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POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

- In the longer-term, policymakers should focus on creating an enabling environment for the and security situation has stabilized; building a foundation for longer-term reforms, including the constitutional development process, public spending and economic reforms, and transitional justice processes envisaged in the R-ARCSS; and developing a plan for elections, currently scheduled for the end of 2022.
- For elections, the international community should consider assuming responsibility for key electoral functions alongside the national election management bodies to help ensure the integrity of the process and limit the potential for electoral violence.<sup>2</sup>

In June 2020, thousands of Lou Nuer youth were seen marching on Murle villages in the neighboring Pibor administrative area. The scene was reminiscent of chronic intercommunal violence that predates the civil war that broke out in December 2013. The attacks were purportedly in retaliation for Murle offensives in May 2020, including an attack on Pieri that claimed nearly 300 lives, which themselves were in retaliation for Lou Nuer attacks in February.<sup>3</sup>

This surge in inter-communal violence is not restricted to Jonglei. Similar trends have been reported in Warrap, Lakes, Western Bahr-el-Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile, Central Equatoria and Abyei.<sup>4</sup> According

source of violence affecting civilians. Findings from the UN Commission on Human Rights in South

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in South Sudan, David Shearer, has traced the increase in violence to a “vacuum of power” resulting from the parties’ delay in agreeing on the allocation of positions in state and local governments,

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These developments are taking place against the backdrop of a peace process that has been characterized by delays and deadlock among elites at the center. While the extended pre-transitional period provided time for mediators and diplomats to convince the parties to compromise on contentious issues, it also contributed to the deteriorating security situation.<sup>7</sup> As the parties struggle

<sup>1</sup> I ] Z J C b VcV Zb Zci d[ ZaXi dch hVb dc\ i ] Z YZVh i ] Vi X1 bZch e j i [ dg Vg Yj g e \ g/hhgidi h Xdchj aVi dch c i ] Z C Vi dCva9 V ad \ j Z # HZZ Hdj i ] H j Yvc C Vi dCva9 V ad \ j Z I ] ] Z E Z de a z = V k Z H e d Z c / : b Z g c \ 8 dch Z ch j h [ g t b i ] Z < g / h h g d i h 8 dch j a Vi dch d c i ] Z 9 g k Z g h d [ 8 g h Z h c Hdj i ] H j Yvc l e # & & & ] i i e h \$ \$ I I # h c V i d C v A V a d \ j Z # g \$ e X d c i Z c i \$ e a d V Y h \$ ] Z E Z de a z = V k Z H e d Z c # ? j a n " % & " & # Y [ #

( 6 h g Z X c i a n V h ? j a n " % & + % % % Y h e a X Z Y e Z de a z Z Y i d h Z Z g [ j \ Z c Z m i d V W h Z d [ i ] Z J c I Z Y C V i d C h B h h d c c Hdj i ] H j Yvc l j C B # H H c E W d g l ] Z c i ] Z k A A Z d [ A j V c d a z I V h V i i V X Z Y V h V b Z Y \ g j e h # H Z Z J C B # H e g h h g z V h Z I ! ] d j h V c Y h d [ V b a z h " Z Z [ g h ] k d a z c X Z c ? d c \ a z V c Y h Z Z " h V c X i j V g n V i J C V W h Z E ( ? j a # % % ! ] i i e h \$ \$ c b h h # c b h h d c h d g \$ j d j h V c Y h [ V b a z h " Z Z [ g h ] k d a z c X Z d c \ a z V c Y h Z Z " h V c X i j V g n j c V W h Z # 6 X d g c \ e \ i d i ] Z J C I V h Z g Z h d [ V i i V X h c ? d c \ a z H V i Z V c Y i ] Z < g V i Z g E W d g e Y b c h i g i k Z 6 g Z V [ g b b Y : Z W j V g n i d Z V g n B V g ] a z i " X k a V c h Y Z V Y # B d h i d [ i ] Z " + + i d b Z c V c Y X \ a g c W W j X i Z Y Y g e \ i ] Z \ i e \ ] V k Z c d i W Z Z c g z a V h Z Y [ g b X V e i k i n # J C Z I h i K X i b h d [ c i Z g d b b j c V a k d a z c X Z c Hdj i ] H j Yvc Y Z h Z g Z j h i X Z ! i g i ] V c Y g z e V g i d c h / 7 V X ] Z a z i E " B V n " % % ! ] i i e h \$ \$ Z I h j c # i g \$ Z c S h i d " g n \$ % % \$ % \$ % + ) . . Ch Z Z V a h d = j b V c G \ i h L V i X ! H d j i ] H j Yvc C Z Z Y h i d 6 Y Y g h h 8 n X a z h d [ c i Z g d b b j c V a a a e h E % B V g ] " % % ! ] i i e h \$ \$ I I I # g # i g \$ c Z I h \$ % % \$ % \$ % \$ % h d j i ] h j Yvc " C Z Z Y h V Y Y g h h X n X a z h " c i Z g d b b j c V a a a e h E #

