

ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA
AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS
IN AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD



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المماثلة في أفريقيا والعالم العربي

ASSOCIATION DES SENATS, SHOORA ET CONSEILS
EQUIVALENTS D'AFRIQUE ET DU MONDE ARABE

Conflict Resolution in Sudan

A Paper Presented by

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Sudan is the largest country in Africa (size: 2.5 million square kilometers) with a population of 33 million people according to 1993 pop. Census. The country is inhabited by about 500 tribes speaking 200 languages and dialects. Nevertheless Arabic is franca lingua and English is widely spoken in many parts of the country. Racially, Sudan can be categorized into 4 main groups, the Arab stock which constitutes about 40% of the population and is mainly found in the northern states, the central part of the country and western Sudan (pastoralists of Kordofan and Darfur). The Nubi is an ancient race that is situated in the further north and their cousins live in Nuba mountains. The third race is the Hamitic group that occupies the eastern Sudan meanwhile the negro group dwells in the ten states of the southern Sudan, Blue Nile and many parts of western Sudan (Darfur Region). However, it should be noted that – Arab and Islamic cultures have been embraced and adopted by most races and tribes in northern Sudan since time immemorial. Communities intermarried and intertwined into an integral whole. Sometimes it is difficult if not impossible to identify one tribe or race from one another. Unfortunately, the policy of divide and rule which was applied by the colonialists, the dumping together of unidentical regions and the quest for identity that prevails in our contemporary era have all dealt a blow to an attempt for national integration. Sudan, like any African country is a multi – lingual, multi – religious, multiethnic and multi-cultural nation that has not yet shaken off the ills of diversity.

The country was occupied and colonized by the British and Egyptian powers under a system known as condominium from 1899 to first January 1956 when it gained independence. Despite its size and diversity the country was governed after independence under a unitary system until 1972. As early as 1947 the southern part of the country opted for a federal system which was not heeded by successive governments until a second military government of Nimeriy signed a peace agreement with the southern rebels under general Joseph Lagu in Addis Ababa in 1972. The first military coup took place when the civilian government capitulated to the army as southern politicians were pressing for federal legislation in parliament. Many historians and political analysts have implicated most of the political ills of the Sudan and especially the rebellion in the south on the system of rule. The other main reason is the unbalance development that was officially encouraged by the colonialists. During the British era, southern Sudan and the Nuba mountains were inaccessible because of the closed districts Act 1936. This ambiguous Act deprived the two regions from education from the central government and it carried no development programs whatsoever. On the contrary, many schools and development projects were carried out in other parts of the country. After independence, a great disparity unfolded especially when sudanization of jobs was being implemented. Only a handful of southerners got minor jobs. Nevertheless the blame was nailed on their northern brethren and the rift emerged from thence. The march forwards national unity was aborted by this incident and southerners thought of nothing short of full independence through any means including arms struggle.

The first civil war which was waged by the south against the central government lasted for seventeen years (1955-1972). Many internal attempts were made to resolve the conflict but all ended in vain.

The most prominent attempt that deserved mentioning was the round table conference that was held in Khartoum in 1965-66. Many southern rebel leaders and southern political parties and likewise many northern political parties participated in the conference though nothing remediable came out of it. The continuation of the war and the atrocities committed aroused the Sudanese and international community conscience. In 1969 the army ousted the civilian government and on 9th June declared the principles where peace negotiations with the rebels should be based. The declaration recognized the cultural diversity of the south from other regions and the underdevelopment it had experienced since independence. The rebels were interested. When the international community realized that both parties were ready to hold talks it acted promptly. The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the African Council of Churches (AACC) offered their good offices to mediate between the two belligerents. The government of Emperor Haile Selassie hosted the talks in Addis Ababa. The south was offered a local autonomy within the context of a united Sudan as it was envisaged in the Round table conference. A regional government was established in Juba, the new capital of the southern Sudan (3 provinces of the south). Justice Abel Alier was appointed the new president of the south and vice president of the republic of the Sudan. A regional assembly was also installed after the regional elections. Sudan enjoyed peace and unity for ten years (1972-1983).

