 120 medical doctors for a nine million population (Watchlist, 2018:13). After the breakout of the conflict, the already-fragile healthcare system became seriously damaged. Access to basic medical care started becoming nearly impossible because hospitals were attacked, people were even sometimes denied access to care by armed groups. When facing these kinds of life-threatening situations, health workers have no choice but to leave (Watchlist, 2018:17). Even when some facilities reopened, they relied more and more on volunteers who, unfortunately, have little experience or are not skilled enough to deal with some diseases (Watchlist, 2018:15). Even relying on volunteers can have fatal implications, because South Sudan, at a moment, was ‘*one of the world's most dangerous countries for aid workers*’ (Dumo, 2017). Besides, the lack of proper hygiene and diet led to malnutrition problems in the country (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, 2018:1). Around 261 424 children were estimated to be suffering from severe malnutrition (WHO, 2018). The government has a huge responsibility in this health crisis. The state spares an extremely low percentage of the national budget to the health sector. In 2014, only 4 percent of government expenditure was dedicated to health financing (WHO, 2016).

4. HUMAN SECURITY ISSUES IN SOUTH SUDAN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FREEDOM FROM FEAR

The conflict that turned South Sudan into a war-torn zone had a disastrous impact on the environment. One of the impact environmental consequence of violence is related to the problem of clean water. The constant situation of conflict left the country with a neglected or destroyed water system. With the depletion of the South Sudanese currency, it became more and more difficult for the population to afford clean water (DROP4DROP). Only 55 percent of the South Sudanese have access to ‘safe drinking water’, and because of the ‘increased costs of production, water providers in Juba are producing less and charging more, squeezing people’s access to safe water even further’ (OXFAM International). Poor rains and drought have also hurt the country's clean water supply. One of the solutions for the population is to rely on aid made by international organizations to reduce the water crisis, however, this approach appeared to be insufficient to resolve the water scarcity problem (DROP4DROP). South Sudan is also a victim of a regional water stress situation, because, despite the Nil River being the main water body in the country, the demand for water exceeds the available amount as the Nil River Basin is shared by 10 countries (DROP4DROP). Deforestation also constitutes an environmental problem in South Sudan. Nearly 80 percent of South Sudan's population relies on agriculture to secure their livelihoods. The increased reliance on agriculture leads to an overuse of forests. Dependence on fuelwood and charcoal also accelerates deforestation (United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], 2018). Deforestation and logging activities threaten South Sudan forests which constitute 33 percent of its total land area (Xinhua, 2018). The deforestation has also been worsened by the illegal trade of forest products, causing the continuing destruction of nature. In the context of instability, it is difficult for law enforcement to contain the organized criminals devastating the forests (Xinhua, 2018), despite the government ban of ‘*illegal logging and export of logs and charcoal*’ in 2015 (UNEP, 2018). South Sudan even faces a greater environmental issue that's climate change. Due to its almost non-existent manufacturing industries, South Sudan contributes very little to the global gas emissions. Yet, the country is very vulnerable to the rising temperatures and decreased rainfalls caused by climate change, since agricultural productions rely on seasonal rainfalls (South Sudan, 2018:54).

Personal security has been particularly vulnerable in South Sudan. While mechanisms of accountability for issues such as abuses and violations are nearly inexistent, attacks against

civilians in such an environment dominated by violent conflict became common and go unpunished (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [OHCHR] 2018:5). Both the government forces and the rebellion groups are in a logic of systematic abuses, as each side accuses civilians of siding with the enemy. What mostly fueled the attacks on civilians is this accusation of sympathizing with the enemy forces either by the government forces or the rebellion groups (Amnesty International, 2017:18). One of the particularities of personal insecurity in South Sudan was sexual and gender-based violence. Women were exposed to widespread sexual violence, as they were victims by both the government forces and the opposition soldiers (Amnesty International, 2017:15).

Ethnic violence represents a major challenge to community security in South Sudan. An important factor in inter-community violence is the role played by warring forces. For some in the international community, ethnic-oriented mass killings perpetrated during the conflict have reached a level that accusations of genocide along tribal lines are justified (Muhumuza, 2017). But the denial of ethnic cleansing allegations by the warring parties (Morgan, 2017), the inaction of the international community and, despite the UN arms embargo, the military support of the US government to the South Sudanese regime made the situation even worse (Aljazeera, 2017). The armed conflict also led to a growing social exclusion among the young. Some of the young South Sudanese ended up joining gang groups, because of the inexistent social and economic alternatives that could have helped them better their life. Social ostracization becomes part of their reality as they are left without the opportunity of job and education and became part of crime groups (The Guardian, 2015).

According to Freedom House's 2018 report on freedom, South Sudan is the world's second least free country (Haines, 2018). The regime of South Sudan and the opposition forces created a climate of fear and intimidation in which alternative voices to their views are perceived as threats. In this regard, violations of fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression and opinion are frequent. After investigations on the field, a UN-led experts team reported ninety-nine cases of human rights abuses related to freedom of the press, and in sixty incidents they analyzed, more than a hundred persons had their fundamental rights violated (Wudu, 2018). Media organizations are regularly targeted, articles publications go through censorship mostly, and even media equipment gets confiscated (OHCHR, 2018:15-18). Besides, human rights activists are also in the government target. Activism and ideas expressed can be causes of constant intimidation and threats. Even public officials who express view contradictory to the government position may lose their job (OHCHR, 2018:25-26). The most fundamental rights and civil liberties are tremendously violated (Freedom House, 2018). The topics that trigger the government repressive reaction mostly are related to criticisms on corruption, human rights violations or political ineffectiveness (OHCHR, 2018:2).

