



[Internet Services in South Sudan are Disrupted After Activists Call for Anti-Government Protests](#)

On Monday, protests in South Sudan were quelled after the government impeded internet access and increased the presence of security forces in the capital city of Juba. Activists in the country have long accused President Salva Kiir of suppressing the South Sudanese population, engaging in rampant corruption, and failing to provide basic human services. Kiir's regime has tried to claim that the internet shutdown was merely a coincidence, however radio station shutdowns and the arrest of activist group members refute that baseless theory. The government's stated opinion that protests are a "public disturbance" that will not be tolerated also highlights their greater intent to crack down on the ability to assemble. All told, this past week's developments support the steady stream of allegations against Kiir and his regime regarding their rights violations towards the citizens of South Sudan, which include repression of the media and ethnically-charged killings of opposition figures, in addition to the stifling of protest activity.

South Sudan has shown to be in heightened levels of instability after the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) – the opposition to the ruling alliance in South Sudan – fired generals after First Vice President Riek Machar was removed as head of the movement. Some activists in South Sudan have expressed concern over protests in the nation as causing more harm than good, while others have supported nonviolent protest. Fears of violence boiling over in the street in the capital city of Juba and other metropolitan areas has led the youth movement in South Sudan to encourage members to stay away from the protest activity. Evidently, the fear over retaliation from Kiir's government against the protesters appeared to prove successful in playing a part helping to quell the protests.

The current government in South Sudan has been accused of numerous human rights violations over the years. Extra-judicial killings, disappearances, torture, and ethnically-based targeted killings of South Sudanese citizens have become institutionalized practices from high-ranking offices within the government. Kiir's regime has also been found to practice sexual violence against women and the repression of media in South Sudan as deliberate tactics to frighten opposition to his government. The recruitment of child soldiers from various ethnic-led military factions within the nation and the use of food as a weapon has additionally spurred the regression of living conditions in South Sudan, especially among younger segments of the population as child hunger continues to increase.

The recent suspicions of an intentional internet shutdown and oppressive police presence in Juba supports the accusations made by numerous activists within South Sudan of Salva Kiir's government engaging in institutionalized human and civil rights violations. As South Sudan continues in its struggle to form a stable state, the actions undertaken by Kiir's government are a direct impediment to this goal. Regrettably, the Kiir regime's oppression of the South Sudanese people in order to consolidate control hinders the potential for citizens to live freely and safely.