



Beyond Darfur: Sudan in its Entirety

The National Implications of Peace and Development in Three of Sudan's Overlooked Regions
May 19, 2008

Sudan is known to most Americans today for the ongoing genocide in its western region of Darfur, yet the problems facing this country are more complex than many activists are aware. As the largest country in Africa and the size of the United States East of the Mississippi River¹, Sudan faces many challenges, governance chief among them. Shaped by its history, modern Sudan experienced two phases of civil war between the North and South (1955-1972 and 1983-2005) killing more than two million while displacing many millions more. In 2005, this conflict ceased with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). However, it is in danger of erupting once again if CPA implementation continues to be delayed due to Khartoum's intransigence on many issues and the capacity challenges faced by the Government of Southern Sudan.

Darfur is not the only region of Sudan that has from political and economic marginalization often characterized by prejudice based upon ethnicity and racialized identity markers. **A lasting solution to Sudan's conflicts must be comprehensive in addressing the frustrations and hopes of people throughout the country, not just those of Darfur or those in the South.** This Africa Action resource lays out the challenges facing three marginalized communities, all of which are critical to the long-term peace and development of Sudan and the region.

While Darfur should remain a priority for advocates, government officials and interested citizens around the world, all these actors can be more effective in creating sustainable solutions that address the underlying issues of conflict if they understand the full context and extent of challenges to peace in the country. The communities of Eastern Sudan, Nubia (to the North of Khartoum) and Abyei all face serious political and economic challenges that threaten Sudan's prospects for long-term stability.

No solution to conflict in Sudan will be instantaneous or without its flaws. Instead, advocates must push for change that is comprehensive and sustainable, acknowledging that **genuine and lasting peace and respect for all the peoples of Sudan will require long-term strategic international engagement to support peace and development initiatives by local and national level actors.**

¹ Bureau of African Affairs. "Background Note: Sudan." State Department, January 2008.

Eastern Sudan



Photo Credit: David Haberlah

“In East Sudan, you have the poorest of the poor. Yet our region is rich, we have ports, gold, oil, pipelines, and fertile land. We want justice and our share in the power and wealth of Sudan.”²

Dr. Amna Dirar, Secretary General of the Beja Congress

One region often ignored by the press and international community is Eastern Sudan. Due to lack of economic, political and social investment and development, the people of this region fought a low-intensity insurgency against the Government of Sudan (GoS) for over a decade. The signing of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) in 2006 brought an end to the violence, **but has still not resolved the serious economic problems in the region. Without a genuine end to these economic injustices, outbreak of further violence is possible.**

Out of the four million people residing in Eastern Sudan, the Bejas constitute a majority, numbering upwards of two million in the area. They constitute the third largest ethnic group in all of Sudan. Like virtually all Sudanese in Northern Sudan, the Bejas are overwhelmingly Muslim. While Beja history stretches back almost 4000 years within the region,³ another important ethnic group, the Rashaidas, are more recent immigrants to Sudan who arrived from Saudi Arabia in the mid 1800s.

The three states that comprise Eastern Sudan (Gedaref, Kassala and Red Sea) are strategically located and resource-rich, yet home to economic and social conditions that paint a different picture altogether. Not only does the oil pipeline transporting all of Sudan’s oil for export run through this region towards the otherwise landlocked country’s only deepwater port, but Sudan’s largest gold mine is also found in Eastern Sudan.⁴ Such wealth could provide a high standard of living. Instead the majority of people in this region are extremely poor, suffer

² International Crisis Group. “Sudan: Saving Peace in the East.” January 5, 2006.

³ Dan Connell. “War and Peace in Sudan: The Case of the Bejas.” SSRC, February 27, 2007.

⁴ Ed Harris. “Rebel Threat in Impoverished East.” Reuters, October 9, 1996.

high rates of malnourishment and are greatly susceptible to price fluctuations, drought and the increasing desertification of the area.