Finally, the ineffectiveness of the institutions and the alarming corruption of the officials are among the main characteristics of the political system in South Sudan. The broken legal system gave birth to a '*culture of impunity*' (Wudu, 2018). The perpetrators of crimes do not face any sort of accountability. Besides the lack of electoral legitimacy of the legislative and executive branches of the state, the whole political system is under the control of an overpowered president as 'he has the authority to fire state governors and dissolve the parliament and state assemblies as he sees fit' (Wudu, 2018). In a nutshell, the very fundamental democratic principle of the separation of power doesn't exist at all.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of South Sudan's situation reveals important elements concerning state fragility. First, shortly after its independence, the country has been torn by internal armed conflict. Besides, it has the highest number of displaced persons in the world, a situation that has been mostly created by the conflict. Also, the government is unable to provide properly basic services to its citizens. The state, indeed, failed in creating a secure environment for its citizens; it couldn't also create proper conditions for the education of the young people and even a basic national healthcare system. The institutions are weak and ineffective, because of the instability brought about by the civil war and the officials' corruption. Finally, social exclusion is also a reality, because, despite the wealth brought by the oil production, the large majority of the population live under a social and economic inequality intensified by a patronage network and ethnic-oriented violent discrimination.

The different dimensions of human security have also been affected in this context where state fragility and armed conflict prevail. The South Sudanese state failed to guarantee the freedom of want and the freedom of fear of its population, which together constitute the main goals of human security. Freedom from want, consisting of economic, food and health securities, fell short. The majority of the population lacks basic income and real job opportunities because of the terrible economic situation of the country. They are also facing a severe food crisis. A basic healthcare system that can answer to their health needs is nearly inexistent. As for freedom from fear, it is even in a more tragic situation. The natural and environmental conditions in which the population lives are affected by deforestation and by climate change, creating a serious threat to their agricultural and pastoral lifestyle. In the chaos brought by the civil war, their life is constantly threatened by either the government repression or the opposition forces assaults. Intercommunal violence is also widespread, fueled by the natural resources scarcity and the regime and the opposition actions. Last, the country is going through a political decay dominated by corruption, impunity, authoritarianism.

In short, the internal armed conflict erupted in South Sudan affected profoundly both state security and population safety. The very foundations of statehood, though weak at the beginning, have been considerably damaged, revealing a state incapacity. The spillovers of that state decay are reflected not only on the state apparatus and the society as a whole but also are perceived in the way the South Sudanese population is affected.

There is an undeniable interrelationship between state fragility and human security in South Sudan. Because as the state capacity declines, the conditions of human security become degradant as well. That is why, the government of South Sudan must prioritize, first of all, the human dimension of its instability, and subsequently, the state apparatus. But this also could open a dilemmatic situation: as long as the state suffers from a fragility, it wouldn't possibly be able to achieve human security at the desired level; and as long as human security is severely disrupted, the state will appear fragile as it is incapable to fulfill its very functions. For that reason, in the South Sudanese case, it is crucial to find a definitive cessation of violence to create a social and political atmosphere in which both the state and the citizens could be, at least, free from basic threats.

It is also important to understand the complexity underlying the political situation of South Sudan. As a young country, even in a situation of a total absence of armed conflict, it still would be lacking a political tradition of a sovereign state. With the existence of multiple tribes and a sense of strong ethnic identity, it is not surprising that intercommunal violence can be easily triggered in South Sudan, just like in many Sub-Saharan countries. In societies where ethnicity is more relevant than citizenship, ethnic conflict can easily be a challenge for

both the state and the population. Besides, some situations can be beyond state capacity. For example, the South Sudanese state cannot be blamed for the consequences of climate change brought in the country, because, as a non-industrial country, it doesn't create carbon emissions to a point of affecting the climate. But since deforestation contributes to climate change, it is within its responsibility to regulate the use of the natural resources available. Furthermore, in South Sudan's fragility, some external factors could have played a role³. As already mentioned before, despite the United Nations arms embargo, the United States continued to sell weapons to the South Sudanese regime. The indirect impact of such an action is threefold. First, it can protract the conflict. Second, it makes the military confrontation deadlier, as the conflict is being prolonged. And third, it makes the regime militarily strong and less accountable in its actions. However, there is an equal responsibility of the opposition not only in the instability of the state but also in the issues related to human security. It is the rebellion initiated by the opposition that turned to a civil war in the first place. The opposition groups committed more or less the same exactions as the regime in place. Notwithstanding these facts, the South Sudanese regime being the highest and legitimate authority representing the country, the greatest responsibilities of overcoming both state fragility and the human security issues remain in its hands.

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³ In our study, we focused more on national and internal factors to analyze the fragility of South Sudan and the human security issues related to it; because we went from the perspective that it is a sovereign country. Nevertheless, international or historical factors such as the legacy of colonialism, the role of the international financial organizations or the US foreign policy in that region may have played a role regarding the situation of South Sudan. But we think that is an angle that requires an entire study to see to what extent external factors played a role in the fragility of the country.

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