) H Z Z Z a # 6 a j V Y = V i V g t D k Z g a # % % e Z de a z Y h e a X Z Y c a i Z h i X a h ] Z h c 8 : H i : n Z G W Y d l E & ? j a # % % ! ] i i e h \$ \$ Z n Z g Y d i g \$ k Z g d # % % e Z de a z " Y h e a X Z Y c a i Z h i X a h ] Z h c X Z h #

\* I ] Z 8 = G H H g e d j Z Y & \* c X Y Z c i h d [ a d X v a z Y k d a z c X Z g h j a c \ c h d b Z \* ( & Y Z V i ] h V c Y ( & , c j g Z h W i I Z Z c : Z W j V g n V c Y B V n " % & # H Z Z G Z e d j d [ i ] Z 8 d b b h h d c d c = j b V c G \ i h c Hdj i ] H j Yvc l j # C # 9 d X # 6 \$ = G 8 \$ ) ( \$ + ! e V g # + & ] i i e h \$ \$ g a z I I Z W c i S h 1 Z h S g z a Z I I Z W c i S a z h \$ g h d j g Z h \$ 6 T = G 8 T ) ( T \* + # Y [ #

+ e g [ Z g c X Z i d X a h ] Z h c ? d c \ a z c ? j a n " % % ! ] H j Z V g g h V Y / I ] h X d c X i h c d i h b e a n c i Z g d b b j c V a V i I Z Z c Z i ] c X \ g j e h # D i ] Z g e d a t X v a \ j g h V g V i l d j # : m i Z g V a V X i d g h c Z Z Y i d h i d e Y a V Z g i Z a n h i d c \ i ] Z X d c X i [ d g i ] Z h V Z d [ a d X v a X d b b j c t Z h # H Z Z V a h d 6 a ? V o Z Z g ! = j c " Y g Z Y h e a z Y c c i Z g d b b j c V a B a h ] Z h c Hdj i ] H j Yvc E % B V n " % % ! ] i i e h \$ \$ I I # a V o Z Z g / # d b \$ c Z I h \$ % % \$ % \$ % \$ j c Y g Y h " a z Y " c i Z g d b b j c V a X a h ] Z h h d j i ] h j Yvc " % % + \* ( . & \* - # i b #

, H Z Z 6 a m Y Z L W a Z i V a # H d j i ] H j Yvc l ] Z E d a t X h d [ 9 Z a n 8 d c X i G Z h Z V g ] E g d g b b Z l 8 G E ! E d a t X v a H z i i a z b Z c i h G Z h Z V g ] E g d g b b Z l 8 H G E I " t ( 9 Z X # " % & ! ] i i e \$ \$ I I # h Z # X # \$ c i Z g c V i d C v A Y Z k Z a d e b Z c i \$ 6 h h Z i h 9 d X j b Z c i h S X X h g h Z V g ] j c f \$ 8 d c X i G Z h Z V g ] E g d g b b Z l X g e b Z b d h S e d a t X h d [ 9 Z a n H d j i ] H j Yvc ( 9 Z X & # e Y [ #





