

# Abeyi violence clouds South Sudan referendum

Large numbers of southern Sudanese are continuing to vote in a referendum on independence from the north, despite a series of deadly clashes which have killed more than 60 people in the disputed Abeyi region. The week-long vote is widely expected to result in Africa's largest country being split in two



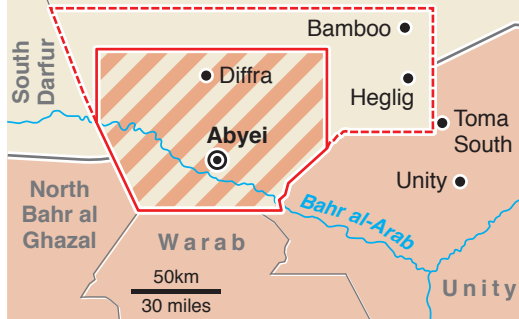
— Border of Abeyi region set by international tribunal, 2009

- - - 2005 boundary

- Oilfields



Southern Kordofan



► **Abeyi:** Lies between Sudan's mainly Muslim north and Christian south

► **Violence:** Both sides fought over region during decades of civil war. Clashes have continued since 2005 peace deal

► **Resources:** Contains rich pastureland, water and key oilfield

► **Tribes:** Arab *Misseriya* nomads from north, and southern Sudan's *Dinka* people both claim land ownership rights

► **Referendum:** January 9 vote on whether to join North or South delayed by dispute over whether Misseriya should be considered residents of region, raising fears of renewed conflict between two sides