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SOUTH SUDAN:
THE UNTOLD STORY FROM INDEPENDENCE TO CIVIL WAR

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to Brookings. I'm Mike O'Hanlon with the Foreign Policy Program.

We have a special treat today, although on a very difficult subject. We're talking about South Sudan, one of the most conflict torn and fragile countries in the world, also one of the newest countries in the world. There had been great hope that its independence and its self-determination would lead to a period of peace, and that has not happened.

We're going to learn a lot about the course of recent events over the past decade or so, but specifically the last five years, in today's discussion, and then look forward to what policy options still are available to the international community as we wrestle with the possibility of an even worsening situation in South Sudan today.

We are really fortunate and thrilled to have Hilde Johnson with us today. She has just completed a book that you are all invited to consider purchasing and it is available in the back of the room, and you can do that at any point during the next hour and a half, it is called "South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to Civil War."

So, it's not a happy read, but it covers most of the decade, really, the whole half decade, I should say, since 2011 and independence, primarily the three years when Special Representative Johnson was the U.N. Special Representative in South Sudan, living there, working there, from independence through the summer of 2014.

There is also an epilogue and a lot of the narrative carries us into the future and the debates that we need to have going forward as well.

The way we will proceed is that she will begin, even though we have an informal conversation set-up here physically, she will begin with a bit of a presentation, which summarizes some of the story of the independence of South Sudan.

Many of you know, there was a comprehensive peace agreement, peace accord, a CPA, that was devised with her help and others in 2005, and they gave South Sudan the option of independence, which it ultimately did exercise as of 2011, after a six-year interim period.

She wrote an earlier book about some of that time, but now we are really focused on the last five years. She is going to tell that story, perhaps also signaling a little bit about future options for the international community, but we will also save that topic for the second half of our discussion a little bit, and I'll come back to that as moderator.

At which point after her presentation, I'll introduce Princeton Lyman, who obviously is one of our nation's great Africanists, and who was also the United States Special Representative for South Sudan during much of this crucial period, and Brian Adeba, who is South Sudanese by origin, Canadian by citizenship, Washingtonian by current residence, with the Enough Project, and who will also contribute enormously to the conversation, as will you. After 45 to 55 minutes or so, we will then go to the audience for comments and especially your questions for the panelists.

Let me just say a brief additional word about Hilde Johnson, and then we will go right to her presentation. Again, she was in her career a Deputy Administrator for UNICEF. She was the Norwegian Minister of International Development during the period of time when these accords were fashioned. As I mentioned, she was the Special Representative for the Secretary-General of the United Nations in South Sudan for its first three years of independence.

Given that remarkable trajectory and set of accomplishments, please join me in welcoming her to Washington and to Brookings today. (Applause)

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you very much. I'll start with a quote. On 9 July

2011, Salva Kiir Mayardit, the president of South Sudan, said the following, “Our detractors have already written us off, even before the proclamation of our independence. They say we will slip into civil war as soon as our flag is hoisted. They justify that by arguing that we are incapable of resolving our problems through dialogue. They charge that we are quick to revert to violence. They claim that our concept of democracy and freedom is faulty. It is incumbent upon us to prove them all wrong.”

Two years later, the detractors were proven right. Competition for political power had turned violent, and would eventually shake the foundations of the new country. Before its third birthday, the dream of independence and freedom had turned into a nightmare. The deliberators risked destroying the very country they had spent decades fighting for.

How could this happen? In this book, which is titled “South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to Civil War,” I’m trying to answer this question, how could this happen?

As Minister of International Development of Norway, I was deeply involved in the CPA negotiations that completed the peace agreement by 2005, as I think most of you know, between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement and Army, the SPLMA.

After almost five decades, Africa’s longest civil war at the time ended, and the CPA did not grant the Southerners independence, as many are thinking now, but self-determination. The parties were giving unity a chance over an interim period of six years, after which Southern Sudan would have the right to hold a referendum on its own future.

With the CPA then, Southern Sudan had to go through at least three transitions, each extremely demanding. Firstly, transition from war to peace. For people

who have known little but war, it was a major shift. Secondly, transition from liberation struggle to government was another challenging one. Third, the transition to independence. All three transitions were still underway after South Sudan voted overwhelmingly for independence in January 2011, and later on Independence Day, when I took the helm as RSG and head of Mission of UNMISS.

I'll run through those three transitions quickly, and then at the end I'll talk about a few of the options.

First, transition from war to peace. South Sudan was liberated from Sudan in 2011 before all the terms of the "divorce" had been reached. Relations between the neighbors were expected to be difficult, but there were bombing raids hitting refugee camps, occupation of oil fields, and the complete shutdown of oil production in South Sudan.

This in turn affected all efforts of state building and peace building. At the same time, South Sudan had major internal security problems. The country's largest state, Jonglei, was mired in a cycle of intercommunal violence in which thousands of civilians had been killed.

Jonglei was also a microcosm testing the country's leadership and us in the United Nations. It was here we would face our greatest challenge prior to the December 2013 crisis and the civil war. These problems were minor compared to what would come later.

The second transition from liberation struggle to government was predicted to be very difficult. The country was awash with weapons, mostly in civilian hands. Lack of commitment prevented necessary reform. This turned the liberation movement into a political party, for one, and the liberation force into a national army.

The security sector was not reformed and contained tens of thousands of

militia, which were poorly integrated into the army. Command and control was poor, corruption rampant, and inflation and rank, a major problem. The SPLA itself had 700 generals, the highest per capita in the world, I believe.

Furthermore, the liberators failed to use the interim CPA period to strengthen the foundations on which the country could be built through stronger institutions. They also ignored numerous warnings against corruption and mismanagement. This liberation curse took hold where people felt entitled to power. It was their turn to eat. South Sudan was soon evicted by two classes, liberation class and old class.

All revenue became an irresistible temptation for those who had spent most of their lives in the bush. Significant amounts were simply siphoned away to foreign bank accounts. You will find a lot of detail on these corruption scandals in the book, for the first time, by the way.

Instead of cleaning up, at the very least at independence, the liberators continued to eat and institutions remained weak. I have had many discussions with Princeton about this.

The third transition, the complex transition to independence, was therefore marked by continuity, and very limited change. The people who expected to finally reap the fruits of peace and freedom saw their hopes dashed. They continued to wait for schools for their children, clinics for the sick, and roads to get to the markets.

South Sudan ended up being by far the biggest spender of public funds in the region. Per capita, three times as much as Kenya and four times as much as Uganda. However, South Sudan spent one-fourth of their neighbors on education, one-fifth or one-sixth on health. It was more likely and is still that a teenage girl dies in childbirth than she will enter grade 8 at school.

The money went elsewhere. It was ruled by the elite for the elite, although attempts were made by the president to address the cancer of corruption in 2012, and we did try on our side to assist in that particular process, five steps against corruption, et cetera, they were not followed.

This also implied that state institutions, including the Army, were insufficiently developed to sustain the pressure of an escalating political crisis. The institutions were weak.