Economic indicators clearly demonstrate the divide between Khartoum and the rest of the country, particularly the eastern provinces. **In 2001, the revenue of the state of Khartoum was over 39 billion Sudanese dinars (more than 10 times the revenue of any other state) in comparison to Red Sea State at over 3 billion, Kassala at 2 billion (in 2000) and Gedaref at 3 billion (2000).**⁵ The 2005 CPA and 2006 ESPA stipulated revenue and power-sharing agreements designed to distribute central government resources more equitably. While full data is not yet available to accurately assess these impacts, “several key aspects of the ESPA remain unfulfilled” and peace dividends have yet to materialize.⁶ Efforts to resolve tensions between the government and rebels through the implementation of this agreement have actually created conflicts between the different ethnic groups who are vying for political power as well as development allocations.⁷

The development challenge for Eastern Sudan is tremendous. **In 2005, the World Food Program reported that per capita income in the Red Sea state was only \$93 annually while nationally the average Sudanese was earning \$2100.**⁸ In the state of Kassala, the per capita income for the same year was only marginally higher at \$156.⁹ The three states of Eastern Sudan continuously rank among the poorest and least developed regions in Sudan by a range of human development indicators, with malnutrition and mortality rates significantly higher than those in Darfur.¹⁰

Commercial mechanized agriculture producing large quantities of food is prevalent in the region, yet much of the population struggles to survive on a daily basis. Mechanized farms, increasing desertification, and famines have limited traditional Beja grazing lands while spurring increased migration of nomadic Beja communities to the cities. The 1984-5 famines displaced approximately 1.2 million people and eradicated 75-90% of all Beja-owned cattle.¹¹ Many of those displaced migrated to urban centers, particularly Port Sudan, which lacked the capacity to assimilate the many new migrants politically, economically and socially.



Photo Credit: Sea Ports Corporation of Sudan

Lack of education and training excludes most Bejas from the technical jobs offered in the mechanized harbor of Port Sudan and other lucrative economic opportunities. Racial prejudices regarding the Beja as “uncooperative, conservative and resistance to change,” and discriminatory hiring practices further aggravate the already tense economic situation.¹²

⁵ World Bank, “Sudan: Stabilization and Reconstruction.” June 30, 2003.

⁶ Dorina Bekoe. “Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement: Taking Stock and Moving Forward.” *USIP*, October 2007.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ “Background Note: Sudan.” U.S. State Department.

⁹ Alertnet, “East Sudan Insurgency.” http://www.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/SD_INS.htm

¹⁰ Crisis Group. “Sudan: Saving Peace in the East.” January 5, 2006.

¹¹ John Young. “The Eastern Front and the Struggle Against Marginalization.”

¹² Dorina Bekoa. “Peacemaking and Peacebuilding in Eastern Sudan.” *USIP*, September 2006.

Conflict and the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement

In response to historic marginalization since British colonial times, the Beja people formed the Beja Congress in 1958, “with the aim of introducing development to the land and its people.”¹³ Without success in achieving their aims through non-violent methods, by the mid 1990s, the Beja Congress and Rashaida Free Lions (RFL), another political group from Eastern Sudan based along ethnic lines, joined the militant National Democratic Alliance (NDA), whose largest contingent was the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the liberation-oriented Southern rebel group.¹⁴

In large part, this turn to violent uprising was in response to widespread “repression, imposed Islamic fundamentalism and land expropriation” instigated upon the Bejas and Rashaidas by the Government of Sudan.¹⁵ Even though the Rashaidas are relatively richer than their Beja counterparts, their support for Kuwait during the first Gulf War angered the Government of Khartoum who supported Iraq. In retribution for this marginalization and government suppression, the Rashaidas decided to join forces with the NDA.¹⁶