More fundamentally, there are serious questions concerning the composition of forces at the

SSPDF. South Sudan is in the midst of an economic crisis due to years of mismanagement, grand corruption, and more recently, plummeting oil prices. The country does not have the resources to together with the political process being facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio in Rome, offers the only framework through which to address the political violence that has ravaged the work to remedy the agreement's shortcomings.

strategy that seeks to build a working relationship among elites across the political divide, engages citizens in discussions about the way forward with a view towards securing greater national ownership of the peace process, and makes prudent preparations for emergency responses should the peace agreement collapse and large-scale violence resume.

the parties. The peace process has relied heavily on deadline diplomacy, but those deadlines only carry weight when they are enforced by regional heads of state, particularly the leadership in Sudan and Uganda. This pressure should be maintained in the short-term to prevent the agreement from collapsing altogether, but it is not a viable long-term strategy for peace. Aside from the imposition of regional interests, which has already proved a hindrance to the peace process, pressure from neighboring countries cannot make the leadership in South Sudan work together in a consistent and predictable manner. Nor does it enable the kind of structural changes that are necessary to

Alongside this high-level engagement, policymakers should make more use of track II processes to responsiveness to citizen views. Faith leaders, civil society, and traditional authorities could reach out to the parties and engage them in discussions about how to proceed with implementation of the peace agreement. Any such effort could be made more effective if backstopped by non-governmental organizations with technical expertise in political mediation and transitional processes. Flexible funding arrangements would also be required to protect the integrity of track II processes and allow them to develop in accordance with national priorities.

Regional pressure and track II processes could help the parties move ahead in meeting milestones in the peace agreement, but these tactics alone cannot remedy the agreement's shortcomings responsibility for peace and hold politicians accountable to their promises.

While South Sudan has a rich tradition of local peace processes and traditional mechanisms to engagement efforts by state actors are few and far between. In the run-up to the signing of and Army (SPLM/A) initiated a South-South dialogue in an effort to reconcile the many armed groups and community protection forces that fought on all sides of the political divide. However, this process was short-lived as the SPLM/A decided to focus its attention on the referendum on self-determination and avoid opening the Pandora's box of dialogue around wartime grievances. Several reconciliation initiatives launched after independence in 2011 ran into similar political

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public dialogue between the state and citizens in South Sudan.<sup>27</sup> As a process established through presidential decree and managed primarily by politicians in government-controlled areas, the National Dialogue has understandably faced criticism for its lack of inclusiveness and independence. Nonetheless, the initiative has engaged citizens throughout much of the country

a path towards peace. While one might question the extent to which the people who participated

harassed or arrested for sharing their views. Moreover, the National Dialogue has demonstrated that if there is political will, the government can implement a broad-based consultative process

transition. Whether or not they support the National Dialogue itself, policymakers should draw lessons from this process and look for ways to streamline robust civic engagement throughout the peace process.

In the short-term, any such civic engagement must be cognizant of the constraints, and

information infrastructure in South Sudan, large-scale civic engagement efforts will not be feasible until the pandemic recedes, or a vaccine is widely available. However, the pandemic is also changing the way that people view the exercise of state power in South Sudan and around the world. A few weeks before the killing of George Floyd sparked global protests against racism and police brutality, South Sudan witnessed a number of demonstrations of public discontent and disobedience, including a protest against sexual violence by women's organizations who observed social distancing and wore masks even as they decried government inaction on the issue. The willingness of women's rights activists to speak out on the issue of sexual violence demonstrates the importance that people attach to justice, even in the midst of an emergency situation.