A few words about the crisis. The build up to it started in the fall of 2012, and early attempts were made within the SPLM to engage the two leaders, Salva Kiir Mayardit and Riek Machar, to avoid a leadership struggle. It did not succeed. Later, in early 2013, a committee was formed, chaired by Deng Alor, now the current Foreign Minister, and through a series of meetings, they tried to resolve the leadership crisis internally. These efforts also came to a dead-end.

From July 2013 onwards, regional leaders flew in to help, the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, the Kenyans, former President Jomo Kenyatta, South Africa, Sulorama Forsa, and the ANC, they came in as well, also other friends discretely unnamed engaged. We all did.

That violence could occur was clear to many of us, but high risk behavior from a number of leaders made everything less. This included three key actions. First, the total exclusion of factions from the new cabinet, followed by political mobilization with public confrontation on both sides. Very dangerous.

Secondly, actions and moves that could be interpreted as military preparation on both sides, including movement of additional security forces to the capital outside the SPLA's normal structures. Also, very risky.

Thirdly, and not least, spinning of stories about arrests and disarmament

in the last week before the important National Liberation Council. This was in December.

In the end, Juba was like a powder keg. These series of actions contributed to what Barry Posen calls “the security dilemma.” Both sides took preemptive steps for their own protection but ended up escalating the situation, and triggered by the acts of a few reckless individuals, it spun out of control.

The South Sudanese leaders played with fire and allowed a power struggle to put everything they had fought for at risk. They all ignored the warnings, both from my side and other international and national stakeholders, that this would lead to ethnic violence.

The last trigger was Salva Kiir’s speech at the National Liberation Council. The speed, scale, and gravity of the December 2013 violence shocked everyone, including the South Sudanese leaders themselves. The massive killings and massacres of the Nuer ethnic grounds in Juba triggered a response in kind.

A shadowy group of people on the government’s side from the Dinka community had conducted the military operations, systematically killing along ethnic lines.

The revenge came as a ground swell from Bentiu, making it possible for Riek Machar to mount sizable opposition forces in record time. With it splitting along ethnic lines joined by the White Army, the opposition quickly reached numbers. These forces committed atrocities in equal measure.

In other words, this was not a long term plan. It was not a planned coup, and it was not a planned genocide, no one really planned for a civil war either, but the responsibility for the civil war, its escalation, and the current mess we are in rests with the two leaders, Salva Kiir and Riek Machar. They had the opportunity to stop this senseless war a long time ago, they chose not to.

Then the obvious question comes what about the U.N.? Could we have

done more? I'm sure the international community and myself included could have done more. We all think about this when we reflect on what has happened.

Still, as early as 18 months before the crisis, I tried to organize retreats within the leadership to address both critical reform issues in the country among the leadership, and the tensions in the leadership. All five of the top leaders of the SPLM agreed at least four times to meet, last in February 2013, in the middle of the crisis. In the end, it never happened. So, a leadership problem.

Through numerous discussions with the chairman of the SPLM Committee, Deng Alor, I pushed for regional leaders to be brought in earlier to help resolve the crisis, already from March 2013 onwards. However, they still wanted to resolve the crisis by themselves, and he asked me to wait.

When the regional leaders finally came in, it was probably too late.

Now, could the U.N. have done more to stop the killings and massacres in Juba? Also, an important question. During the last week of December, we had 150 soldiers that were not occupied protecting our two major bases. Our infantry battalions were elsewhere, in Jonglei, in particular, where civilians were seen to be most at risk, and we were expecting revenge attacks around this time, and the Security Council was expecting us to be present and protect.

Our capacity to protect in Juba was very, very limited. In the morning hours of 16 December, hundreds of civilians were gathering outside our gates seeking protection from the violence that was firing off through many parts of the town, and then thousands came. They had been running for their lives, and at 7:30 a.m. in the morning of 16 December, I told our security to open the gates to our two bases in Juba to protect the civilians.

After this, as probably many of you know, thousands and thousands

sought shelter within the U.N. base. I think during the first day, it was 14,000 people, at a scale never seen before in the U.N.'s history. Anyone fleeing the violence, whether Nuer, Dinka, or foreigners, all got refuge, and this repeated itself as the fighting continued throughout three of the states of the country. The number reached 140,000 during my time, and I've seen it has reached 200,000.

It was an absolute last resort, and a decision fraught with problems. People are really suffering under very tough conditions. It is nothing that I would think was an optimal solution for anyone. However, their lives were saved.

Increased tensions between the government and the U.N. was then a fact. This led to a lot of challenges. It was much worse for the people. The outrageous atrocities committed on both sides in equal measure are an abomination.

Mass killings on ethnic grounds, the systematic use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, women and girls being gun raped and burnt alive in their dwellings, horrific crimes committed against children, not only child abduction but castration, rape, murder, acts of grave violence, seemed to be motivated as a generational attack on another ethnic group.

This has never happened in South Sudan before. The atrocities committed were beyond comprehension, and the intractableness of the leaders appalling. It was as if people no longer mattered.

After 18 months of negotiations, the South Sudanese leaders finally signed a peace agreement in August 2015, but Riek Machar returning only in April 2016 to establish the transitional government.

The fundamental question we all have asked ourselves is this: can the same characters that caused the crisis now save South Sudan? We got a preliminary answer in July.

South Sudan had just cancelled its independence celebrations, and I have to say for good reason, after only 10 weeks of joint government, fighting erupted in Juba, and hundreds if not a thousand or more were killed. Targeted killings took place again, and Machar fled the capital. He was pursued by government security forces for weeks.

South Sudan was once again plunged into the abyss, and now I'm getting to the way forward. The country was already imploding from within. The social fabric was tearing apart. Human suffering now reached unprecedented levels.

Starvation and hunger forced displacements, and violence and conflicts all over the country, the blocking of humanitarian aid and protection forces, ruled by the gun with predatory behavior against innocent civilians by almost all security forces, and the list is longer.

All of this committed by South Sudanese against South Sudanese. Half the population of South Sudan, 6.1 million, are now in need of aid, 2.6 million have fled their homes. It is the worse humanitarian crisis after Syria.

The betrayal committed by the liberators against themselves and their people is unprecedented in history of the country. I think the freedom fighters and the martyrs would have turned in their graves.

In another ironic twist, Taban Deng Gai from a fraction of the opposition, was then appointed first vice president, and the fate of the peace agreement was in question. At the same time, the security decided to send a regional protection force of 4,000 soldiers to the capital and called for the establishment of the hybrid court.

South Sudan urgently needs not only to be safe from fighting, it needs to be safe from failing and from falling apart. This was my assessment when the book went to print in April 2016, and I wrote the epilogue. Now, it is even more urgent. The country

is in a downward spiral with increased ethnic violence and unknown development.

It is not long before developments in South Sudan will become irreversible. A rescue operation is urgently needed. How? The peace agreement is the only game in town or is it? It now has to be rescued and revitalized. It must be used as a basis for change.

To rescue it, three things are critical. First, the actual and potential spoilers of peace must be stopped. This implies that all signatories of the peace agreement must be part of the solution. Exclusion of any of them creates more spoilers and increased fighting.

