

South Sudan

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|--|---|
| Country name | South Sudan |
| State title | Republic of South Sudan |
| Name of citizen | South Sudanese |
| Official language | English (<i>eng</i>) ¹ |
| Script | Roman |
| Romanization System | Not required |
| ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3) | SS/SSD |
| Capital | Juba (4°51'0"N, 31°36'0"E) ² |
| Population/Area | 12,703,714 (2024 est.) / 644,329 km ² ³ |

Introduction

South Sudan is a landlocked country in eastern Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia, Sudan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Kenya. South Sudan split from Sudan in July 2011, becoming independent after many years of conflict and civil war, making it the world's newest sovereign state.

Geographical names policy

PCGN policy for South Sudan is to use the Roman-script names found on official South Sudanese sources. Arabic script and romanized Arabic names should not be used. It should be noted that varying spellings of some names in South Sudan may be encountered.

Where possible, official South Sudanese Roman-script sources should be used for geographical names, but, in the absence of these, pre-secession Sudanese Roman-script mapping, produced by the Sudan National Survey Authority may be used. Following South Sudan's secession, the US State Department produced some maps of the country, which are good sources for names. The US NGA [Geographic Names Server](#) (known as GNS or GNDB) may also be used. UN-produced mapping may also be used.

Language

There are many different ethnic groups in South Sudan, many speaking their own languages. These include Dinka (Jieng), approximately 35-40%, Nuer (Naath), approximately 15%, Shilluk (Chollo), Azande, Bari, Kakwa, Kuku, Murle, Mandari, Didinga, Ndogo, Bviri, Lndi, Anuak, Bongo, Lango, Dungotona, Acholi, Baka, and Fertit.

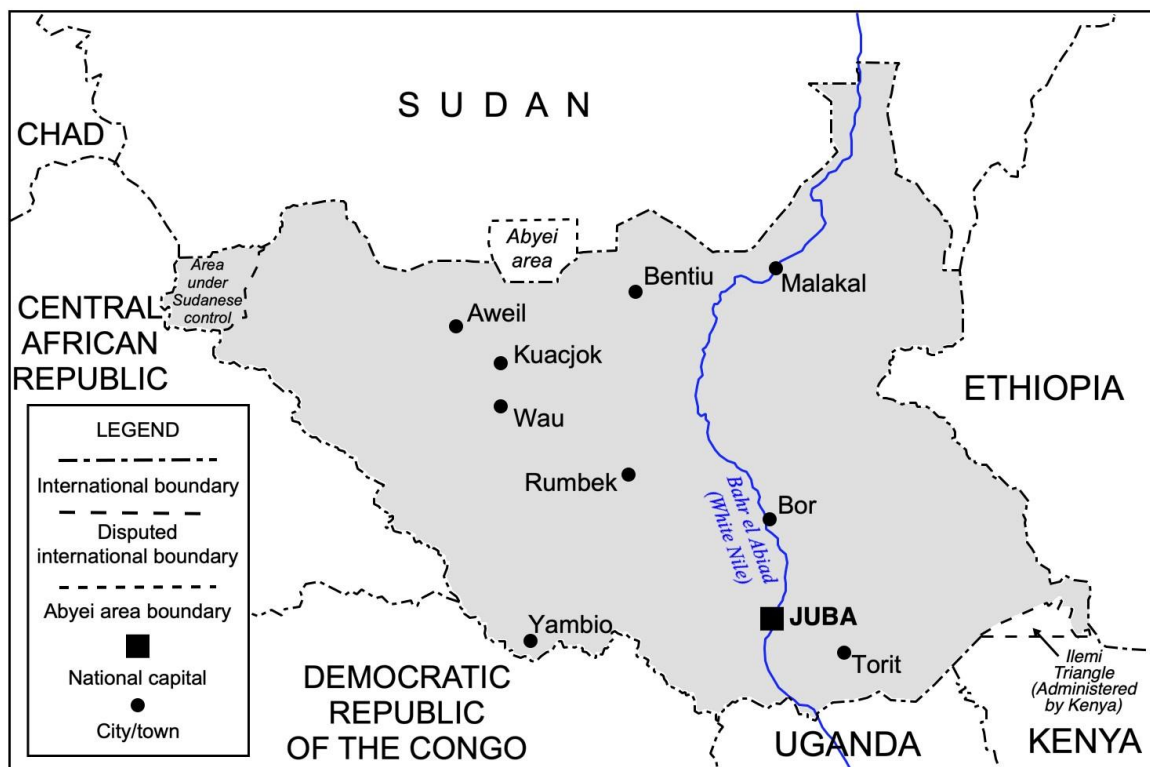
¹ ISO 639 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.

² In 2011, the South Sudan government announced that the capital of South Sudan would move from Juba to Ramciel, located in central South Sudan. However, the move has yet to occur.

