

Trump administration violates judge's order, banishes immigrants to South Sudan

Jacob Crosse
21 May 2025

On Wednesday, District Judge Brian E. Murphy in Boston, Massachusetts, ruled that the US government violated his previously issued order when the US government began deporting eight men to South Sudan, a country currently in a state of civil war, earlier this week.

In an emergency hearing Wednesday, Judge Murphy said the Trump administration "unquestionably" was in "violation of this court's order." Last month, Murphy instructed the Trump administration not to deport immigrants to countries they are not citizens of without providing at least a 15-day notice for them to challenge their deportation.

Lawyers for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) admitted in Wednesday's hearing that only one of the eight immigrants currently in Africa was actually from South Sudan. The other seven men, according to DHS, are citizens of Cuba, Laos, Mexico, Burma and Vietnam and had never been to South Sudan.

It appears none of the men was given more than a few hours' notice before they were flown out of the country. Not one of them was able to contact lawyers after the notice was given, and it is unclear how many of the men even understood the order. "It was impossible for these people to have a meaningful opportunity to object to their transfer to South Sudan," Murphy explained Wednesday.

According to the *New York Times*, as of this writing the plane carrying the immigrants is currently in Djibouti. The *Times*, citing "two people familiar with the matter," reported that US military personnel were "standing by to assist with securing detainees if needed."

Djibouti is home to Camp Lemonnier, the only permanent US military base on the African continent. The base currently houses over 5,000 US and allied soldiers, contractors and spies. The base serves as a major drone and logistics center and is strategically located next to the Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport in Djibouti City.

South Sudan is currently in a civil war. A March 8 travel advisory from the State Department warns:

Do not travel to South Sudan due to crime, kidnapping, and armed conflict. ... Violent crime, such as carjackings, shootings, ambushes, assaults, robberies, and kidnappings

are common throughout South Sudan, including Juba. Foreign nationals have been the victims of rape, sexual assault, armed robberies, and other violent crimes.

If one does decide to travel to South Sudan, the State Department suggests drafting "a will and designate appropriate insurance beneficiaries and/or power of attorney" and discussing "a plan with loved ones regarding care/custody of children, pets, property, belongings, non-liquid assets (collections, artwork, etc.), funeral wishes, etc."

In March, South Sudan's First Vice President Riek Machar was arrested by the current President Salva Kiir. Describing Machar's imprisonment at his home, the *Times* reported earlier this month, "Armored personnel carriers block the gate of the sprawling compound and security officers wielding AK-47s patrol the perimeter."

In a comment to the Associated Press on Wednesday, South Sudan's police spokesperson Maj. Gen. James Monday Enoka said that no immigrants from the United States had arrived in the country yet, and if they did, they would be "redeported to their correct country" if they were not South Sudanese.

In Wednesday's hearing, Murphy did not order the government to return the immigrants to the US, only that they remain in the custody of the government. He also warned that government agents involved in the "illegal deportation" could be held in criminal contempt.

This is not the first time Judge Murphy, an appointee of President Joe Biden, has ruled against the Trump administration's deportation efforts.

Earlier this month he issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the Department of Homeland Security from expelling immigrants to Libya, another war-torn country. Murphy directed the government to provide immigrants a "meaningful opportunity" to challenge their deportation, including by citing the risk of torture.

This is also not the first time the Trump administration has flagrantly violated a judge's ruling while exiling humans to foreign gulags. In mid-March, the Trump administration violated Judge James Boasberg's orders to stop deporting mostly Venezuelan immigrants to El Salvador's CECOT "terrorism

prison” under the Alien Enemies Act. None of the nearly 300 men sent to El Salvador, including Maryland father and SMART union member, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, has been returned to the United States.

Flouting an April Supreme Court order to “facilitate” Abrego Garcia’s return, the Trump administration has steadfastly refused to provide daily updates on what, if any measures, the government is taking to comply with the court order.

Abrego Garcia is one of several union members who have been kidnapped and imprisoned by the immigration Gestapo. At a press conference held Monday at the Sea-Tac Airport in Seattle, Washington, family, friends and co-workers demanded the release Maximo “Max” Londonio, a green card holder, resident of Olympia and member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Local Lodge 695. Londonio was detained by Customs and Border Protection (CPB) agents while returning with his family from a trip to the Philippines.

Londonio is the lead forklift driver at a facility in Lacey, Washington, where he has worked since 2017. According to Crystal, Max’s wife, he was held at the airport for five days before being transferred to a detention facility.

At Monday’s rally, Crystal said:

The lack of accountability by the United States CBP is failing him right now; it’s failing everybody. It’s being taken from everyone that seeks refuge here; that seeks freedom; that seeks equality. I’m tired of waiting. I want him home.

None of the major trade unions has proposed strike action in response to the illegal detainment and disappearance of their members. Instead unions like the Teamsters are actively collaborating in Trump’s fascist campaign against immigrants.

Following Trump’s inauguration in January, Teamsters President Sean O’Brien invited fascist Josh Hawley on his podcast for an over hour-long friendly conversation. O’Brien presented Hawley, one of Trump’s top January 6 coup supporters, as a champion of the working class and backed Hawley’s attacks on immigrants.

O’Brien said, as Hawley nodded along in agreement:

I think the biggest problem is people are trying to protect illegal aliens that come here and commit crimes and that’s unacceptable. The social issues are all well and good, but protecting illegal immigrants that come into our country to commit crimes and steal jobs, that’s a tough pill to swallow.

In an attempt to increase the number of deportations, immigration agents have begun arresting people after they appear in court hearings and immigration appointments. On Monday,

reporters for the *Miami Herald* witnessed at least 10 plainclothes ICE agents stalking the hallways of Miami’s immigration courthouse for hours as they arrested at least “four unsuspecting men as they walked out of courtrooms on Wednesday.”

Prior to each arrest, the *Herald* reported that DHS attorneys in court would drop their deportation cases against the immigrants, preventing them from presenting their asylum claims. After the case was dropped, agents surrounded and arrested the men and placed them in “expedited removal proceedings—an administrative process that doesn’t require a judge and that the government uses to quickly deport people—if they have a pending case in court.”

Reports of immigration agents stalking courts to arrest people lawfully showing up at their appointed times were also reported in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, New York City and Phoenix.

As of May 2025, over 49,000 people are imprisoned in ICE facilities across the United States. One of them continues to be Mahmoud Khalil, a lawful permanent resident and Columbia graduate student, who has been imprisoned in Jena, Louisiana, for over two and a half months for the thought crime of objecting to the US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza.

On Wednesday, Khalil’s lawyers at the American Civil Liberty Union (ACLU) released a statement confirming the US government has denied multiple requests to permit Khalil to have a contact visit between him and his family, which includes his US citizen wife and newborn son. Recently Khalil’s wife, Dr. Noor Abdalla, traveled over 1,400 miles from New York to Louisiana, with their newborn child, in the hope that Khalil could hold his son for the first time.

This request was denied. Facility administrators said Khalil could see his son behind protective glass.

“I am furious at the cruelty and inhumanity of this system that dares to call itself just,” said Abdalla. She said:

After flying over a thousand miles to Louisiana with our newborn son, his very first flight, all so his father could finally hold him in his arms, ICE has denied us even this most basic human right. This is not just heartless. It is deliberate violence, the calculated cruelty of a government that tears families apart without remorse. And I cannot ignore the echoes of this pain in the stories of Palestinian families, torn apart by Israeli military prisons and bombs, denied dignity, denied life. Our struggle is not isolated. This system is unjust, and we will fight until Mahmoud is home.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:
wsws.org/contact