Number two, the peace agreement will have to be adjusted, both the security arrangements and the power sharing arrangements will need to be reviewed. Number three, some kind of inclusive political process with a roundtable of all the political forces of South Sudan should be convened, paving the way for a caretaker government. This should probably be combined with external management of certain sectors that are in peril at the moment, and that are key to save the country.

This rescue operation will be needed for new leaders to take over. As I say in the book, it is only the younger generation of South Sudanese leaders that can save South Sudan. They are ready, in fact, and they should be given the chance. The sooner, the better.

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu reminds us in the forward of the book, and I quote, "In the midst of all the darkness, believing in this change is our hope." Thank you. (Applause)

MR. O'HANLON: That was a fantastic presentation and amazing service on your part. I'm going to introduce Princeton and Brian in just a second, and we will explore after their remarks or during their remarks your ideas certainly in more detail.

Before we do that, recognizing that a lot of people in the room do know Sudan and South Sudan very well, I thought nonetheless maybe we could go over just a couple of basics for those who are sort of still catching up, and hopefully will read the book to catch up more.

Could you just remind us, we have gone over the independence trajectory in some detail. South Sudan is a relatively small country in terms of population but relatively large in land area. Is that fair? 10 to 12 million people?

MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

MR. O'HANLON: They are virtually all Christian? This is not a confessional conflict, as you were saying, it's an ethnic conflict to the extent there is that kind of a dimension, and it is largely Dinka/Nuer, those are the two major groups. Also correct?

MS. JOHNSON: It's a political conflict that has turned ethnic, so it's very important that it basically is a power struggle. It has ethnic aspects to it, but it is a power struggle of taking control of the country and who holds control of the country. There are ethnic elements in there. Of course, ethnicity has been exploited in this power struggle.

MR. O'HANLON: Two more background points and then we will go to Brian and Princeton for their reflections and comments. On the issue of the U.N. force that you alluded to, I believe that's a relatively large force by international standards, 12,000 or so, but it has fairly restrictive rules of engagement like most U.N. missions, right? In other words, this is not a peace enforcement force with a mandate to impose anything, per se, but the regional protection force that has been proposed, would that have more robust rules of engagement if it were deployed, or would that just sort of be a reinforcement of the same kind of effort?

MS. JOHNSON: You have a 12,000 force that is under the rules of

engagement of the United Nations which implies that it is a force with strong protection, Chapter 7, elements to it, but it does not have an intervention mandate or enforcement mandate.

To date, the only U.N. mission that has that is the force intervention brigade of the Congo, in the northeast of Congo, the FIB, and I think there were discussions when the regional protection force was raised as an important proposal from the region as to whether they would be given an interventionist or more robust mandate.

If you read the Security Council resolution, that is less clear. It has been not termed an intervention force. It has been termed a protection force. It is going to have three roles, protecting strategic installations in the capital, it is more a stabilization type mandate in many ways than an intervention mandate.

Correct, it has a more robust mandate but it does not go in the direction of an intervention force in the same way as the FIB has in Congo.

MR. O'HANLON: I know we will come back to this, and I know Brian and Princeton will want to comment on it as well, but just one last thing to get some of these basic facts and factors on the table. Let's just say a quick word about oil. Of course, oil was a big part of the issue in the separation of the two Sudan's, and as your book makes clear, part of the deal for separation was Sudan itself would receive a \$26 a barrel transit fee, since it has access to the sea that South Sudan lacks. When that was all negotiated, this was in the late 2000s when oil was \$100 a barrel, \$26 seemed like a modest fraction. Now, it is the majority of the earnings.

Could you just say another word about the oil economy and how that contributes?

MS. JOHNSON: Well, South Sudan basically is bankrupt. It has hit rock bottom because you don't have any income any more. At the time when this book went

to print, I calculated and we calculated that South Sudan was able to keep \$4 a barrel, and that basically is close to nothing.

At this point in time, they have a situation where they are in arrears to Sudan for the fees, and the deal they got, as I'm saying in the book, they got a very lucrative deal on the transit fees, and of course, it didn't have a clause or variation with the dollar fluctuations of the oil market, which is a big concern.

That implies that Sudan is getting a huge amount, actually they are the ones benefitting from the production in the South and not South Sudan much.

The other aspect that one needs to know is that South Sudan has also been borrowing against future oil reserves and future oil production. The country is heavily indebted. There is a discussion as to whether it is 4 or \$7 billion, but it is really a huge debt, and basically borrowing from the oil producers that are engaged in drilling in the country. They have lent money to South Sudan against future oil reserves.

They are now in a situation where they have done two things, one is that, the other is domestic borrowing, so they have also exploited domestic borrowing significantly, everyone that knows macroeconomic issues knows that is a dead-end. That is really not very wise, and it is a disastrous situation now for South Sudan.

Whether the economists will agree, they are soon reaching the level of hyperinflation. They have a certain technical kind of definition, but it is not far from it.

It's a complete crisis. What also is happening is what is already a crisis of enormous proportions, you know have two things going on. One is the virtual collapse of the country with also the inability to pay salaries for security forces, so one thing is normal people can't purchase things on the market, one, they don't have cash, two, the prices are unbearable, but three, you also have security forces that are without salaries, and the only way to survive is to attack civilians and grab from them.

You have a terrible situation for civilians, and for the first time in at least to my knowledge in South Sudan, you see numbers of beggars in the streets of Juba. This never ever happened. It's a total, you do not beg. However bad the situation is, you never ever beg. It's different culturally from many other countries, absolutely a shame. It is really against your integrity to do that.

Now, a lot of people in Juba are begging, and they just cannot survive. It's a disaster.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you for that distressing but important picture to get on the table. Now, I'd like to bring in Brian and Princeton in that order, and they are each going to speak for a few minutes, and then we will have a broader discussion on where we go from here.

As I mentioned earlier, Brian Adeba is of South Sudanese origin, although I guess at that time, of course, it was the one Sudan, the southern part, grew up in East Africa in general, ultimately made his way to our friends to the great white north, and studied there in Waterloo, and I think worked on Canadian regulatory reform, if I'm not mistaken, and also was trained as a journalist, in route to working on various aspects of East Africa and specifically Sudan's various internal conflicts and governance challenges, and he has been doing this now with the Enough Project in Washington in the recent times.

Princeton Lyman, as I mentioned earlier, is undoubtedly one of America's great African experts and distinguished public servants. He was U.S. Ambassador to both Nigeria and South Africa. He had a number of other postings in and about the region, also at the State Department, Assistant Secretary of State for international organization issues and subjects dealing with Africa in many cases.

From 2011 to 2013. Therefore, the first two years of South Sudan's

independence. He was the United States Special Envoy to this troubled land, so he saw a lot of what Hilde was doing, and as she mentioned, they worked together on these issues during that period of time.

We will look forward to hearing from both of you. Brian, over to you, please, for your perspectives. As I mentioned, of course, the Enough Project focuses on stopping genocide and mass killing, and that is certainly an ongoing concern in South Sudan, clearly.

MR. ADEBA: Thank you. I'll make a few remarks about Hilde's book, and then I'll explore two themes in it that I think are critical. Hopefully, we will segue to Princeton.