While the southern region enjoyed relative freedom and democracy, the North was governed with an iron hand. Many northern politicians became envious and started dismantling the southern gains through the central institutions. On the other hand many southern politicians who were vying for favour of the president started staging political intrigues against each other. In addition, after the peace

agreement the central government never delivered peace dividends. The southern ambitions for development were shattered. Ignoring his own constitution, Nimery frequently intervened in the regional affairs, dissolving regional assemblies and dismissing presidents if they deviated from policy. To make things worst, Nimery violated the permanent constitution of the Sudan by redividing the southern region into 3 smaller regions. All in all, many grievances were recited by the rebellious south and the Sudan reverted into another civil war that lasted for twenty one years (1983 – 2004). Had it not been because of the political and military support John Garang, the new rebel leader received from Ethiopia, the rebellion would have not succeeded. Ethiopia was applying a tit-for-tat policy. It had been accusing Sudan of offering safe sanctuaries and political support to the Eritrean rebel movements that were fighting for independence from Ethiopia. It is apparent from this incident that in Africa to have an internal stability, neighboring countries must aspire for stable regional relations.

Once again the regional and internal interests pushed Sudan into another ordeal. The death toll during the second civil war among civilians and fighting forces due to bullets, disease, hunger and deprivation was unparalleled. Millions of southern civilians left their homes and moved to the north seeking safe sanctuaries. During this period Sudan witnessed a popular uprising (1985) that toppled the military government and a military revolution (1989) that toppled a civilian government. Two months after the revolution, the new government organized a peace conference in Khartoum. All Sudanese political parties and groupings including the SPLM were invited to a national conference on peace issues. As expected, the SPLM never turned up in the conference. Nevertheless the conference continued as planned and the government

adopted most of its resolutions as a working paper for peace negotiations with the SPLM. The fundamental resolutions were:

- 1- adoption of a federal system based on devolution of powers to lower levels of the government.
- 2- Wealth sharing among those levels.
- 3- A new constitution that will exempt the south from some provisions of Islamic Hudud.
- 4- Peaceful resolution of the conflict.

After the conference many delegates were dispatched to neighboring countries and other parts of the world to preach the government initiative. Some delegates met SPLM/A delegates in Addis Ababa / Ethiopia and Nairobi / Kenya. However, no official engagement was relevant until the Nigerian president Ibrahim Babangida called for a peace conference in Abuja in 1992. the initiative failed because the belligerents could not agree on fundamental issues. The government delegation stuck to sharia which the SPLM/ A delegation rejected and it counter proposed a secular system (separation of state and religion) or self-determination for the south. The government rejected both proposals. Although the negotiations collapsed, the Nigerian initiative was followed by a series of regional and international initiatives that finally brought about peace to war-torn Sudan. Before we enumerate such initiatives, it would be just and appropriate to recall some internal peace initiatives that were carried out by Sudanese governments before 1989 military coup. Prior to the popular insurrection in 1985, Nimeri made feeble attempts to negotiate peace with the new rebels. His attempts were rebuffed. The transitional military council (TMC) that replaced Nimeri made appeals to the rebel movement but could not agree to the movement's demand to freeze sharia laws. All the attempts failed. In 1986 Umma party (the largest party in the country) and SPLM reached agreement in many SPLM's demands. But other

major parties especially the Democratic unionist party (DUP) and the national Islamic Front (NIF) refused to participate in the discussions. It goes without saying that the Umma initiative failed. Again in 1988 the DUP and the SPLM made a great breakthrough when the DUP affirmed all the SPLM's demands including the holding of a constitutional conference. The Umma party and the National Islamic Front vehemently opposed the agreement which led to its failure. To go back to regional and international initiatives, in 1994 the inter governmental authority on drought and desertification (IGAD), disturbed by the destabilizing impact of the war on neighboring countries, launched its own peace initiative. In the same year the Sudanese negotiators met in Nairobi under the auspices of IGADD. However, self-determination made the talks not to go further than expected. IGAD relentlessly continued to engage both parties. It assumed the role of arbitrators and presented the two parties with declaration of principles (DOP). It is worth noting that several internal, regional and international initiatives among them the Nigerian second initiative, joint – Libyan – Egyptian initiative, internal peace processes (1997), Eritrean and the American efforts heightened the interest and the determination of the world community to bring an end to the war in the Sudan. Consequently, the second IGAD initiative backed politically and financially by the USA, UK, Norway and Italy made a historical breakthrough. IGAD focused its efforts to convince the belligerents to agree on the two contentious issues, i.e state and religion and self-determination. The machakos protocol which was the first protocol among the six protocols (signed in July 2002) entailed a compromise between self-determination that represented SPLM and Southern demand, and sharia which represented a popular demand in the North. The comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) as it became to be known is a great achievement for Sudanese people⁽¹⁾. It brought to an end the 21 year