³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/south-sudan/#people-and-society>

English, the official language, functions as a lingua franca. Arabic (including Juba and Sudanese variants) is also spoken, alongside over 60 indigenous languages, including Dinka, Nuer, Bari, Zande and Shilluk⁴. Juba Arabic is an Arabic pidgin, used by several thousand people in the capital, Juba, and also functions as a *lingua franca*.

Map of South Sudan



Note: this map is for illustrative purposes. It is not to be taken as necessarily representing the view of the UK Government on boundaries or political status.

Boundary Issues/Toponymic Disputes

Abyei area

The Abyei area limits run north of the current *de facto* boundary between Sudan and South Sudan, between the points along that line at 9°36'45"N, 27°54'20"E and 9°40'25"N, 29°00'00"E. The sovereignty of the entire Abyei area (which itself is defined) is disputed as it continues to wait for a referendum (as agreed to in principle through the 2004 Protocol on the Resolution of the Abyei Conflict in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement), although there is currently no indication that any such referendum is planned. On mapping, Abyei is to be defined by an encompassing boundary and to be annotated simply as *Abyei area* (use italics). The boundary should be shown with a unique, broken line symbol, except for the southern edge which should continue to be shown as the Sudan - South Sudan *de jure* boundary until the status of Abyei is decided.

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/south-sudan/#people-and-society>

Ilemi Triangle

The Ilemi Triangle is an area of dispute measuring over 10,000 square km, on the boundary between South Sudan and Kenya, between 4°37'41"N, 34°24'22"E and 4°37'52"N, 35°46'50"E. Sudan first agreed to Kenyan administration of part of the Ilemi Triangle in 1928, without affecting its perceived sovereignty of the area. The establishment of South Sudan in 2011 has re-opened the dispute.

On mapping, the Ilemi Triangle should be shown as a disputed area, with the 1902 Maud Line and the 1938 Red Line both shown with a broken line, disputed boundary symbol. The Red Line is the more northerly alignment and the effective *de facto* line, in favour of Kenya. The Maud Line is more southerly and represents the South Sudanese claim line. The area defined between the Red Line and the Maud Line should be shaded on HMG mapping as part of Kenyan territory. This reflects continuing Kenyan *de facto* control of the area, with a note identifying the disputed area as being "Under Kenyan administration" or "Administered by Kenya".

Kafia Kingi area

Kafia Kingi is one of five disputed sections recognised in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement⁵, along the *de jure* alignment between 9°49'01"N, 24°50'34"E on the Bahr al Arab river to the Central African Republic tripoint at 9°40'19"N, 23°41'46"E. Sudan claims a line from the Bahr al Arab to a more southerly tripoint at 8°38'51"N, 24°14'13"E, claiming the territory on the basis of a 1960s transfer of administrative areas. South Sudan claims the area on basis of administrative areas in place in 1956, when Sudan became independent. HMG advises that the South Sudanese claim be considered as *de jure*. On mapping, show a *de jure*, full international boundary line symbol along the northern extent of the claimed area, to the advantage of South Sudan, with a broken line, disputed boundary symbol along the southern extent of the claimed area. Within the disputed area add label "Area under Sudanese control". The Kafia Kingi area should be shaded as part of South Sudan.

The other four disputed sections recognised in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement are as follows:

- **Bahr al Arab or "14 Mile Area"**, also known as Samaha, is a 14-mile-wide strip of grassland south of the River Kiir/Bahr al Arab at the northern frontier of the Bahr el Ghazal region between 10°22'27"N, 25°55'59"E and 9°36'45"N, 27°54'20"E. *De facto* control of this area is currently with Sudan.
- **Joda/Jawda** between 12°08'14"N, 32°44'18"E and 12°12'12"N, 33°17'29"E.
- **Jabal Megeinus** between 11°57'13"N, 32°44'37"E and 11°57'00"N, 32°05'51"E.
- **Kaka**, a port town on the White Nile, and surrounding area, between 10°44'11"N, 32°09'04"E and 10°17'25"N, 31°46'48"E.

Heglig

Heglig is centred at 10°00'00"N, 29°24'00"E. The local population generally refer to Heglig as Panthou. This territorial dispute materialised after South Sudanese secession from Sudan in 2011 and is not recognised as a dispute in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. In 2012, a brief war was fought between Sudan and South Sudan over this small border town. An agreement was signed on 26 September 2012, resolving most aspects of the conflict and South Sudan withdrew from the area. *De facto* control of this area is currently with Sudan.

⁵ Between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army

Administrative structure

South Sudan is divided into 10 states at first-order administrative level (ADM1); these are subdivided into counties at second-order (ADM2) level.

As mentioned above, the spelling of place names in South Sudan can be inconsistent. This Factfile lists the recommended Roman-script spellings of the names of the states of Sudan and their administrative centres⁶.