First of all, I want to say that this book is the most comprehensive book that has come out in recent years about happenings in South Sudan. In particular, the description of events leading up to 2013. That has been the most comprehensive description of what has happened, taking into consideration many viewpoints from different angles, and educating us. We were looking forward to reading the part on what exactly happened when the protagonist factions of the SPLM descended upon each other in December 2013. I want to thank you for that.

That being said, I want to look at one of the themes that I mentioned earlier, and this is the theme of the U.N. role in South Sudan. Obviously, the United Nations -- the mandate in South Sudan was broad. The challenges were great. It's just even amazing that someone would contemplate carrying out that mandate under those conditions.

That being said, the U.N. did a lot of good work despite the challenges. However, one issue that will continue to dog it is the failure to protect civilians. As early as 2009 when I first visited South Sudan after many years, I visited a couple of towns,

and I was basically trying to gauge opinion also about the role of the U.N.

This is what I was told. These guys, they don't do nothing. When they hear shots, they just retreat to their barracks, hunker down, and take defensive positions, and that's it. This was 2009. That label has stuck and it has continued, at least an indelible level on the role of the U.N., and even as the protection force, the so-called protection force contemplates getting into South Sudan, that is an issue that will continue to dog it.

While this may seem an indictment of Hilde's role as Special Representative in South Sudan, I think the issue is also beyond her scope for it originates actually at the U.N. headquarters here in New York.

It, therefore, opens up the conversation at a much broader level, and I think it behooves us to ask the following questions of the international community. Why did the U.N. mission in South Sudan have the few resources that it had? Why were member countries not keen on contributing troops that were needed to sufficiently ensure the protection of civilians?

In Hilde's book, you will find that there were mobility issues. South Sudan has no infrastructure, and during the rainy season, literally half of the country is submerged in water, and the only way to access regions or towns in order for the U.N. to do its role was by air, and the U.N.'s role in that respect was incapacitated by lack of helicopters, for instance. Why were these things happening at the U.N. and why were they allowed to continue?

Perhaps lack of resources also wasn't the only issue that dogged the U.N. mission in South Sudan. Perhaps lack of commitment by the U.N. troops to fight. We have seen that incident in Malakal where basically the troops could have done more but they did not, and it allowed the militia to enter the protection-ed civilian site and kill

people with impunity.

If that is the scenario, perhaps is it time that the department of peacekeeping in New York hold member countries, the countries that contribute troops, to hold them accountable, to hold those troops accountable for their failure to protect civilians?

Is it time to explore punitive measures, again, countries that contribute troops, that allow their troops not to engage in the role they were supposed to, despite the robust mandate of the mission in South Sudan?

The second theme that I want to explore is the theme of corruption. She has touched on it a few times in her presentation. I found an interesting description of corruption in her book. She does not downplay it. In fact, she actually says it is one of the factors that probably contributed to the conflict because there was lack of oversight on the behavior of the political elite in South Sudan.

Particularly, I was intrigued by her exploration of the theme of kleptocracy in South Sudan. One sentence caught my attention where she says blaming the conflict on kleptocracy is simplistic, and she dives into the postulations that have been made by people like Alex Dewar and the like.

She says in fact, President Kiir took decisive measures to combat corruption and launched some ambitious steps. In other words, she was suggesting actually there was an effort or desire to combat corruption, but when you look at what has happened, the truth of the matter is despite the public pronouncements by the president to combat corruption, there wasn't actually any desire to do that, and that was because the institutions of governance that were supposed to provide oversight on the actions of the political elite in South Sudan had actually been hijacked and incapacitated through various means.

I will just touch on a few steps on how that has happened.

MR. O'HANLON: If I might just suggest you do it in like three or four minutes.

MR. ADEBA: Sure, absolutely. First, the institutions and the funds they needed --

MS. JOHNSON: I was saying all this.

MR. ADEBA: Yes, deliberate, so there is conflicting legislation to govern their actions. For instance, the Anti-Corruption Commission cannot perform its role because there are two pieces of legislation that govern it, but these pieces of legislation are incompatible to each other.

For instance, in the interim constitution, it says the commission has powers to prosecute individuals, but the act that governs the day to day activities of the commission itself doesn't say that, so it allows the elite to get away with corruption.

Next was the appointment of Chronis to head institutions, so that any malfeasance that happens, they don't actually pay any attention, to look away, and this is predominately in the Public Accounts Committee, in the legislature. The decision to appoint the head depends on the Minister of Finance or the president. In most cases, it is the president. Corruption was allowed to continue unabated.

I am reminded, of course, I have a few minutes' left. That in a nutshell explains corruption in South Sudan and how it actually contributed to this conflict. The state became the grand prize, which the competing factions of SPLM all eyed with jealousy, and at a certain point, because the institutions that were supposed to provide oversight were incapacitated, expression of this contest acquired violent terms, and in the end, of course, as what happened in December 2013, the institutions were not there, and the country was plunged into the conflict that we are talking about today.

Thank you. (Applause)

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you very much, Brian. Much appreciated.
Princeton, over to you.

AMBASSADOR LYMAN: Thanks so much. Hilde, thank you for the book, which is extremely important as Brian has said, and I want to say another thing, that Hilde not only worked extraordinarily hard during this very difficult period, but at times at risk of your own safety and security.

That brings me to a quick point on UNMISS and the role of UNMISS. The government of South Sudan was never in favor of UNMISS, was never a supporter of UNMISS. Now, it is most openly opposed to the U.N. role. That has been a factor inhibiting UNMISS' capability.

It goes to the points that Brian raises, as a structure of peacekeeping. Rarely if ever do you have a peacekeeping force that is willing to confront the host government's own military, rarely if ever. It's not even clear it's in the mandate.

The intervention brigade in DRC is against the rebel group, but it's not against the government. Whether the U.N. is prepared or even capable of doing that, it seems to me is a larger question that needs to be addressed. It comes up with this additional 4,000 forces that will face exactly the same dilemma.

Let me turn to the way forward, because Hilde has laid out a number of things, et cetera. As Hilde describes well in the book, you have a comprehensive paper, it is terrific, the time tables are ridiculous, but everything you would want in a peace agreement is there, but the idea that the very people who tore the country apart and will have no stake in such information would carry it out is one of the fundamental weaknesses of the agreement.

The only way that could have been done is if IGAD had been built in a

strong enforcement through international oversight and sanctions against the parties. It did not, and it hasn't done it to this day. It hasn't done it because the IGAD members of themselves are sharply divided. Some are selling arms. I know people in one country selling to both parties, and I'm sure a lot of others are doing it. They are enmeshed in the corruption. They are enmeshed in the financial dealings, et cetera, and there are political rivalries between Sudan and Uganda, jealousies between Ethiopia and Kenya.

The net effect is, although they have threatened an arms embargo and other things a dozen times, they have never advocated it. You can't go to the U.N. Security Council and pass something like an arms embargo unless the Africans are united behind it. If they're divided, the Security Council is divided. Russia and China do not vote for sanctions and arms embargoes unless the region says we want it, and that has never happened yet in this case. You don't even get an arms embargo on this situation.