civil war in southern Sudan and other war – affected areas adjacent to it and provides the constitutional basis for the current setup in the Sudan. The CPA promised the southern Sudanese the right to vote in a referendum on self-determination in the year 2011. the CPA was signed on 9th January 2005 between the SPLM/A under the leadership of late Dr. John Garng who died in a helicopter crash on 30th August the same year and the government of Sudan (GOS). The CPA is composed of six protocols, ⁽²⁾

1- Machakos protocol frame work:

As mentioned above Machakos protocol is based on a fundamental compromise, a self-determination referendum for the south after a six-year interim period in exchange for the continuation of Islamic laws in the north.

2- Power sharing:

The agreement has reinforced significant structures in the Sudanese body politic and had provided constitutional format for the whole country.

- A. Citizenship is the basis for rights and duties.
- B. A bill of rights and fundamental freedoms.
- C. A decentralized system of government with devolution of powers to lower levels of government.
- D. Autonomy for the south and equitable representation at the national level.
- E. The formation of a broad base government of national unity (GONU) and general elections not later than the 4th year interim period. About 14 parties are represented in the government of national unity on the following percentages -; 52% for national congress 28% for SPLM 14% for other northern parties and 6% other southern parties.

- F. A constitutional review process and national review commission to prepare a draft national interim constitution to be adopted by the legislature. An interim national constitution was prepared by 14 parties and political institutions and the constitution was approved by the former national assembly and the SPLM liberation council. The president of the republic signed the interim national constitution on 9th July 2005. The constitution empowers each level of government to have a constitution that defines the legislative, executive and judicial powers and to function within the powers and limitation implicated in its constitution provided that the general framework of every state constitution or southern Sudan constitution must be compatible with the interim national constitution.
- G. Two bicameral houses were established at the national level, the upper house or the national assembly whose legislative mandate and powers are to enact laws and supervise the executive branch and the lower house or council of states whose main powers are to safeguard or protect the interests of the southern states that are willing to be exempted from national legislation based on sharia law. According to the power sharing protocol, the council of states is a full partner of the National Assembly in issuing all legislation with simple majority, passing legislation that affects the states with two thirds majority amending the constitution with three quarters majority and approving the bill of allocation of revenue and resources⁽³⁾. It has the power of reviewing legislation passed by the National Assembly and also it has a final say when decentralization and state interests are at stake. When a bill is rejected by the president, the council

of states acts as an umpire. If the national assembly is fixed on having its bill passed it must win over the two thirds majority of the second house. The council of states functions as a body that is closer to the states and more responsive to their will. This may prevent policy decisions from being over centralized and make the second chamber an expression of decentralization of the country and manifestation of the autonomy of its sub-units. The National Assembly is composed of 450 seats representing 17 parties and political organizations meanwhile the council of states is composed of 50 seats with two representatives from each of the 25 states and two observers from Abyei area.

3- Wealth Sharing: ⁽⁴⁾

On a per capita basis Sudan, is among the world's poorest, least developed and highly indebted countries due to war. Wealth sharing formula provided for new hope. It created parallel central banks for north and south and specific revenue sharing formulas for the south and the disputed areas of southern Kordofan state, Blue Nile state and Abyei area. The government of southern Sudan and the central government are to split all oil and other revenues derived from the south evenly. Two reconstruction and development funds are to be established one national and the other for the Southern Sudan.

4-The security arrangements:

The security arrangements agreement stated that the two parties must establish joint integrated units with equal numbers from the SPLA and the Sudan armed forces. The joint integrated units shall constitute a nucleus of a post referendum army of

Sudan, should the result of the referendum confirm unity, otherwise they would be dissolved and the component parts integrated into their respective forces. The SPLA and the Sudan Armed Forces are to maintain their troops in the south and the north respectively. The agreement provides in effect for elimination of all other armed groups especially the south Sudan Defense Forces (SSDF). The SSDF and other armed militias supporting either the SPLA or the Sudan Armed Forces were given the opportunity to qualifying for integration into security structures or civil institutions of either party. Many of the SSDF including their C-in-C general Paulino Matip have joined the SPLA and some have been integrated into Sudan Armed Forces. Others have been demobilized.

