

AFRECS E-Blast: January 25, 2012

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

In the church:

THE WORST IS HAPPENING: A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins

A few months ago, a Christian leader from Sudan, in speaking to US policy makers and advocates, alerted us to the possibility that the Christian community could anticipate further discrimination and harassment as the Khartoum/National Congress Party moved forward with Sharia law and other measures to marginalize Christians. It appears that that day has come. We are now receiving accounts of Christians and their leaders being arrested for evangelizing which, in this case, is any outward expression of their faith that might attract attention. To profess one's faith publicly is considered a subversive act.

As the regime has escalated action to frighten Christians, large numbers are fleeing south, impacting border areas that are not able to absorb their frightened and generally impoverished sisters and brothers. As Christian numbers in the north dwindle, the Khartoum government can now confidently assert that Christianity is a foreign religion. This becomes a pretext for further assaults on Christians and thus for the imposition of Sharia law. The presence of these "foreigners" in the north translates to a "security" issue which gives further justification for isolating Christians by a hostile government.

Again, these egregious acts against Christians get relatively little if any attention from the US media. And again, it is up to those who care about the fate of Christian Sudanese to speak up and demand more robust US action to stem a further annihilation of the Christian faith in a part of the world where Christians have long struggled to survive. Let the faithfulness of our Christian friends in Sudan be matched by our vigilance and determination to tell others about this vicious attack on innocent sisters and brothers who desire only to practice their faith.

A [sample letter to the US Secretary of State](#) is offered on the AFRECS web site that you are invited to consider as a means of expressing your concern. Please speak out.

Episcopal News Service on the Plight of Christians in Sudan

ENS has a [story](#) on the worsening situation of Christians in Sudan.

ECS Translation Department Newsletter

Click [here](#) for news about Bible translation from the Episcopal Church of Sudan.

Hope for Humanity Newsletter

The church-affiliated organization Hope for Humanity shares [good news](#) from its Hope and Resurrection Secondary School in Atiaba.

Helping the Church Serve

Tearfund, a UK Christian charity, has published an [online book](#) of guidelines for church leaders in times of disaster.

SCC Statement on Jonglei Situation

The Sudan Council of Churches this week published a statement (available at the [Salisbury Sudan Link news pages](#)) on the conflict in Jonglei between the Murle and the Lou Nuer. The ECS sent out [a report on Archbishop Daniel's visit to Bor](#) this week that focuses on his work for peace in Jonglei.

News from the Salisbury Sudan Link

From sudanlink on Twitter: Please pray for ECS Bishops (Enock, Samuel and Elijah) attending the new bishops at Canterbury from 24-31 January.

The Salisbury Sudan Link website has an updated [home page](#) as well as a new [advocacy](#) page.

ECS/Diocese of Salisbury Testimony Before Parliament

Watch Rebecca Coleman and Ian Woodward testify before a committee of Parliament, starting with introductions at about 11:48 in the [video](#) and then Ian and Rebecca from 11:56.

Church News on Facebook

If you're on Facebook, look for AFRECS, the Salisbury Sudan Link, Together for Sudan, and the Renk Media Team for ongoing news on church news.

In politics - Sudan:

Increasing Danger for Christians

As Richard Parkins and ENS tell us above, this week the Sudan government made an explicit [threat](#) against Christians, who are to be arrested for 'evangelizing,' a term that seems to have a very broad meaning for GOS. As if to underscore the danger, two Roman Catholic priests were [kidnapped](#) and have [not yet been released](#) as of this writing, and an evangelist from the Evangelical Church of Sudan has been [beaten and arrested](#).

Ongoing Attacks by Sudan Armed Forces and Humanitarian Crisis in Blue Nile and South Kordofan

US ambassador to the UN Susan Rice [spoke to the press](#) Wednesday about the increasingly critical humanitarian crisis in Sudan as a result of the government's attacks in Blue Nile and South Kordofan States, and the US government, predicting a [famine](#) in the area, is considering [humanitarian aid](#) despite Khartoum's [refusal](#) of aid for the region. (Sunday Khartoum said that aid groups that were present before war broke out in Blue Nile and South Kordofan could [stay](#).) Eric Reeves has a [long piece](#) in the *Sudan Tribune* on the situation in Sudan, as well. There were new [attacks](#) in Blue Nile.