My feeling is the only way to save this peace agreement, if one can save it at all, is to restructure it with a very strong international oversight mandate, and that is not there now. That means IGAD countries who are now hosting -- what did you say -- 2.6 million refugees, have to recognize this crisis as bigger than all their individual interests that are keeping them from taking the stronger stand.

Maybe that will happen as the situation gets worse, but that is a big risk. It would take a major diplomatic lift by the United States, by the United Nations, and the AU to bring about a change in that atmosphere. I'm not sure that in the waning months of this Administration, the waning months of Ban Ki-moon, the waning months of Madam Zuma at the AU, there is bandwidth for this kind of initiative, but without it, I don't see this peace agreement moving forward, and Taban Deng does not command the loyalty of all those forces who are fighting the government.

To pretend that this government is an immunity government capable of doing it is, I think, a mistake.

There is one more dilemma that I would raise, and that is the humanitarian aid situation. Over 60 aid workers have been killed trying to bring aid to the people of South Sudan. They have been killed by government supporters, they have been killed by opposition supporters, and a dozen other inhibitions and restrictions have been placed on the humanitarian aid efforts.

At the same time, the humanitarian effort wants close to \$2 billion a year in South Sudan. As Hilde said, the second largest humanitarian -- the question is, why should we continue it? Why should people die to feed a people whose government and opposition leaders are determined not to let them be fed?

You raised that, and of course, it is all horrific. Most humanitarian people in this business would say you can't turn away from it. I wonder if in a crazy way we are not subsidizing the war? Maybe people should leave. That is a terrible question to raise. I raised it once and my editor told me not to put it in the article.

It is an awful dilemma, but the question is if we are serious about arresting the situation, diplomatically, in terms of whether 4,000 additional force would do in terms of pressure on the parties and in terms of our own international efforts to try to avert major famine, whether we need a very different approach to bring this under control.

MR. O'HANLON: That is an excellent start. I think it is time to bring you all in. I was going to have another additional round of conversation up here about the path forward, but we have already heard a lot of ideas that have just come out, I think, organically in the discussion, whether it is redefined U.N. mandate, different expectations of individual nations' peacekeepers, a power sharing government that goes beyond the

current leaders, and somehow displaces them. The elements of what we might conceive of as a future course forward have already been mentioned.

I think I will let you now take the conversation to the next level and maybe draw out some of this further with your questions. Why don't we take two at a time. Please wait for a microphone, and identify yourself. I prefer just one question per person, if that is at all possible. You are allowed to make a small comment, but not four questions per person.

Let's start up here in the second row, and then after that, the gentleman in the fourth row, and then we will have a second round.

QUESTIONER: My name is (Inaudible) In view of Mr. Lyman's last comment, I feel I can go first. Ms. Johnson, you said South Sudan must be saved. Could you explain that?

MS. JOHNSON: Could you --

QUESTIONER: You said that South Sudan must be saved, you said that on several occasions. I find that a puzzling statement, who would say that and why should that be so?

MR. O'HANLON: Let's take one more question before we have responses.

MR. FOWLER: Rob Fowler with Asylum International. I found it interesting that Ms. Evani wasn't mentioned, you might want to make a comment about that.

My question is how does the complex language situation in South Sudan play into ethnic violence and the challenges that there are to try to unify groups?

MR. O'HANLON: Hilde, would you like to start with one or both of those questions?

MS. JOHNSON: Yes, maybe one comment, if I may, on this protection of civilians' issue, if I can. Then I'll be quick on the two others. I can maybe take those two first.

Language situation, I'm not sure that plays into things at this point in time. Most people in South Sudan speak Juba Arabic, and of course, ethnicity is important in terms of language use.

The hate speech has contributed. There had been during my time in South Sudan hate speech used to incentivize horrible acts, and that has happened during the course of the last year as well, to which extent that has been a major trigger is difficult to say at this point in time.

It is playing some role, but I think the factions on the ground are probably paying a more significant role. I think ethnic identity feelings may be larger drivers than instructions over the radio, if I can put it that way, in a language.

Others might have different views on that. That is at least my assessment. It's dangerous but it has not been as systematically used, as was the case in Rwanda. I think it's more the feeling of revenge and the feeling of wanting to commit these acts because of what has happened to your own brothers. That seems to be a bigger driver.

On the issue of who should save South Sudan and why, it might sound a little paternalistic, that somebody else has to save it. It can clearly only be saved by its own people and its own leaders. The point is at this point in time, South Sudan cannot be left to its own devices, which implies that there has to be an international action in one way or another to intervene.

The question is what type of action, how, by whom, and what I was saying just in the introduction was that I believe there needs to be significant pressure

mounted on them, and this type of roundtable arrangement with external elements and external management of certain sectors, and by that I mean financial sector, financial management, likely security sector reform is not going to be easy to implement alone without a strong international intervention one way or the other.

I think thirdly you would need the oil sector to also have a big element of external management. I think that is the saving operation or the rescue operation, in a way a combination of South Sudanese leaders and an inclusive process on the political side underpinned by external management one way or another of some key sectors that at this point in time it is going to be very hard to see function without that type of intervention.

That is what I am alluding to. Just a few words on protection. Just to inform people that -- it is one of the things that happened to me when I came to South Sudan as an SRSG because I was not a military person, and you have to really get your handle on the military issues if you're going to be an SRSG. To my surprise, what sounds as big numbers are really miniscule in a country like South Sudan.

We had 7,000 soldiers but we didn't have 7,000 infantry. Infantry was between 3,200 and 3,600, it came up to 4,200 in the last year of my tenure. However, if you look at the situation, we had one soldier per 100 square kilometers. I don't know the numerics of what the miles would be. It is close to nothing; right?

If you have that, how can you protect civilians? People will say in international military terms, well, it's not about that, it's about mobility. Well, the problem is there is no mobility either, because you don't have infrastructure to get the troops around. You have to rely on helicopters that take 20 per ride, right? You just can't move.

As I said to the Security Council, we're stuck in the mud. That's what I said, literally, to the Council. You can't expect us to protect civilians in this situation.

Of course, this is also going to hit any external additional forces coming in. These parameters haven't changed. These issues are going to play into the deployment of the 4,000, let alone the issue of SOFA and respect for freedom of movement. Both those factors are going to play into this.

What is important is not to believe that the RPF is a silver bullet for a situation. It isn't. It's important. It has to underpin a political process.

I think those are my comments.

MR. O'HANLON: Princeton, and then Brian.

AMBASSADOR LYMAN: Quick comment on the language question. I agree with Hilde. There was a study done just prior to the breakout of the civil war by the Institute of Political and Security Studies that mapped 900 local conflicts underway in South Sudan. You had a lot of localized issues, not language, but land, cattle, ethnic boundaries, et cetera, that easily were exploited in this current situation.

MR. ADEBA: The ethnic conflict in South Sudan is a byproduct of the fallout at the political level. Ethnicity itself is not a cause for conflict, it is a byproduct of the political process.

Regarding language, when conflicts start to happen at the local level, and usually it's local grievances, these local grievances are expressed in, of course, the language of the people who are in that locality.