5- The Abyei Protocol: ⁽⁵⁾

Abyei is a bridge between the north and the south linking people of Sudan. The territory is defined as the area of the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms transferred to Kordofan in 1905.

The Messeriya nomadic peoples have their traditional rights to graze cattle and move freely in the area. Residents of Abyei will be citizens of both southern Kordofan and Bhar El Gazal with representation in the legislature of both states. Abyei will be administered by local executive council elected by the residents of Abyei. Net oil revenues from Abyei will be divided six ways during the interim period, national government 50%, government of southern Sudan 42% Bhar El Gazal region 2% southern Kordofan 2% Ngok Dinka 2% and Messeriya people 2%. Residents of Abyei will cast a separate ballot during referendum with the following choices irrespective of the result of the southern referendum:

- a. that Abyei retain its special administrative status in the north.
- b. That Abyei be part of Bhar El Gazal.

Abyei shall have a council composed of 20 members. There shall be established under the executive council, Abyei resettlement, construction and development fund to handle relief repatriation, resettlement, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction programs in the post war period.

6- Resolution of the conflict in the two states of southern Kordofan and BLUE Nile: ⁽⁶⁾

This protocol establishes a special status for the two states in the northern Sudan based on the following general principles:

- (1) the guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all individuals.
- (2) The development and protection of the diverse cultural heritage and local languages of the population.
- (3) The development of human resources and infrastructure as the main goal of the states.

The agreement addresses the following key issues:

- a- popular consultation.
- b- Structure of state government.
- c- State share of national wealth.
- d- Security arrangements.

The CPA will be subjected to the process of popular consultation. A presidential assessment and evaluation commission will be established by the presidency, it will submit a report to the government of National Unity and to the two state governments for use in ensuring the faithful implementation of the CPA. Based on those reports each state legislature may choose on a specific date (9 July 2009) either to endorse or to rectify

the protocol. If the state endorses the protocol, it becomes the final settlement of the conflict in that state. If a state legislature chooses to rectify any shortcomings in constitutional, political or administrative arrangements, it must do so through negotiations with government of national unity. The state government like any other state in the Sudan shall consist of a legislature, an executive and a judiciary.

The fiscal and financial allocation and monitoring commission will have representatives from the two states. It will establish specific formulae for allocating resources to war affected areas, taking into account among other things, population, social development indicators and the effects of war.

During the interim period Sudan Armed Forces troop numbers in the states in question will be determined by the presidency.

The CPA agreement also embodied two fundamental points:

- a- permanent ceasefire and security arrangements implementation modalities.
- b- Implementation modalities and global implementation matrix and appendices.

A good number of commissions, councils and committees serving as mechanisms for the implementation of the CPA have been established, among them are:

- 1- The presidency – the council of the president (himself and his two vice presidents). The first vice president must be from the SPLA (South Sudan).
- 2- The assessment and evaluation commission which is composed of the two parties to the agreement and IGAD partners. Its main function is to monitor the implementation or non-implementation of the agreement.

- 3- The border commission (between the north and the south as from 1/1/1956).
- 4- the national constitutional commission.
- 5- The national civil service commission. The agreement stipulates that 20-30% of the positions in the civil service should be allocated to southern Sudanese.
- 6- Human rights commission.
- 7- The fiscal and financial allocation and monitoring commission. It monitors and ensures that equalization grants and funds from the national revenue are promptly transferred to respective levels of government.
- 8- The national population census council.
- 9- Special commission to ensure the rights of non-Moslems in the national capital. The two parties to the agreement shall be adequately represented in the administration of the national capital.
- 10- The joint assessment commission.
- 11- Council for promotion of national languages.
- 12- The ceasefire political commission.
- 13- The petroleum commission.
- 14- The land commission.
- 15- The judicial service commission.
- 16- The constitutional court.