This 10-state structure has been in place since South Sudan’s secession. However, in October 2015, President Salva Kiir declared that he had decided to divide the existing 10 states⁷ into 28 new states, a change that was reportedly part of a move towards a federal system⁸. Despite opposition to the decision, President Kiir reportedly appointed and swore in governors for the 28 new states in December 2015⁹. In January 2017, President Kiir created four additional states, bringing the number of states in this new structure to 32¹⁰. Despite reports in the media on the creation of the new states, PCGN did not find any official confirmation of the practical implementation of the new structure. Therefore, the original 10-state structure remained the recommended structure for HMG purposes.¹¹ Then, in February 2020, President Kiir agreed to return to the 10-state structure.

Ten States of South Sudan

| State (ADM1) | Approximate centre point of state | ISO 3166-2 Code | Administrative Centre (PPLA) | Approximate location of PPLA |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Central Equatoria ¹² | 05°00'N 31°30'E | SS-EC | Juba ¹³ | 04°51'N 31°37'E |
| Eastern Equatoria | 05°00'N 33°00'E | SS-EE | Torit | 04°25'N 32°34'E |
| Jonglei | 07°30'N 32°30'E | SS-JG | Bor | 06°12'N 31°33'E |
| Lakes ¹⁴ | 07°00'N 30°00'E | SS-LK | Rumbek | 06°48'N 29°41'E |
| Northern Bahr el Ghazal | 09°00'N 27°00'E | SS-BN | Aweil | 08°46'N 27°24'E |
| Unity ¹⁵ | 08°30'N 30°00'E | SS-UY | Bentiu | 09°14'N 29°50'E |
| Upper Nile | 10°00'N 32°30'E | SS-NU | Malakal | 09°32'N 31°39'E |
| Warrap | 08°00'N 29°00'E | SS-WR | Kuacjok | 08°18'N 28°00'E |
| Western Bahr el Ghazal | 07°30'N 26°30'E | SS-BW | Wau | 07°42'N 28°00'E |
| Western Equatoria | 05°00'N 29°00'E | SS-EW | Yambio | 04°34'N 28°25'E |

⁶ These are the Roman-script spellings recommended by both PCGN and BGN for UK and US use.

⁷ See Annex A

⁸ <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/kiir-and-makuei-want-28-states-s-sudan> [accessed March 2018]

⁹ <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article57484> [accessed March 2018]

¹⁰ <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article61403> [accessed March 2018]

¹¹ Further details of the proposed new states can be found in BGN/PCGN 31st and 32nd Conference papers, available on request.

¹² In April 2005 Bahr el Gabel state was renamed Central Equatoria.

¹³ Juba is also the national capital.

¹⁴ Formerly also known by its Arabic name, El Buhayrat.

¹⁵ Formerly also known by its Arabic name, Wahda.

Other Significant Locations

| PCGN Recommended Name | Conventional Name | Alternative names (for reference) | Location | Feature Type |
|--|-------------------|---|---|--------------|
| South Sudan - Bahr el Jebel (White Nile) Sudan - Bahr el Abiad (White Nile) | White Nile | بحر الأبيض (Baḥr al Abyaḍ) or النيل الأبيض (An Nīl al Abyaḍ) Bahr al Jabal, Bahr el Gabel | The White Nile flows from Uganda, through South Sudan, joining with the Blue Nile in Khartoum (Sudan) to form the River Nile. | River |
| River Nile | River Nile | نهر النيل (Nahr an Nīl) | The Nile is the name given to the river formed by the confluence of the Blue and White Niles in Khartoum, from where it flows through Sudan and Egypt, where it forms a delta and flows into the Mediterranean Sea. | River |
| Bahr al Arab | - | Bahr el Arab, Bahr al' Arab, Kiir river, بحر العرب (Baḥr al 'Arab) | 9°05'19"N, 29°26'24"E A tributary of Bahr el Ghazal, which is a tributary of the White Nile. | River |
| Lol | - | | 9°12'53"N, 28°59'10"E | River |
| Bahr el Ghazal | - | Bahr al Ghazal | 9°30'50"N, 30°27'39"E | River |
| South Sudan- Pibor Ethiopia- Pībor Wenz | - | | 8°26'06"N, 33°13'07"E Forms part of the boundary between South Sudan and Ethiopia. | River |
| Lake No | - | | 9°29'32"N, 30°27'14"E Located at the confluence of the Bahr el Jebel and Bahr el Ghazal rivers, and marks the transition between the Bahr el Jebel and White Nile proper. | Lake |
| As Sudd | - | The Sudd, al-Sudd, Toc | 8°N, 31°E | Swamp region |

Useful references

- BBC Country Profile: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14069082>
- CIA World Factbook South Sudan country summary: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/south-sudan/>
- Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005): https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SD_060000_The%20Comprehensive%20Peace%20Agreement.pdf
- FCDO Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/south-sudan>
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): www.iso.org
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#home>
- Omniglot: www.omniglot.com (for information on languages and scripts)
- PCGN Country Names list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names>
- South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics: <https://nbs.gov.ss/>
- Unicode: www.unicode.org
- US NGA Geographic Names Server: [Geographic Names Server \(nga.mil\)](http://GeographicNamesServer.nga.mil)

Compiled by PCGN
info@pcgn.org.uk
www.gov.uk/pcgn
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