

O Yei O Yei

I may not be able to find any internet for the next week as we are flying around Southern Sudan visiting small towns, most lacking any electrical grid. We are staying at the Evangelical Presbyterian compound in Yei, Sudan and they have miraculously produced internet access.

It took a few extra days in Nairobi to obtain a visa for Sudan, but it was a good time to plan and prepare. We also made many contacts in Kenya and watched the election crisis unfold in that country. Several Southern Sudan leaders also operate out of Nairobi and we were able to meet with them.

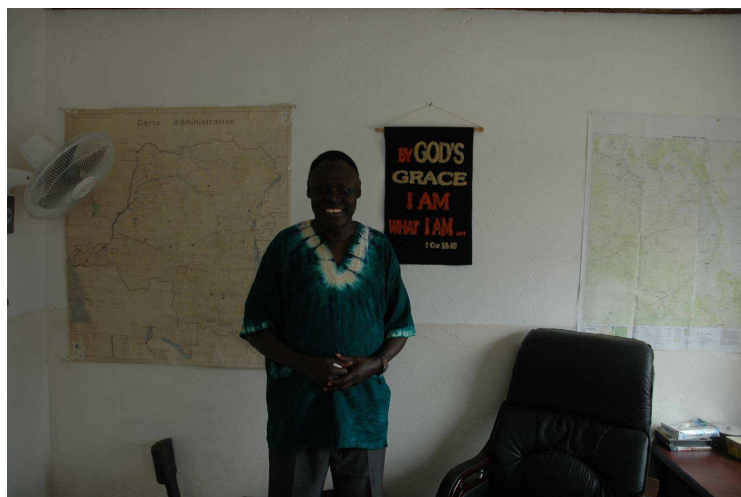
Southern Sudan is one of the most compelling areas you can imagine. It does not seem possible that people could live and exist like this in 2008. Pray for ability to relate and bring back images and stories that will cause many to be involved from Canada.

It is exciting to visit here as I have watched the events in South for many years. People with absolutely nothing defended themselves and held off the Muslim Arabs of the north for most of the 50+ years that Sudan has been a nation. I have been told that up to 4 million have died. A truce was signed in 2005 with the possibility of a new nation being formed in 2012. However, the north has instituted new tactics to make sure that does not happen (see below) It is called war by proxy. I do not know if the media in Canada has picked up on the attacks in Chad. These are reportedly sponsored by Khartoum. Similar tactics are being used in Darfur called 'Arab Militias' and around the southern flank of Sudan and Uganda.



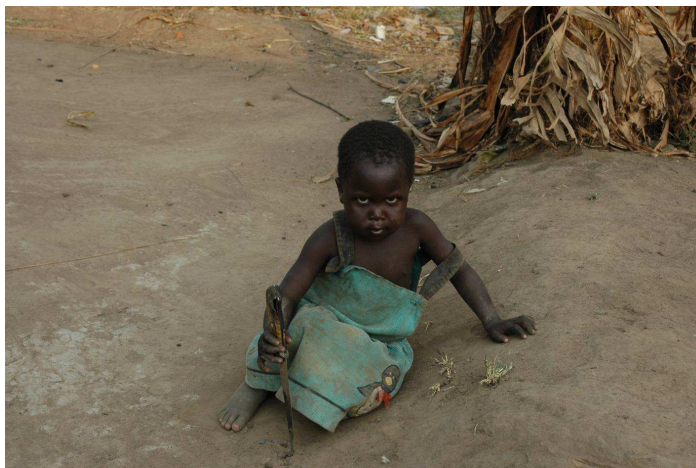
We arrived in Yei, S. Sudan on Wednesday morning. Even Google Earth cannot prepare you for this. There are several hundred thousand people living in the town. It is the dry season. There is no pavement. The dust is horrendous. There is no infrastructure whatsoever. Only cell phones work (not mine). The best house in town is a mud hut with a grass roof.

Unbelievably, we are hosted by one of the most dynamic men I have met in Africa, Bishop Elias Taban. He has been helped extensively through our UK Affiliate, WorldShare. All 6'6" of him stayed in my house in Milton last week, just by 'chance'. He flew back to Yei on Thursday and here we are in his guest home on Wednesday the following week in Yei.



In a town of dirt, he has begun churches, lumber mills, agricultural projects, Bible schools on a huge scale. He took us into his home and toured us around the area. A new Christian hospital has just opened a few miles and few hours of hard driving down the road from Yei. He carried cement on his motorcycle himself to begin this very large facility.

We were scheduled to drive to Juba on Thursday morning when a report came through that 500, well armed mercenaries were spotted near the road to Juba. I have a new appreciation for cell phones and the communication they provide for developing countries. This army is reported to have brand new uniforms, RPG's and were heavily armed with all new equipment. The group is well known in this area near the Uganda border as LRA, Lord's Revolutionary Army. They have been trying to overthrow the Ugandan government for years. Now, the government in Khartoum is using them to destabilize the South of Sudan, because the world is distracted in Darfur (eastern Sudan).



We made a quick call to AIM AIR, to see if they had a plane in the area on Thursday and made arrangements to fly to Juba rather than drive.
<-(She looks dangerous with that knife)

I have included a few facts on Sudan that were picked up locally. There listed below for those interested.

- 540 tribal groups
- Borders on 9 other nations
- It is the dividing point of the Arab/Muslim north and black African south
- 40,000,000 people, -in the north, 70% Muslim – South 70% animist, 20% Christian, 10% Muslim
- 75% of women and children illiterate
- Tremendous natural resources ,gold oil, timber, wild life and mineral deposits