Although the implementation of the CPA has not been an easy task, all the constitutional institutions and commissions have been completed and are functioning according to the CPA implementation modalities time-frame starting from the presidency down to the

About 85% or more of the issues have been implemented and the remaining tasks that need urgent attention from the government of national unity (its main function being to implement the comprehensive

peace agreement) and two parties to the agreement that are assigned to supervise and foresee its implementation are:

- 1- Abyei protocol. The parties disagreed on the Abyei border commission (ABC) that was drawn and prepared by experts on the border of Abyei area. The SPLM recommends implementation of the ABC report as per CPA whereas the national congress party objects to the report on the basis that the ABC exceeded its mandate:
- 2- The deployment of the troops in accordance with 1/1/1956 border between the north and the south.
- 3- The border issue.
- 4- The population census issue.

The agreement was not an accord to stop the war, but a comprehensive design to bring about sustainable peace, not only between the north and the south but all over the country.⁽⁷⁾ It was the outcome of Sudanese parties' will and commitment to end the war, rebuild their country and end the suffering of the people. It is also a showcase in favor of constructive engagement by the regional and international powers in conflict resolution (IGAD, IGAD partners, Italy, Norway, UK and USA). Fourteen presidents and representatives signed as witnesses to the CPA. The Security Council of the United Nations took notice of the agreement and protocols in its resolution No. 1574 which it issued in its historic meeting in Nairobi on 19 Nov. 2004.

The United Nations mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has about ten thousand troops and civil police to monitor the ceasefire. Internally and internationally the success of the implementation of the CPA depends on three factors:

- 1. The international pledges and support:**

After the agreement the international donors met in Oslo and pledged to raise \$ 5 billion for reconstruction, rehabilitation and repatriation programs. Very little has been received.

2. The international monitoring activities:

No serious ceasefire violations have been reported with the exception of Malakal incident which was controlled without dangerous repercussions.

3. The Darfur crisis:

The war in Darfur burst in 2003 and has intensified since the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement. Many donor countries have stated that they will not send needed funds to Sudan until peace prevails in the region.

The reasons for war in Darfur are similar to those in the south although many factors ignited the conflict in unprecedented scale.

The root causes of the crisis can be summarized as follows: ⁽⁸⁾

1- Political, historical and geographical:

The first minister from Darfur in the national government was appointed eleven years after independence and the first person from Darfur origin appointed as governor of the region was in 1981 twenty eight years after independence.

2- Since early 70's waves of draught and desertification hit the sahalean zone that includes the region of Darfur which led to deterioration of pastures recovery rate and diminished agricultural resources. The situation led to increased rate of competition

between the communities over livelihoods resources such as water, pasture and agriculture land as well as infringement over traditional land ownership rights – land use and land tenure (The Hawakeer). Initially and gradually it began to manifest into Darfur – Darfur struggle, pastoralists versus settlers, then developed into tribal conflicts, which by now has been marked as ethnical divide conflict (Arabs versus zurga, the later connotes indigenous African tribes).

3. The Libyan – Chad war and internal Chadian conflicts made use of Darfur region as an extension of their battle – fields. This was promoted by the fact that the major conflicting tribes in these wars have large presence in Darfur. As a result, the proliferation of small arms in the region became a norm.

4. The political parties and party struggles between different National political parties at the federal level have exploited Darfur region as a backyard to manage their struggles so as to advance their party interests.

5. The international and regional concern, and the extensive media coverage that accompanied the war raise questions over the regional and international roles in the burst of the war in Darfur.

Attempts to achieve sustainable peace

There have been considerable efforts by the regional and international communities as well as the government of Sudan to achieve conflict settlement. But the settlement outcome translated in the Abuja peace agreement (DPA) including the presence of the African mission in Sudan (AMIS) was signed by one faction. Other factions refused to sign because of different demands, paramount among them was the demand for personal compensation for the citizens affected by the war. The government insisted that only communities and not individuals, deserve

compensation in form of services rendered to all like schools, clean, drinking water and hospitals.

The Darfur peace agreement is moreless similar to the comprehensive peace agreement. It put stress on three fundamental principles agreed upon in Nivasha and they are:

- 1- power sharing.
- 2- Wealth sharing.
- 3- Security arrangements.

