

Thousands Flee South Sudan Fighting



United Nations, January 13 (RHC)-- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says thousands of South Sudanese people have fled to neighboring countries in the wake of deadly violence between government troops and rebels.

Nicolas Brass, the external relations officer with the UN refugee agency, confirmed on Sunday that 10,000 people have crossed the border into Sudan from South Sudan. He added that most of those who have crossed into Sudan and reached the Kordofan region are women and children, adding that they are "in need of basic assistance." Brass further noted that the UNHCR is working closely with Sudanese authorities to help the South Sudanese refugees.

Meanwhile, Uganda Red Cross Society said on Sunday that more than 46,000 refugees have fled South Sudan into Uganda since last month.

On Saturday, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the UN Security Council called on South Sudan President Salva Kiir to free political detainees. The South Sudanese government has so far rejected the Security Council's call, saying those detained must face legal proceedings.

Violent clashes erupted in South Sudan on December 15, 2013, after Kiir accused opposition leader Riek Machar of attempting to stage a coup. Machar, who is former vice president, has denied the accusations.

The violence between government forces and rebels has killed more than 1,000 people and forced 230,000 from their home so far.

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