For instance, take where I come from, around Yei, recently on YouTube, the people there, the youth are mobilized and have picked up arms against the state because of so many grievances, mainly the highhandedness of the SPLM in that area.

How are they expressing their grievances, apart from taking up arms? What is happening is there are songs that are coming out in the local language that are actually insightful, and harken back to the days of that community's glory days, when they

conquered their enemies and stuff like that. These songs are coming out. There are certain words in the songs that are actually meant to mobilize people. That is the role of language here.

Going to your question on who can save South Sudan, obviously, as Hilde, it is the South Sudanese themselves. The peace agreement provides for every ability to really make South Sudan great if there is political will across the political divide to actually enact it in its full capacity, all the terms of the agreement, with all due diligence. That is not happening right now.

Again, despite the fact that the peace agreement itself looks like it's dead, none of the parties have given up on it. The SPLM-IO recently, about a week ago, came out with resolutions after a meeting. Despite saying they are picking up arms against the state and continuing the arms struggle, they also state emphatically that they are obliged to obey the peace agreement, and they believe that the peace agreement is the way forward. I hope that answers your question.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. I am just going to add two factoids before we go to the next round. The next round will be here in the seventh row, the two next to each other.

Let me just mention facts and figures and perspectives on this. South Sudan, as I understand it, is about 600 to 700 miles tip to tip, roughly the size of Texas more or less. You're dealing with 4,000 people, maybe a dozen helicopters probably in the whole U.N. mission.

Just a couple of reference points. The so-called Petraeus criteria for how big a force needs to be to stabilize a population in a robust conflict or in an insurgency or any kind of conflict, if you go back to the manual that General Petraeus, General Amos, and General Mattis wrote in 2006/2007, that would imply you would need

200,000 infantry or police for 10 million people. We are talking about 12,000 versus 200,000.

If you don't want to go to the robust U.S. Army standard, which is another point of reference, we all know the New York Police Department, which has a geographically slightly smaller space to worry about, is 36,000 strong to protect 8 million people.

I just thought I'd add those two points of reference to back up your point. It doesn't even get to Princeton's broader point, which is what about to the extent you might have to think of some of the local military actors as potentially your adversaries, which the current mission does not contemplate, per se. If you thought in those terms, you would have yet another demand pushing the force requirements upward.

QUESTIONER: I'm Rebecca from Techniserv, and I guess until recently we worked with coffee farmers around Yei to try to diversify the economy. There is coffee from South Sudan. Again, until recently, we were very hopeful that it would provide an alternate source of income besides oil.

I guess my question has to do with the two leaders, and how capable they would be, even under a functioning peace agreement implemented. They are war criminals, frankly. I am curious to the extent to which they still have popular support, and what the prospects are for replacing them, and would those leaders be any better, or does it matter?

MR. FERNANDEZ: My name is Guido Fernandez, and I am from the Political Department of the Embassy of Spain. My question goes for Mrs. Johnson. You just mentioned it was a political conflict but it turned into an ethnic conflict; no? My question is in most of the current ethnic conflicts nowadays, and according to many scholars, originally were also political conflicts that were promoted by its leaders.

Do you think in order for their leaders to solve that conflict, can it be out of their hands, even if they want to solve that conflict, even if the political elites agree in the peace, maybe the population and the groups they represent won't be willing to implement that peace? Thank you very much.

MR. O'HANLON: Hilde, would you like to start the response again, and then we will go to Princeton and Brian.

MS. JOHNSON: On the latter, this is an issue that I'm elaborating a bit on in the book, that when the ethnic card is being played, you risk losing control of the situation.

I think, for example, at times during the conflict, clearly there were two things happening at the same time. One, command and control was always very weak. Command and control in the IL forces was extremely weak. At the same time as the command and control lines were fragmenting, you had also this ground swell of movement on the ethnic side.

While you had use of the ethnic card on the one hand deliberately, this has been reviewed both by the AU Commission of Inquiry, that none of us really have mentioned, but needs to be praised for its very solid work, and it is clear from their assessment as well as human rights investigations, et cetera, that there has been targeted killings that have been instructed.

At the same time, you also have this factor where the command and control is so weak that revenge acts all by themselves are happening simultaneously.

Is it a situation where we have reached the stage where you can't roll it back? That is what I am understanding from your question. It is a tricky question to answer, and it is difficult really to know to which extent you can roll it back, but I tend to believe it is still possible, but if it gets to continue further, I think I said in my statement, it

is getting soon to a stage of irreversibility.

I think there is still time to turn it around, but it's going to be very hard, and very significant efforts have to be made of if peace is there, reconciliation processes, there are many established ways, and of course, use of the hybrid court, because if you don't hold those in charge or responsible for the biggest atrocities to account, then people will not believe in peace.

It's a combination of a number of actions that have to take place, I think, for the ethnic card to come more under control, if I can use that term, for ethnicity not to be out of control.

These intercommunal and reconciliation processes and lack of impunity and the actions of having a court established, investigations underway, holding people to account, these are long processes. I think somehow there has to be political actions that are taken first showing -- if the leadership doesn't show that they can reconcile, why would soldiers and normal citizens be willing to do it? If the leaders show there are continuous conflicts on ethnic and political grounds, there is no way you are going to convince people to reconcile.

The political steps have to be taken first, and these processes have to be put in motion, then I think it is possible to turn things around, but it will take a long time, this is a generational effort, to heal this country will take a generation or two from what has happened.

It is a really, really long process, but I think it is still possible, but we are closing to the moment where we can see it might be irreversible, which is my nightmare. There are already lots of nightmares there. That is really my nightmare.

I think I answered the question on Kiir and Machar in my statement, meaning you can't exclude the signatories of the peace agreement from being part of a

process of establishing a caretaker government.

Now, what that looks like is not in my court. I would leave that to the South Sudanese themselves.

MR. O'HANLON: Brian, and then Princeton.

MR. ADEBA: Is it possible to roll back the ethnic part of the conflict, I think we have a very small window at the moment before South Sudan goes over the cliff and degenerates into a full scale Rwanda like scenario, and the way to do that right now is really to get the leaders to adhere to the terms of the peace agreement and put the country back on a peace footing.

The longer there is a delay in implementing the peace agreement, the more localized grievances arise, and the more the ethnic component becomes bigger, and we would be sitting in a situation where Rwanda is possible.

There has been a precedent of one on one intercommunity talks to reconcile, in 1999 between the Dinka and the Neur. That happened and bridged the gap between both communities.

I think as we even embark on implementing the peace agreement and instituting the hybrid court called for in the peace agreement, it's still very critical that some form of reconciliation that adheres to the cultural norms and practices of the people of South Sudan are carried out at the grassroots level to compliment what's happening at the top.

That also implies the leaders at the top should actually reconcile first to set the example.

Do the two leaders, Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, have popular support? Because the grievances are now taking on an ethnic component, you will find there are bases of support for both individuals, and let's not forget, this is a kleptocratic system where a large patronage system has been weaved, and the beneficiaries of the

patronage system formed the support base for the president and for the vice president, and the support bases can be found in all parts of the country, it is not just restricted to particular locations where these two leaders come from, although the locations where they come from form the majority of the base, but that support can be found nationwide.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Princeton?