The SPLM/A’s military support helped the NDA to control broad swathes of territory along the Eritrean border. **However, the signing of the CPA in 2005 between the SPLM/A and the National Congress Party regime in Khartoum largely ignored Eastern Sudan.** Consequently, the Bejas and Rashaidas decided to continue their fight by forming the Eastern Front that same year. Labeled as the “forgotten Sudan” by Jeffrey Gettleman of the New York Times, this conflict is estimated to have claimed as many as 5,000 lives.¹⁷

This rebellion halted in October 2006 with the signing of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement between the Eastern Front and the Government of Sudan. Hosted in Asmara, Eritrea, this agreement granted the Eastern Front inclusion in the political process and promised increased development assistance from the central government in Khartoum. **In this agreement, the Government of Sudan even recognized that, “political, social and economic marginalization constitute the core problem in Eastern Sudan.”**¹⁸ As a result, the Eastern Front was to be granted eight representatives in the National Assembly, one advisor to the president and a larger role politically within the state governments, which were previously dominated by GoS appointees. The agreement further established the Eastern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund, whereby the GoS would allocate a minimum of \$100 million a year towards the reconstruction and development of East Sudan over a four-year period.¹⁹

Implementation of this agreement has been slow and limited in progress. While this region harbors major transportation routes (both car and railroad), an oil pipeline, large agricultural plantations, Sudan’s largest gold mine and the country’s only port, its people still live in extreme

¹³ Dr. Amna S. Dirar. “The Beja of Eastern Sudan.” Beja Congress, August 20, 2005.

¹⁴ Crisis Group. “Sudan: Saving Peace in the East.”

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ed Harris. “Rebel Threat in Impoverished East.”

¹⁷ Jeffrey Gettleman. “Misery Churns in Eastern Sudan, Away from Spotlight.” New York Times, October 28, 2006.

¹⁸ Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, p. 5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

poverty, many surviving on as little as 25 cents a day. Increased development in the region is vital to stem the outbreak of further conflict.

Political representatives from Eastern Sudan have been sworn into office, but with such limited political power and lack of a comprehensive development plan, the situation in this region is unlikely to improve in the short term. As local ethnic groups vie for development funds and political power, a resumption of conflict is possible, which while small in scope in comparison to the rebellion in Darfur, would still have lasting ramifications for the country as a whole. **Any peace that is sustainable, just and comprehensive for Sudan must address the underlying political and economic marginalization of the people of Eastern Sudan.**

Damming the Nubians



Photo Credit: Merowe Dam Official Website

*“Halfa First! Kajbar Next!!
Nubia Drowns and Dies of Thirst!!!”*

Nuraddin Abdulmannan, Secretary-General of Rescue Nubia

The damming of Nubia’s homeland to the North of Khartoum demonstrates GoS’s governance pattern of marginalizing peripheral regions. In efforts to electrify and modernize the country, Sudan is focused on harnessing the strength of the Nile River. It is estimated by the GoS that hydropower in Sudan could potentially produce 5000 megawatts (a rather optimistic approximation).²⁰ **While electrifying the country is necessary in Sudan’s path to development, such efforts must not be at the expense of the people of Sudan. The unjust GoS policy being executed 300 miles North of Khartoum threatens the existence of the local Amri, Hamadab and Manasir communities and further exacerbates the political, economic and social divide between Khartoum and the rest of the country.**

²⁰ International Rivers Network. “A Critical Juncture for Peace, Democracy and the Environment: Sudan and the Merowe/Hamadab Dam Project.” March 1, 2005.

Traditionally, the Nubian homeland has encompassed much of Southern Egypt and Northern Sudan. At its apex, the Nubian civilization extended from Suba (South of Khartoum) to Southern Egypt. Dating back 5000 years, Nubia was an advanced society that predated the Egyptian pharaohs. As one archeologist from the British Museum stated, “Very little archeological work has ever been undertaken in this region, but what has indicates the richness and diversity of human settlement from the Paleolithic period onwards.”²¹

However, with the construction of dams, many of these archeological artifacts will be lost forever due to the inundation of these Nubian homelands. As first exemplified by the construction of the Anwar High Dam during the 1960s, over 50,000 Nubians were forced to flee the town of Wadi Halfa in Northern Sudan losing their homes and many of their possessions without proper compensation.²²

With much less international attention than the Anwar project, this process is currently being repeated in Northern Sudan with the forced displacement of Nubians and other local populations through the construction of three other dams along the Nile at Merowe, Kajbar and Dal.

