



6 August 2014 - The UN Security Council has [expressed grave concern](#) about the catastrophic food insecurity situation in South Sudan, and describes it as currently being the worst in the world.

More than a third of South Sudan's population is at risk of starving as a result of the ongoing hostilities in the country, and the international community, NGOs and local organizations are sounding the alarm over an impending famine.

Since the last surge of fighting broke out in December 2013 between government troops, mutinous soldiers and militia forces, thousands have been killed and over 1,5 people million have fled their homes.

The violence has forced families to abandon their fields and livestock during the planting season. Many people are therefore reliant on humanitarian aid in order to survive. Ensuring the safe passage of food and critical supplies remains, however, an uphill task with aid often being

looted as towns and villages frequently change hands.

The current conflict will likely have long-term impacts on development aid, and foreign direct investment. Many agricultural development programmes have been put on hold due to insecurity, and foreign investors have returned to their home countries.

Of South Sudan's roughly 11 million people, some 3.9 million people face dangerous levels of food insecurity - many not knowing when and how their next meal is coming. Moreover, nearly one million children aged below five will require acute malnutrition treatment in 2014, according to [WFP](#) and the UN Children's Fund ( [UNICEF](#) ). They [estimate](#) that 50,000 children could die from acute malnutrition.

Leaders from the UN, the USA, the European Union as well as regional leaders across Africa are calling for greater humanitarian assistance and a rapid end to the conflict in order to avert famine.

In the past week, six humanitarian aid workers have been killed. The Deputy Special Representative in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan ( [UNMISS](#) ) , Toby Lanzer, [iterates](#) that such crimes put humanitarian operations at risk, jeopardizing the lives of tens of thousands of men, women and children who count on aid organisations for their survival.

Peace talks between the government and rebels resumed this week, with 10 August being set as the deadline for agreeing on a transitional government and implementing a ceasefire.

UNRIC's backgrounder on [South Sudan](#)

UNRIC's articles on South Sudan:

- [UN reaches remote, conflict-torn communities in South Sudan](#)
- [War, rain and money](#)

- [UN expert: Security of displaced must be absolute priority](#)