AMBASSADOR LYMAN: I think these questions go back to the question of this gentleman here about who can save South Sudan. The international community is involved and has a responsibility. All the neighboring countries are involved, and many of them in a negative way.

Uganda and Sudan were fighting a proxy war in South Sudan in the first year. South Sudan now has Riek Machar and he is hosting the opposition playing the game. Uganda, in and out of support for Kiir. Arms sales from both sides. Financial dealings from all sides.

You can't separate the responsibility of the South Sudanese from the international community, including the neighbors.

Therefore, to get at this question of how you would move forward, and particularly the neighbors, you do need to say we're going to take responsibility for bringing this process and this deterioration to a stop. Can you stop it? Can you arrest it in time? I agree with Brian, it is a very small window. You could cut off all the arms and all the financial support coming from abroad, that would be a very good step to start with.

Second, I have little faith that Salva Kiir and Riek Machar will themselves carry out a transformation. What you need is a process that allows them to exit the scene, and that means you have side by side with a strong oversight the hybrid court. In effect, you say to the leaders you can either go along with the transformation or to the court across the street, and your chances of amnesty and immunity rest with what you do

in the peace process.

There are ways to bring them in and find a gracious exit for them as you move forward. This takes a lot of work and effort, but it can be done and it needs to be done soon.

MR. O'HANLON: I think we have time for one more round of questions. I have a lot of hands. I think we are going to have to do is consider this to be the lightning round. (Laughter) First of all, our panelists will have to take very good notes because there are going to be about five or six questions on the table by the time we get back to them, and they are not going to each one respond to each of your questions. Also, please, just one question per person.

With those rules, let's go ahead and see if we can start at the front and work back. Up here in the second row, please. We will do five or six, so please be ready.

MS. ZILFOGLE: Hi, Karen Zilfogle, I worked on a radio program about South Sudan for many years, including when Ms. Johnson announced she was leaving. At the time, you were accused of cozying up to the government, and also of cozying up to Riek Machar.

MS. JOHNSON: More the latter at that time, I think. (Laughter)

MS. ZILFOGLE: I wanted to hear from you about the accusations against you and against UNMISS in general, and whether we should instead of blaming UNMISS, the South Sudanese seem to have a talent for blaming everything on somebody else, should they not be looking -- I think you have all addressed this -- looking more in their own backyard to fix things?

MS. ROSCA: Thank you. I'm Laura Rosca, I'm with American University. I just wanted to first say I completely agree that the political solution is what is

needed, but we're talking about a medium to long term game, and there are lives at stake today and tomorrow.

I was wondering what are the best practices, what can specifically UNMISS do today, tomorrow, this week, to do as much as they can to have as great as an impact specifically towards protection? Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Great question. We'll go to the back.

MS. CAMPO: Hi, I'm Katie Campo from the National Endowment for Democracy. Given that the U.S./South Sudan bilateral relationship has grown more tense, and as Ambassador Lyman pointed out, all the regional players have some skin in the game as well, I'm wondering about your thoughts on how diplomatically China could play a role, and what would that look like, not just in South Sudan where they have lots of interest and where they have lost peacekeepers, but getting the regional players as well to start to play along. Thanks.

MR. O'HANLON: I think we can do a couple more, so one row back.

MS. COBB: Hi, my name is Jennifer Cobb. I'm just wondering if you could comment a little bit on the growing anti-American sentiment within the government and also within the military that seems to be emerging.

MR. O'HANLON: We are going to do two more with apologies.

MS. BAKER: Hi, my name is Sherrie Baker. I'm currently working as a consultant on human rights and security issues with the Center for Civilians in Conflict and also with the OCODA program at the Department of State.

I am curious to hear what your opinions are on the protection as to the land sites in South Sudan and what are some of the challenges and successes at those sites.

MR. O'HANLON: Finally, over against the wall, please.

MS. BIURE: Hi, thank you. Ayan Biure with South Sudan in Focus. You said that the agreement should be adjusted, and I'm wondering what parts of the agreement should be adjusted, and does the agreement itself make room for amendments in the first place. I always thought it was set in stone. Thanks.

MR. O'HANLON: Hilde, would you like to go first or last?

MS. JOHNSON: I'll go last, if I may.

MR. O'HANLON: Princeton, why don't you start?

AMBASSADOR LYMAN: I'll take some of them, and I'll let Hilde address some of the specific U.N. ones, although I will say on the first question that I know Hilde was working extraordinarily behind the scenes to bring parties together as this crisis was unfolding, and that's what good diplomats do.

China's role. China has played a partially helpful role in this sense, they keep the oil sector going, because without them, their oil presence, it wouldn't function at all. They have an infantry brigade in on this.

They advocate for the peace process, but the degree to which they would use much greater leverage, let's say, on Khartoum's role, is questionable. We have always had that limitation. They don't like to get involved in detailed politics, but they are staying closer to this peace process than they normally do, and there is good contact between them and the various envoys.

Anti-American sentiment, a very serious issue/presence inside the government, outside, perhaps, too. We saw it in the attack on the Terrain Hotel, very pointedly anti-American. It grows out of a long history that we have with the South Sudanese government from its independence, but it is very dangerous in terms of blaming the outsiders, you didn't support us and that's why we are in this mess. I find it a very dangerous thing.

As far as adjustments to the agreement, sure, it can be adjusted. The parties that put the agreement together, IGAD can bring the parties together and say it has to be amended. It can be adjusted. It can be adjusted to provide much more oversight from IGAD and the AU and enforcement elements that were not there at the beginning and have not been there since. Without that, I don't see how the agreement is going to work.

MR. O'HANLON: Brian, why don't you take one or two, and then we will let Hilde, like Mr. Murphy or Mr. Harper, bat clean up.

MR. ADEBA: Let me touch on the anti-American sentiment that has become so visible in recent weeks. I think the anti-American sentiment is a result of misconception among some of the mobilizers and decision makers in the government that the United States has abandoned them and is taking on a stance that is highly critical of the government, and the support base of the president in particular has taken the view that the Americans are no longer friends.

Of course, that is also a buildup of a deterioration that started not now, it started probably a couple of years back when the president came here, and it is described very well in Hilde's book and everyone who follows South Sudanese issues particularly knows about this fallout when supposedly one of the leaders of South Sudan stood up to the President here and the U.N. Secretary General.

That is the history of the deterioration in relations. I don't think it is something that is prominent. As soon as there is a change in the decision making level in terms of, let's say, adhering to the peace agreement, I think that will change.

We have seen the vice president when he came over here to the United Nations General Assembly also took the time to sort of go around and talk to people in the power structure here basically to try to mitigate any differences or to build bridges.

That act itself is an indication that the anti-American sentiment that is so prevalent right now is a temporary issue that can go away as soon as certain issues at the top level between the government of South Sudan and the American Administration are rectified.

What parts of the agreement can be adjusted? Certainly, when you look at what has happened, the agreement, the security arrangements of the agreement have collapsed. In any agreement, as soon as the security arrangements collapse, that means actually there is no peace agreement.