The arguments for constructing these dams along the 4th and 5th cataracts of the Nile north of Sudan are at first glance compelling. The government has been eager to expand its electrical capacity for decades, but has been thwarted by the North-South civil war and overall lack of foreign investment.²³ However, with both the signing of the CPA and the recent increase in oil exports, Khartoum accumulated the stability and revenue necessary to attract foreign investment and thus greatly expand its production of electricity, which the government views as instrumental in efforts to “meet the increasing demand for purposes of economical and social development.”²⁴ Others argue that these dams will decrease the sediment and silt deposits that are causing problems for Anwar High Dam further upstream.

While potentially accomplishing some of the stated goals above, current execution of these projects has come at the expense of human rights. Not only has Khartoum failed to demonstrate that the dams at Merowe, Kajbar and Dal would benefit Sudan’s most needy populations, but the flooding they would create threatens the existence, history and culture of one of the oldest still-living civilizations on the planet today.

Due to complete construction later this year, Merowe Dam will raise the water level 220 feet above the riverbed spanning five miles, creating a lake two miles wide and 108 miles long, while displacing 9500 families or 50,000 people.²⁵ It will further double the total output of electricity in the country.

Kajbar dam, estimated to cost \$1.5 billion, is expected to produce much less power than Merowe, approximately 200 megawatts. It will stand at 221 meters high with a reservoir

²¹ Ibid.

²² Michael Hoebink. “Nubians Alarmed about Dam Plans.” <http://www.radionetherlands.nl/currentaffairs/nil070712>

²³ Andrew Lawler. “Damming Sudan.” *Archaeology*, Nov/Dec 2006.

²⁴ Dams Implementation Unit. “About the Dam.” <http://merowedam.gov.sd/en/location.html>

²⁵ Lawler. “Damming Sudan.”

stretching over 80 miles behind it and will displace the populations of as many as 100 villages.²⁶ Other statistics simply are not known regarding the hydroelectric dam projects of Kajbar and Dal due to government secrecy and exclusion of local civil society in the planning phases. Regardless, the Nubian population in the Kajbar area is much denser than in the Merowe-affected area, and consequently that dam will impact many more people.

Even though the government has denied claims that it has begun construction of the Kajbar dams, reports began surfacing in early 2007 that many Chinese construction workers and heavy machinery were beginning to arrive in the Kajbar area.²⁷ **Fearing relocation without just compensation as their fellow Nubians experienced with both Anwar and Merowe, the Kajbar community quickly united to peacefully protest this project.** The third such non-violent protest was met with armed intervention by the Sudanese police forces, killing four and injuring 19.²⁸



One Nubian activist lamented,
*“I can't explain why they started firing. It was a peaceful demonstration.”*²⁹

Widespread protests also met the construction of the Merowe Dam throughout 2005 due to the imprisonment of community leaders, exclusion from the decision-making progress, complete disregard for the local communities and forced displacement from their lands. The local communities have responded in different ways, some preaching dialogue and discussion while others, such as the Kush Liberation Front, have declared violence as the only method to protect their Nubian homelands.