Civic engagement programs, whether led by government or civil society, can provide forums for people to air their views in a more controlled fashion so that they do not have to resort to street protests, or worse yet, take up arms, for their grievances to be heard.<sup>30</sup> While this may not be safe to do given the current public health crisis, the government and its development partners can use this time as the world struggles to bring the pandemic under control to initiate dialogue with key

<sup>1</sup> + HZZ 9Vky'c#9Zc\l'B Vii] Zl 'EgtX] Vg' VcY' 7Za nh'AdeZo'HZVg] '[dgV' CZl ' 7Z\ 'cc'c\ 'EZgZei 'dch'd[ 'l g j]!'?'j hi 'XZl' GZXdC'X'Vi 'dc' VcY' =ZVat' 'c' Hdj i] 'Hj YVc' Hdj i] 'Hj YVc' AVl 'HdXZin' HHAHl 'VcY' i] Z' J c' tZY' CVi 'dch' 9ZkZateb Zci 'Egd' g\ b b Z' Lj C9Ei' l' 2? c# ' %&\* !' !' e# . !' l iieh/ \$ \$ I I #hh' cYe# dg \$Xdci Zci \$hdj i] Thj YVc \$Zc \$ db Z \$eVd/ gn \$Yz b dXg\ i' XT' dkZg' VcXZ \$eZgZei 'dc' hj gZn' dc' i' g i] ' ' j hi 'XZ' 'gZXdC' 'aV' i 'dc' VcY' ] ZVat' ' \$ i b a#

<sup>2</sup> , HZZ Hdj i] Hj YVc' CVi 'dc' Va9' Vad\ j Zl ZVh' tZl' l iieh/ \$ \$ I I #hcVi 'dc' Va' 'Vad\ j Z# dg #

<sup>3</sup> - 6XXdg' c\ 'id i] Z' B= GHH' 9Zhe' tZi] Z' Xgt' Xhb h' VVd\ j i] Z' cdc' eVg' X' eVi 'dc' d[ 'h' c^ Xvci hZXi 'dch' d[ i] Z' Hdj i] Hj YVcZ' hZi] Z' dg' Vc' hZg' d[ i] Z' CVi 'dc' Va9' Vad\ j Z' h' gkZ' id' Z' chj g' i] Vi i] Z' Xdchj aVi 'dch' l Zg' Vh' [gZ' VcY' XvCY' Vh' edhh' VZ' # ] Z' 9' Vad\ j Z' b Vc' V\ Z' id' \Vi] ZgVl 'YZ' g' c\ Z' d[ 'kZl h' [g\ b i] Z' e'j VdX' dc' i] Z' g' di' Xv' hZ' h' d[ i] Z' Xdc' Xi' VcY' gZ' XZ' kZY' hj g' egh' c\ an' XvCY' Y' g' hedchZ' h' c' Xj Y' c\ 'hj Wb' 'hh' 'dch' Viig' VY' i' 'c\ 'Vd\ b Z' id' i] Z' \dkZg' b Zci [dgj] Z' Xgh' h' c' Hdj i] Hj YVc' # ' 9Zhe' tZi] Z' Y^ Xj a' Zh' hj g' g' cY' c\ i] Z' CVi 'dc' Va9' Vad\ j Zl' b Vcn' X' t' bZch' l ' i] c' i] Z' Xdj cign' V' kZ' c' \ \ ZY' l ' i] Z' dg' Vc' hZg' h' Yj g' c\ i] Z' Xdchj aVi 'dch' c' \ d' dY' [Vt] !Zne' g' zh' c\ i] Z' g' kZl h' l ' i] V' g' b Vg' Wd' h' \ ] YZ' g' Z' d[ ' XvCY' d' g' GZedg' d[ i] Z' 8db b' 'hh' 'dc' 'dc' =j b Vc' G\ ] ih' c' Hdj i] Hj YVc' !' #C# 9dX# 6\$ = G8\$ %\$+. !' ee# & . & . ' ' l' & ; ZV# %& !' ] iieh/ \$ \$ g' aZ' [ ZV# c' i' \$ g' edg' \$hdj i] 'hj YVc' \$ g' edg' 'Xdb b' 'hh' 'dc' ] j b Vc' g\ ] ih' 'hdj i] 'hj YVc' V] g' ) %+. ' VYkVcXZ' ] cZY' tZY' kZg' h' dc' #