I think that part about the security arrangements needs to be revisited. For instance, if there is a situation where the deposed vice president ever returns to Juba, under what terms of protection should he have or should he come back. Should he have his own force, as was stipulated previously. Should someone take over the management of Juba. Those are the issues that need to be addressed.

Hopefully, also the impending coming of the protection force may contribute to resolving the security challenges that have faced this agreement.

What role can China play? I think Princeton answered that quite well, and I will not delve into that. I guess the other big question is the perception that Hilde was cozying up to parties in the government, and I'll leave that to her to answer.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Hilde, over to you.

MS. JOHNSON: Let me start maybe with the first question. The accusations against me went both ways, as you were saying. Initially, it was I was cozying up to the government, and then when the crisis started and we protected people in our bases and opened the gates, we were accused of cozying up to the rebels and protecting the rebels and all of that.

I was both transporting landmines and weapons to Riek Machar, and I was his lover at the same time, just for everyone's information. Very interesting.

You have to just sustain yourself through that, and what I was not concerned about was myself. I mean my safety was, of course, an issue, as Princeton was saying. That was most certainly a concern.

Apart from that, the challenge that was there for me was the fate of the South Sudanese people. That is what I am worried about, not myself. That is also what is the center of the book, so I don't give much space or room for elaborating on my own fate. That is of less interest in my view.

I think the only lesson we can draw from that is there is a tendency to look for scapegoats in all situations like this. Any country going through a conflict will look for scapegoats. It has been the U.N., it has been me, UNMISS. It is now the U.S.

What is also certain is these things are going away in South Sudan. Everything changes very rapidly, so the sentiment can be one day, it can be turned around and switched entirely the other day. In two days, you have two totally different stories, and people are adjusting. It's just like this, with lightning speed, which implies the concerns around the anti-American sentiment, this can turn around tomorrow or Monday.

I think what has happened now probably, you have national security and SPLM youth and the Ministry of Information colluding on feeding popular sentiments over time in Juba and in South Sudan. These are the demonstrations that are being permitted and promoted, and they are feeding them with all sorts of materials and what not, so if they decide they want to switch the sentiments, it's not going to be the popular sentiments all over the country, but the impression of the sentiments in Juba will change.

So, this is all about politics and how you play the politics and how you play the cards, and who you want to blame at this point, and who you don't want to blame the next day.

This is entirely related to the power politics of government. I think you

can be quite at ease on this. This will change with changing times. The issue in my view is less about the sentiments that are partly produced and reproduced by power politics, the issue is what are we going to do to get this country out of the mess, and how can we assist the South Sudanese in making that happen. For me, that is the big issue.

If I can move to the other question related to the immediate actions that one should take, short, medium term, what can UNMISS do. UNMISS can do very little at this point in time on the political side. The reason is they are in a very tight spot in Juba at this point in time.

The political pressures were driven by IGAD, the political pressures were supported by an envoy of the Secretary-General, exactly for this reason. UNMISS is in a tight spot where it is.

The issue now is what can be done to get a process underway in which we are rescuing the peace agreement. I don't want to be interpreted as saying this is what has to happen, and that I'm not being misunderstood in any way as this is falling apart.

It can be rescued, but it can only be rescued if there are some adjustments. I think the obvious ones are the security arrangements. The facts have changed on the ground. You are either agreeing to have forces in control, whose forces, from where, and under whose control are they? These issues are different and need to be accounted for.

Similarly, what is the role of the RPF, the regional protection force? How does that link with the security arrangements? There are many, many questions. It is actually possible to sort these out.

As I said, the security arrangements will always be a consequence of the political part of an agreement, and that is one has to look at what can be done to have

the signatories of the agreement around one table, because my fear is that excluding key players here, it is going to produce new spoilers and new powerful spoilers.

I think Princeton was the one mentioning that I was the one to highlight the role of Khartoum here. They have four or five now of the key position leaders, they can arm them, and I presume they are doing so any time, and this has a huge impact on the security situation in South Sudan.

In the book, there is a chapter called "Neighbors, Peacemakers, or Spoilers." That is related to this issue.

It clearly has to be handled in a comprehensive way by the region, and you have to see them be part of the solution for South Sudan. You can't de-link them, as I think Princeton was also saying.

Before I end, the POCs, I was asked by someone on the challenges and successes.

MR. O'HANLON: Well, say what the "POCs" are.

MS. JOHNSON: Yes, the protection of civilian sites, when we opened our gates, we couldn't have a situation without control internally in the bases. We needed to fence off areas, which we called the protection of civilian sites. That is where the IDPs were, the displaced. The civilians were protected in those sites.

After a couple of weeks, the arrangements were put in place in which the humanitarians were running those sites to distinguish clearly between the military side of the mission and the humanitarian operations.

I have to say for those who are following the humanitarian stuff, I was deeply involved in that. It was quite a revolution that both the ICRC and the Doctors Without Borders, are both operating within military bases in an U.N. peace keeping mission in South Sudan. That has never happened before, and I doubt it will ever

happen anywhere else, but we will see.

This situation of saving people's lives pulled all good forces together where people were willing to actually reconsider some of their principles to be able to save lives. Otherwise, they would not have survived.

These POC sites, of course, people are living under very difficult conditions because they are totally crammed and packed, and there are all sorts of efforts made to ease up the assist in the situation.

Let me give you three important things that I think has to happen. You will never be able to have people move home and return to their homes if there isn't a credible peace. If they don't believe the peace is going to hold, they will never go home. That's number one. Political solution again is the main way forward.

Number two, you need to give people a credible feeling of protection. Peace, protection, meaning that there has to be some control of the security forces because they are the ones people are the most afraid of, even if there is peace, there needs to be some protection and protected efforts to protect them. If they don't see that, they are not going to move back to their neighborhoods and their homes.

Number three, police. You need to find a way of training new police forces that can work with UNMISS, and UNMISS can have a huge opportunity and huge responsibility of being present and help build a new police force that is respectful of human rights and that is credible to people, with presence of U.N. police on the ground, in the field.

I mean that is absolutely critical for them to be willing to come back.

I think those are the solutions, actually, short and medium term for the POCs, otherwise, it is just to operate them as best you can, improving conditions, making sure people are at least not living in the mud, trying to expand the areas, et cetera, until

you have achieved a sustainable peace.

I think that is my response on that. I think just finally, my hope is that a rescue operation is a collective effort, where both the international community, not the least, the region, is really pushing for a political way forward here, where the signatories are involved, and without it, I'm very, very worried about where South Sudan is heading.

I think it is possible to do that, but we need courageous leadership. I think the region holds the key to a large extent to this, and that, I think, is my final word.

MR. O'HANLON: On behalf of the Africa Security Initiative at Brookings, I just want to thank all three of these amazing panelists for their service to their country as well as for what they have done today, and Hilde, for her fantastic book.

I think she is going to stay to sign books, and if you want to buy one, that would be great. Christmas is coming. (Laughter) It may not be the most natural Christmas read, but maybe by then we can start to energize a new effort.

MS. JOHNSON: We can hope for the new year.

MR. O'HANLON: Hope for the new year. Thanks to all of you as well. Please join me in thanking the panelists. (Applause)

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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