While efforts to electrify the country are important, as with any major public infrastructure projects, these dams should be subject to close scrutiny to ensure that their construction leads to just and equitable human development. Whether financed by the international financial institutions like the World Bank, bilateral donors from the U.S. to China or private investors, major development projects in Africa must be more transparent and inclusive of local populations than the purely top-down approach pursued with these dams. Carlos Linares, senior water-policy advisor to the United National Development Program, clearly states, **“Nobody has**

²⁶ Dr. Arif Gamal. “Kajbar and Nubian Lands: History, Case for Culture and Struggle.” http://www.rescuenubia.org/pdf/Kajbar_Dam.pdf

²⁷ Ibid; <http://www.radionetherlands.nl/currentaffairs/nil070712>

²⁸ Dan Morrison. “Four Killed Over Nile Dam Project That Threatens Nubian Towns.” *National Geographic News*, June 15, 2007.

²⁹ Ibid

ever proven that the benefits of large dams go to the poor.”³⁰ Further criticism of Sudan’s dam projects has been leveled by a member of the World Commission on Dams, Kader Asmal, who stated, “It means nothing to build billion-dollar dams if they alienate the weak.”³¹ Finally, **Sudan expert Eric Reeves unequivocally issues his opinion that, “the Merowe Dam is arguably the most environmentally irresponsible construction project in all of Africa.”**³²

Additional scrutiny must focus on the current electric grid within Sudan. Current efforts to expand transmission lines are in place are shown below:

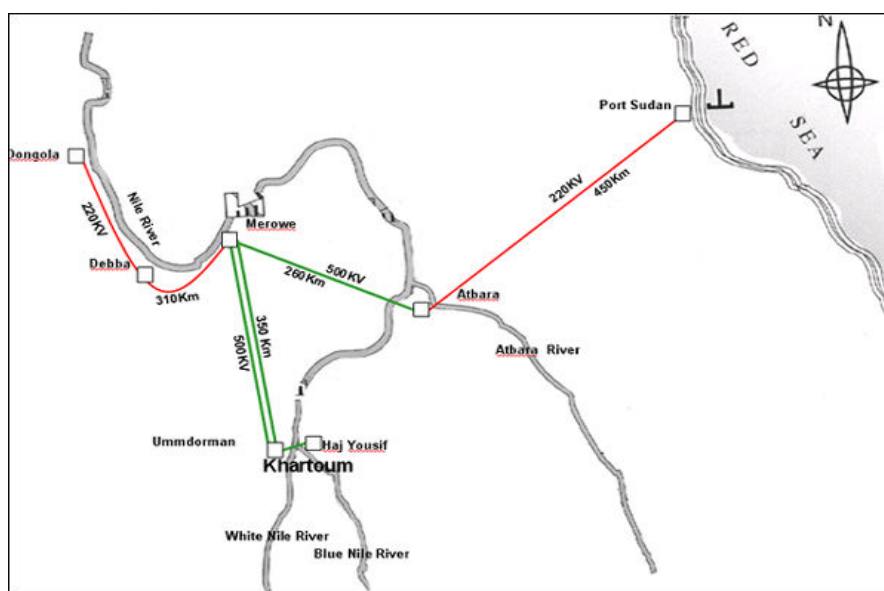


Photo Credit: sudaninside.com

This map demonstrates a complete disregard for other major cities, the three states in Darfur, areas south of Khartoum and all rural areas. **A majority of the electricity produced by these dams will clearly benefit Khartoum and a select few other cities.** Vague GoS plans are in place to expand the national grid to the states of Darfur and Kordofan, yet rural electrification remains under-funded and under-emphasized. Khartoum and the surrounding area will reap the benefits of these hydroelectric construction projects at the expense of the Nubian people and others displaced from the region.

Forced Relocation Without Just Compensation

These dam projects have neither included local populations during the planning phases nor justly compensated locals for their relocation. Instead the construction process has been marked by grave human rights abuses committed by the Government of Sudan and its contractors, such as the violent quelling of peaceful protests.

³⁰ IRIN. “The Impact of Dams, a Continuing Controversy.” Sept. 13, 2006
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=61050>

³¹ Ibid.

