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South Sudan: Advice For a Fragile State?



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visits Africa's newest nation, South Sudan on Friday.

Unfortunately, after an optimistic separation from Sudan just over a year ago, the situation today is still not ideal.

Jon Lee Anderson reported on a visit there recently for the New Yorker (subscription required).

"A year after independence...most of its citizens live on less than a dollar a day, and seven out of ten are illiterate. In the entire country, there are only thirty miles of paved roads... One thing the country does not lack is soldiers. They are everywhere in Juba, wearing green uniforms, red berets, and dark sunglasses, and carrying Kalashnikovs. They are often drunk."

While every country's political situation and conflicts are unique, IPA is addressing the problems which seem to often plague fragile states, with programs in Education, Youth Employment, and Reintegration.

A year ago, on the occasion of the new country, our research affiliate Chris Blattman reacted to a New York Times interview asking fellow research affiliates Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo for advice to South Sudan.

Blattman disagreed with Duflo and Banerjee, and shared points which are worth thinking about in light of what's going on there today

The conversation continued, with Banerjee and Duflo responding, and being an academic of course, Blattman responded to their response.

Its still worth a read on this occasion with a year of hindsight. What should Secretary Clinton's priorities be there?

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