

Ottawa

Monday, February-03-14

Article 11 on South Sudan

Developments in South Sudan Conflict: Is saying the Truth a Crime?

Our Articles 1 to 3 and 5 to 10 were situation analysis of the conflict in South Sudan. Our article 4 (A) and 4 (B) were the first of our series on “Who is Who”. Our article 4 (C) is under editing. This article (11) is dedicated to a brave woman.

The accounts of Articles 11 will deal with the harassment of the Warrap State Minister of information who was pushed out of her job for saying the truth.

The news

Warrap state’s information minister, Nyanaguek Kuol Mareng, has resigned allegedly over reports that she denied that fighting between the army in the capital Juba on December 15 was a coup attempt, contradicting the government’s version of events.

Who is she?

She is Ngok Dinka from Abyei and a relative of Deng Alor. The Abyei people are not happy with Kiir for refusing to recognize the referendum. Kiir has also fired Edward Lino in August 2013. But is bringing the elite Ngok Dinka Francis Deng as “pacifier” now.

Background

The government of South Sudan claims that forces loyal to former vice-president Riek Machar tried to seize power from the President Salva Kiir in mid-December. Machar and his supporters all deny attempting to stage a coup but many of them are now leading a rebellion against Kiir’s administration.

Ms Kuol is the first state minister to quit during the current crisis, which has led to 10,000 deaths, according to the International Crisis Group. The United Nations estimates that 740,000 people have been displaced. Jonglei State saw a purge of anti-Kiir ministers in December 2013.

Multiple officials and security sources told “*Sudan Tribune*” on Sunday that Kuol was forced to resign after she was accused of showing support for Riek Machar and the rebels. Joseph Anei Madoor, director for public relations and political affairs in the office of Warrap’s Governor Nyandeng Malek Deliech, told “*Sudan Tribune*”, that Kuol’s resignation was due to personal problems. He stated that "Yes, she has resigned but her decision was prompted by her personal or individual problems that are not connected with our performance as the government", Madoor said on Sunday.

The Director General of South Sudan’s Internal Security Services (SSISS), Akol Koor Kuc, flew to Kuacjok, the capital of Warrap state, on Saturday on a special flight from Juba. The trip is

believed to have been to present evidence to Governor Nyandeng Malek Deliech that Ms. Kuol is somehow connected to Machar's rebels - SPLM/A- In Opposition.

Minister Kuol seems to have been under the surveillance of SSISS and the material gathered was displayed to the Government of Warrap (The Home State of Kiir).

Four charges were brought against the State minister of information:

1. The first charge was that she was found talking to individuals, including Deng Alor, who are considered loyal to the former vice president Riek Machar before and after they were accused and arrested on suspicions that they were playing to mobilise the public against the government prior to the December 15 clash within the presidential guard force in Juba. Deng Alor is a blood relative of Ms. Kuol and they both come from the Ngok Dinka of Abyei.
2. The second charge is that she denied in an interview with state radio that what happened in Juba, on December 15 last year, was an attempted coup to depose President Salva Kiir Mayardit from power, but was a clash within the presidential guards.
3. The third charge was that she accused South Sudan's army - the SPLA - of targeting Nuer civilians in Juba and said that soldiers who committed the attacks should be held responsible-even Kiir said that.
4. The last charge was that she denounced pro-government protesters in January which held placards carrying slogans against Riek Machar, arguing that the group had little evidence to prove that the former had planned to carry out a coup.

The core of this information came from a report by Nyandeng Malek from Warrap

The big questions are:

1. Are these personal positions by Minister Kuol crimes worthy of laying "Charges" against her?
2. Is meeting a blood relative a crime?
3. The rouge Dinka Tiger Brigade did kill Nuers indiscriminately in Juba and 7 of them have been arrested although the number of culprits is far bigger.
4. Not only Ms. Kuol, but the entire world, including the US's Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, has denied that it is a coup.
5. Why is it so important for the Director of SSISS to muzzle Ms. Kuol so fast and so promptly by taking a private plane to oust her?

This and the massive negative fallout of Addis Talks (Not yet told) tell us that all is not well and that we may not have seen the near end of the violence. Please wait for our article 12 tomorrow night for the worrying possible twist.

Subsahara Centre
Ottawa
Canada