³² Eric Reeves. “Khartoum Escalates Conflict in Eastern Sudan, Southern Sudan and Darfur.” Jan. 14, 2006
<http://www.sudanreeves.org/Sections-article539-p1.html>

Below is one of the relocation sites for members of the affected population. According to the International Rivers Network (IRN) after having visited El Multaga relocation site:

*The desert soil is extremely poor, and many plots are still covered with sand. The displaced farmers are supposed to pay twelve sacks of wheat for seeds and fertilizer per year, but manage to produce less than two sacks on average. Poverty is rising rapidly, and many families are reported to have left the resettlement site.*³³



Photo Credit: David Haberlah

Timothy Kendall, an archeologist from Northeastern University visited one of the relocation sites stating, “There is nothing there. There are mud-brick cubicles by the thousands in the middle of the desert that are absolutely horrific.”³⁴ Not only do they separate the Nubian people from their historical homelands, the banks of the Nile, but the cultivable land that is prepared for them is extremely poor, so much so that IRN stated, “even with irrigation, the quality of the soil is so poor that farmers cannot sell their products on the market.”³⁵ Furthermore, “the poverty rate at the El Multaga site has increased from 10% to 65% in less than two years,” according to community leaders, demonstrating that these areas not suitable for resettlement.³⁶ The compensation process is also far from fair, evidence of an overarching policy that tries to disenfranchise rather than reimburse the affected communities. The most affected populations have been excluded from compensation, including migrant laborers, individuals living in houses built after the last census in 1999 and people who refuse to move to the resettlement sites. The destruction of date palms, an essential source of income for these farmers, is also not being adequately compensated.

Various Chinese and Arab lending organizations – such as the China Export Import Bank, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Development Funds for Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Oman - are financing the construction of the dam by

³³ International Rivers Network, “A Critical Juncture for Peace, Democracy and the Environment...”. May 1, 2005.

³⁴ Lawler. “Damming Sudan.”

³⁵ International Rivers Network, “A Critical Juncture for Peace, Democracy and the Environment...”

³⁶ Ibid.

Chinese and Sudanese companies with the assistance of French, German and Swiss firms. All of these organizations refuse to acknowledge the injustices committed or grant proper compensation to the affected communities.³⁷ The international community should support the proper monitoring of these construction projects, which have trampled on the rights of the Nubians and other affected populations.

By damming Nubia, the government of Khartoum is destroying an ancient civilization, artifacts of worldwide significance and the homes of many tens of thousands of people, further marginalizing those who are already suffering and benefiting least from government policies. The international financial institutions, mentioned above, and European contractors – such as Lahmeyer International of Germany and Alstom of France – supporting the dam projects are complicit in this injustice. The situation around the dams has repercussions for Sudan’s other conflicts. Without a proper forum for addressing the voices of the Nubians, violence may escalate in the region, as some Nubians have already taken to arms, while underscoring broader implications for the country as a whole. Leading Sudan expert Alex de Waal posits that Merowe Dam could be the next target outside Darfur for the Justice and Equality Movement rebel group after its shocking May 10 strike on Khartoum.³⁸

The Powder Keg: Abyei

Increasingly recognized by experts as Sudan’s next flashpoint, the Abyei region spans the border between North and South Sudan. This area of South Kordofan has been marked by sporadic fighting and a series of tit-for-tat moves by both the SPLM/A and GoS forces, increasing tensions and possibilities of a renewal of civil war between the North and South. Out of the three regions profiled in this report, Abyei faces the gravest immediate threat of igniting nationwide conflict. The heretofore neglected and full administration of the Abyei region and demarcation of the North/South border are essential tenets of the CPA. Failure to resolve these issues risks catapulting the country back into civil war.

Throughout the North/South civil war, this region was subject to intense fighting between the government forces and the SPLA. Many atrocities were committed by Northern troops throughout the 1980s and 1990s such as mass rape and murder.³⁹ Furthermore, Abyei and much of the surrounding region were virtually uninhabited due to the mass displacement of the native Ngok Dinka communities during the civil war.⁴⁰ One of the ethnic groups in this region is the Misseriya, a nomadic people who were armed by the GoS when the civil war broke out for a second time in 1986 in order to fight the South. They continue to be manipulated as proxy agents of destabilization by the GoS.