Sudan and the Arab Spring

The Egyptian English-language *Ahram Online* reports on the [torture](#) of Sudanese activists in Khartoum.

East Sudan

Mostly neglected in favor of more immediately urgent news, eastern Sudan and its Beja people are [suffering](#) from poverty and neglect by the Khartoum government.

Darfur

Problems continue in Darfur, where a [UN peacekeeper has been killed](#) and a militia [attack](#) killed one civilian and injured another. In West Darfur, a group of gunmen killed a [policeman](#). The IDP camps in South Darfur are suffering from a serious [water shortage](#), and Nyala, South Darfur, saw a large [demonstration](#) today, occasioned by the arrival of the new governor of the state. The chief of UNAMID (the Africa-Union/UN Mission in Darfur) has stated that 2012 must be the year [peace](#) comes to Darfur. The Khartoum [government](#) says the peace process is going well.

Soccer

Sudan's Islamic Fiqh Council has issued a [fatwa](#) saying that the country cannot form a women's soccer team. The Sudan men's team lost its first [Africa Cup of Nations](#) match to Cote d'Ivoire 1-0 and plays Angola on Thursday the 26th.

In politics - South Sudan:

Casualties in Jonglei

MSF reports that [wounded](#) people continue to emerge from the bush following the major attack of Lou Nuer and Dinka fighters on the Murle of Pibor. The top UN official in South Sudan urged an [end](#) to the ethnic violence there, and the local Lou Nuer and Murle [commissioners](#) have called for peace.

Tribal Conflict and Fundraising

Activities of a Nuer refugee in Washington state have raised questions about [contributions](#) in support of the Nuer-Murle conflict coming from the US.

Oil Crisis

This week South Sudan went from [threatening](#) to **shut down oil production** to prevent oil theft by Sudan to [beginning the process](#), and the *Washington Post* reports that South Sudan is [suing](#) Sudan over looting its oil. President Salva Kiir [addressed the legislature](#) on the measures. Juba is set to announce plans for a [new pipeline](#) through East Africa next week. The deteriorating situation over oil between the two Sudans brought a [warning](#) from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. The US Department of State released a [statement](#) supporting the Africa Union's process for **resolving the crisis**, and the *Kenyan Daily Nation* says Kenya is being urged to [mediate](#). In a New York Times opinion piece, Alex de Waal calls the oil shutdown South Sudan's "[doomsday machine](#)," and says Friday's meeting of the two nations' presidents is the last hope, but South Sudan Vice President Riek Machar says the move marks his country's [economic independence](#) from Sudan.

Refugees

There are [several recent stories](#) on refugees in South Sudan from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. You can subscribe to refugee news from the UNHCR from this page as well.

VOA (Voice of America) has a story on Monday's [bombing](#) of a refugee camp by an Antonov plane inside Upper Nile, about 10 km south of the Sudan border. The BBC (and other sources) report that the UN has [condemned](#) the bombing. Sudan has been accused but has not accepted responsibility for the bombing.

MSF has [video](#) from the Doro refugee camp.

Reducing UNMISS's Resources

Russia is [withdrawing](#) its helicopters from South Sudan, saying they were there to support the UN Mission in Sudan, which ended with independence, and not the UN Mission in South Sudan.

URGE: Please advocate with your government leaders and representatives for the suffering people of Sudan. A sample letter to Secretary Clinton is [here](#).

PRAY: Please pray for the Diocese of Renk in South Sudan, caught between Blue Nile and South Kordofan on the border with Sudan, in a particularly fragile position as it depends on Khartoum for supplies and is in a constant state of dealing with the influx of refugees and

returnees. Please pray for ECS Bishops Samuel, Enock, and Elijah, in Canterbury this month for the new bishops' course. Please pray for all victims of violence, instability, and suffering in Sudan and South Sudan -- for refugees, IDPs, and those suffering at home -- and for a speedy end to conflicts in and between the two Sudans.

This weekly Sudan update is from the [American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan](#). You are receiving it because you are currently on an AFRECS listserv. Feel free to forward this newflash to others who may find it helpful. To join the list if you received this email as a forward, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. For more information about AFRECS, visit our website www.afrecs.org or our Facebook page.