<sup>4</sup> . EghXV] '6' da' L db Zc' VXi' k' hih' egliZhi' g' eZ' XvZh' YZb VcY' j hi 'XZl' : nZ' G' VY' d' l' e+ ' B Vn' % % !' ] iieh/ \$ \$ ZnZg' Y' d' # dg \$ db Zc' VXi' k' hih' egli' iZhi' g' eZ' XvZh' YZb VcY' j hi 'XZ' #

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stakeholders, including opposition groups, faith leaders, traditional authorities and civil society, to consider how public dialogue might be streamlined throughout the transitional processes provided for in the R-ARCSS and to put in place structures and processes that will enable it to proceed in a timely and effective manner once the situation is conducive. Critically, civic engagement activities should go beyond a simple airing of grievances and listing of the many things that should be done to helping people to organize and become active agents in the reform process. Participants in these activities should consider how their ideas and recommendations will be implemented in light of the prevailing social, political and economic constraints and coordinate their plans with existing structures and institutions at the local level.

optimistic than the preceding ones. The notion of emergency preparedness is founded on the

see a recurrence of intense violence targeting civilian centers. As seen in the episodes of violence in Juba in December 2013 and July 2016, and the countless outbreaks in urban and rural areas throughout the country, restoring basic security in the wake of large-scale violence requires an urgent and decisive response.

In such a scenario, mediators and diplomats should act swiftly to bring pressure to bear on the parties to cease hostilities and enter into dialogue, while the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) maintains its open gate policies at protection of civilian (POC) sites and takes more bold action to protect civilian centers and establish safe corridors outside the POCs. Civic actors should have mechanisms in place to support one another and regroup as soon as possible to help shape narratives and inform responses to the crisis, while delegations of faith leaders, civil society and traditional authorities could engage government and opposition forces at various levels to try to mitigate harms against civilians and encourage dialogue. These sorts of coordinated responses are made all the more challenging by the fog of war and plans must be put in place ahead of time to have any chance of success.

Developing longer-term strategies that seek to promote peace over the next three to four years

some of the major benchmarks and putting in place mechanisms to assess progress towards those goals is a critically important means of keeping the agreement on track. Three areas could be considered, in this regard: return and resettlement of displaced populations, the longer-term transformational agenda, and national elections, currently scheduled for the end of 2022.



Pressuring people to return home in this volatile situation is deeply problematic on many levels. When people return home only to be forcibly displaced once again, as has happened repeatedly

whether the more formal court, police and prison systems or the more informal customary systems that exist at the community level throughout the country, can help to reestablish security and build resilience at a small fraction of the cost of the humanitarian response. The R-TGONU and its international partners should scale up programming while they continue to invest in some of the new accountability mechanisms that have been introduced in recent years, including the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Court, mobile courts for the POCs and other areas that do not have access to a permanent court, and special courts presided over by statutory court judges and chiefs

role in access to justice and legal aid programming by monitoring the functioning of the justice system and working to protect basic rights.<sup>34</sup> Much of the progress that was made on this front

There is an urgent need to reengage with this type of programming both to serve an immediate

The R-ARCSS envisages the end of the transitional period coming about through elections to mark and security arena, and the fact that most of the senior leadership from all sides of the political

consider assigning the UN responsibility for managing the electoral process. This would go beyond mere technical assistance to actually assuming responsibility for key functions in the electoral process alongside the nationally owned election management bodies already provided for in the peace agreement and in South Sudanese law. South Sudan may also need to consider decoupling elections from other processes, such as the national census and the constitution-making process, to ensure that the elections are not derailed by delays in implementing other parts of the agreement.

that is needed to set South Sudan on a path to sustainable peace. South Sudanese must assume responsibility for the peace process and shape it in a way that responds to their needs. Policymakers should assess what is possible within the current political dispensation, and if the environment is not conducive to transformative change in the short-term, begin laying the foundation for such change so that people have somewhere to start when the time comes. Ultimately, the empowerment of South Sudanese citizens to demand a government that is responsive to their needs is what will

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Disclaimer: This material has been funded by UK aid from the UK government; however the

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