

## Country Report South Sudan

South Sudan is a landlocked country in East Africa. It borders Sudan to the north, Ethiopia to the east, Kenya to the southeast, Uganda to the south, the Democratic Republic of Congo to the southwest, and the Central African Republic to the west. Its capital is Juba. South Sudan is rich in mineral resources, especially petroleum, but also gold, diamonds, silver, iron ore, copper, chrome ore, zinc, tungsten, mica, and limestone.

These mineral resources are mainly extracted by non-industrial mining.

Working conditions are indescribably poor due to the ongoing wars in South Sudan. Most miners in South Sudan engage in on-site mining and thus keep their heads above water with difficulty, threatened by hunger and death every day. There are no houses, people sleep in the open; there are no regulated, legal rights; every day passes unpredictably and completely arbitrarily.

This forces people to flee. That is why our sponsor colleague M. fled to Uganda with her family. She was not able to participate in this conference, although everyone involved had made every effort. First, she had to get a visa for Uganda so that she would not have to return to the war zone at the end of the conference because of her South Sudanese passport. The duration of this visa had to be longer than the duration of this conference, but is only valid for three months. This created a time pressure for the issuance of a German visa. The German embassy in Uganda used this underhandedly for stalling tactics with several appointments without results. For example, it demanded proof of an own bank account, although the regulations for a Schengen visa do not provide for this at all. For a refugee, this proof is practically impossible to provide, let alone that it must have existed for at least 6 months.

Non-industrial mining is generally characterized by the absence of occupational health and safety, making it one of the most dangerous activities there is. In some cases, the holes that are dug to extract the mineral resources are so small that only very delicate people or children can crawl into them, but aeration and ventilation systems are lacking.

It is a pity that the German embassy prevented a representative of this inhumane mining work from speaking here on behalf of the millions of miners who are forced to eke out a living under such conditions. Especially since South Sudan was once the focus of the so-called humanitarian aid of the Federal Republic.

But that will not stop us from continuing to promote the union of the miners with the labor movement worldwide. Only in this way will the force emerge that will one day put an end to these goings-on.