The agreement stresses also on: ⁽⁹⁾

- a- protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- b- A federal system of government with an effective devolution of powers and a clear distribution of responsibilities between the center and other levels of government including local administration, is essential to ensure fair and equitable participation by the citizens of the Sudan in general and those of Darfur in particular.
- c- The national service, the national armed forces, the police and intelligence services shall reflect at all levels a fair and equitable representation of all citizens, including those from Darfur.
- d- Women rights must be protected and they must be represented in government institutions and decision-making structures.
- e- Affirmative action shall be taken in favour of Darfurians in order to enhance inclusivity in public services.
- f- After the signing of the DPA the government of Sudan shall establish a transitional Darfur Regional Authority⁽¹⁰⁾. This authority shall serve as the principle instrument for the implementation of DPA agreement and for enhancing coordination and cooperation among the three states of Darfur.

- g- The permanent status of Darfur shall be determined through a referendum held in the 3 states not later than 12 months after the elections in Darfur in 2009. The options are:
- 1- the creation of Darfur Region that is composed of the three states.
 - 2- Retention of the status quo of the three states.
- h- upon signing of the agreement, the president shall appoint a senior assistant to the president who shall also be chairperson of the transitional Darfur Regional Authority. The nominee shall be from Sudan Liberation Movement/ Army or Justice and Equality Movement, the two large rebel movements in Darfur.
- i- Darfurians, especially those in the movement shall be represented in the administration of the national capital.
- j- Recognition of traditional rights (including "hawakeer") and historical rights in land is essential to establish a secure and sustainable basis for livelihood and development in Darfur.
- k- Darfurians, including members of the Sudan liberation movement/ Army and the Justice equality movement shall be adequately represented in the following institutions :-(¹¹)
- 1) The National Executive.
 - 2) The National Legislature.
 - 3) The Council of States.
 - 4) The National Judicial Organs – The Constitutional Court, National Supreme Courts, National Judicial Service Commission.
 - 5) The National Civil Services.
 - 6) Armed forces, law enforcement Agencies and National Security.
 - 7) Commissions – especially National Constitutional Review Commission, National Elections Commission, Population Census Council and Technical ad hoc Border Committee.

- 8) Education Institutions – Exemption from payment of school fees for new students of Darfur origin at all levels, for a period of five years.
- 9) Rehabilitation and reconstruction of Darfur is a priority, to that end, steps shall be taken to compensate the people of Darfur and address grievances for lives lost, assets destroyed or stolen, and suffering caused. A compensation commission shall be established to deal with Darfurian claims.⁽¹²⁾
- 10) A special fund for reconstruction and development of Darfur shall be established under this Agreement.
- 11) The Fiscal and Financial Allocation and monitoring commission shall institute a transparent, formula-based process whereby the transfers to the states of Darfur and other state governments of the Sudan shall be made in a predictable and timely manner, with the guarantee that the national government may not withhold the transfer of funds to Darfur States.⁽¹³⁾
- 12) The parties agree that a special fund for the rehabilitation, reconstruction, construction and development of Darfur states to be known as a Darfur Reconstruction and Development fund (DRDF) shall be established.⁽¹⁴⁾
- 13) Tribal land ownership (hawakeer), historical right to land, traditional or customary livestock routes, and access to water, shall be recognised and protected.⁽¹⁵⁾
- 14) All displaced persons and other persons arbitrarily or unlawfully deprived of rights of land shall have those rights restored to them. No person or groups of persons shall be deprived of any traditional or historical right in respect of land or access to water without compensation on just terms.⁽¹⁶⁾

- 15) There shall be established a state land commission to address issues related to traditional and historical rights to land and review land use management and natural resources development processes.⁽¹⁷⁾
- 16) A ceasefire commission shall be established and chaired by African mission in Sudan (AMIS) force commander.
- 17) The Darfur Peace Agreement shall be incorporated into the Interim National Constitution.

Although peace has not yet been achieved in Darfur, the Darfur Peace Agreement is another master-piece in peace negotiation and peace building. The greatest obstacle in peaceful solution in Darfur is the myriad number of rebel movements who speak different languages and have contradictory agendas when it comes to peace negotiations. There must be a clear agenda comprising of all the grievances and aspirations of the Darfurian society. What has complicated the matter is the great gap between the Arab and the African communities within Darfur. Therefore the urgent task the regional and international communities need to embark on now is to appeal to the rebel movements to unite under one banner. The Darfur authority established under the Darfur Peace Agreement is functioning although the humanitarian, political and security issues in the region need urgent attention from the government of Sudan and the regional and international communities. All stakeholders are expecting a break-through in the coming peace talks in Sirte, Libya.

The Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) :

The Eastern Sudan Front is composed of a number of political groups, including the Beja congress and the Rashaida Free Lions. The main grievance of the Eastern Front was the appalling underdevelopment conditions witnessed by the region since independence. Like the previous

agreements, the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement which was signed in October 2006 can be summed up into three main issues: ⁽¹⁸⁾

- (1) Power Sharing :
- (2) Wealth Sharing:
- (3) Security arrangements.

The agreement emphasizes equality before the law, the fundamental freedoms, political pluralism and a federal system of government.

The Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement created the Eastern Sudan States' coordinating council to enhance coordination and cooperation among the three states of Eastern Sudan (Kassala, Gedarif and Red Sea states). This council will enhance the political and cultural identity of the region. The agreement provided for the Post of the Assistant to the President (refer to DPA) who shall be appointed among the Eastern Front leaders and shall supervise the work of the Eastern Sudan states' coordination council and also the work of the Eastern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund (ESRDF). Another higher level post created by the agreement is an advisor to the President. The Eastern Sudan citizens must, according to the agreement be adequately represented in : ⁽¹⁹⁾

- (1) National Legislature.
- (2) The National Judiciary.
- (3) The National Civil Service.
- (4) The National commissions including the National constitutional Review Commission, National Elections Commission, National Civil Service Commission, Human Rights Commission, Population Census Council, Public Grievances Chamber and Land Commission.

(5) Educational institutions. –The use of local languages shall be encouraged at the primary level and the media to promote literacy and education in Eastern Sudan.

(6) The National capital.

(7) Executive, legislature and judiciary positions at the state level.

The parties agree to establish the Eastern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund (ESRDF). The agreement stresses on the poverty eradication and equitable distribution of wealth and good living conditions of all citizens.

(8) The Armed forces. A specified number of the combatants of the Eastern Front will be integrated into the Sudanese Armed Forces.

Other strategic objectives in the agreement are :-

(a) Ensuring the return and the rehabilitation of refugees and internally displaced persons.

(b) Ensuring that all the development programs address the specific needs of women.

The Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement has been implemented and as a result the war has stopped in that part of the country. All combatants have returned home and are now living a normal civilian life (those who have chosen not to join the armed forces).

We shall conclude this paper by reiterating the Preamble and Principles of the comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that states that:-⁽²⁰⁾

Whereas the parties to the agreement are desirous of resolving the Sudan conflict in a just and sustainable manner by addressing the root causes of the conflict and by establishing a framework for government through which power and wealth shall be equitably shared and human rights guaranteed and **mindful** that the conflict in the Sudan is the longest running conflict in Africa, **that it** has caused horrendous loss of

life and destroyed the infrastructures of the country, wasted economic resources, and has caused untold suffering, **sensitive** to historical injustices and inequalities in development between the different regions of the Sudan that need to be redressed the two parties agree that the unity of Sudan, based on the free will of its people, democratic governance, accountability, equality, respect and justice for all citizens of the Sudan is and shall be the priority of the parties and that it is possible to redress the grievances of the people of Southern Sudan and to meet their aspirations within such a framework and **that** the people of Southern Sudan have the right to control and govern affairs in their region and participate equitably in the national government, **in addition** the people of South Sudan have the right to self-determination, inter alia, through a referendum to determine their future status. The parties also agree to establish a democratic system of governance taking into account of the cultural, ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic diversity and gender equality of the people of Sudan. The same parties agree that they will find a comprehensive solution that addresses the economic and social deterioration of the Sudan and replaces war not just with peace, but also with social, political and economic justice which respects the fundamental human and political rights of all the Sudanese people.

Resolutions and proposals :

To avoid political and social conflict we propose the following:-

1. Good governance – Transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law and justice and equality.
2. democratic transformation – fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual. Peaceful transfer of power through the ballot box. Institutionalization of free given consent.

3. decentralization – power and wealth sharing among various levels of government.
4. stable relations with neighbouring countries. This proposal is based on the assumption that stable regional relations are a pre-requisite for internal stability and that the pursuit of foreign relations must reflect the broad interests of the country concerned.
5. equitable social and economic development. poverty eradication. Fight corruption.

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