In January 2005, a special protocol to the CPA was agreed upon to determine the exact border within Abyei through the creation of the Abyei Boundary Commission (ABC), composed of five

³⁷ IRN. “Urgent Call for a Negotiated Agreement to End the Violence in the Merowe/Hamadab Dam-Affected Areas”, November 30, 2005.

³⁸ <http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/darfur/2008/05/11/the-hour-of-the-hardliners>

³⁹ Nicholas Kristof. “Africa’s Next Slaughter.” *The New York Times*, March 2, 2008.

⁴⁰ Enough Project. “Abyei: Sudan’s ‘Kashmir’.” <http://www.enoughproject.org/abyei>

representatives from the GoS and the SPLM/A in addition to five independent experts. However, the GoS and SPLM/A representatives failed to reach agreement. Consequently, the five independent experts surveyed the information and presented their decision on July 14, 2005. The SPLM/A accepted the independent decision whereas the GoS rejected it, even though the agreement stipulated that the ABC decision was legal and binding.⁴¹ This issue remains unresolved, threatening the entire North-South peace and exacerbating low-level local conflict dynamics around to pastoral/nomadic land use patterns.

Since December of 2007, over 150 people have been killed in fresh scuffles between the SPLM/A, armed Misseriya and others. More recently, tensions were raised when a politician from South Sudan, Edward Lino, arrived in the region of Abyei. The government in Khartoum condemned this action as a unilateral move by the South.

Abyei presents such a critical dilemma because of its oil reserves and border location. Where the border lies directly affects the distribution of revenue from that oil money to the GoS, the Government of Southern Sudan and local communities. **According to the International Crisis Group, the gross revenue for 2006 from the oil fields in Abyei was approximately \$670 million, yet little to none of this money is invested back into the community.**⁴² Both the SPLM and the government of Khartoum stand to lose or benefit from the ultimate demarcation of the border. In addition, traditional trust between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities has largely eroded due to the civil war and lack of agreement in its immediate aftermath.

The case of Abyei demonstrates the overall challenge presented by North-South border demarcation, as oil deposits line broad swathes of this boundary. Further difficulties may arise around the 2011 CPA-mandated referendum deciding the future status of Abyei and whether its lucrative oil concessions will remain in the North or be considered part of the South. Lack of international engagement after the 2005 CPA has allowed conflict around this issue to intensify.

Africa Action stands in solidarity with the people of Abyei in hopes of a peaceful resolution that justly distributes the region's oil wealth and fairly delineates the border between North and South while respecting the cross-border migration rights of people in this region. Differences can be resolved between the Misseriya, Ngok Dinka and other local communities with the halt of arms shipments to the region as well as the establishment of an inclusive, transparent and democratic local political administration. If the government refuses to drastically alter its policies towards this region, it risks plunging the country back into a devastating full-blown civil war.

Conclusion

The implication of these three case studies is clear. To be effective, reactive crisis diplomacy must no longer be the driving approach to a U.S. foreign policy toward Sudan. Advocates must not only push for an end to the genocide in Darfur, but a proactive resolution of the many separate but interrelated conflicts throughout the country. It must be understood

⁴¹ IRIN, "Interview with Douglas Johnson." May 29, 2006.

⁴² Crisis Group. *Sudan: Breaking the Abyei Deadlock*, October 12, 2007.

that these conflicts are not geographically contained – as the recent Justice and Equality Movement assault on Khartoum demonstrates.

The role of development in these conflicts must also be analyzed under a critical lens.

Irresponsible investment that ignores environmental degradation and the concerns and rights of local populations, such as the dam projects in Nubia, cannot continue. Instead, emphasis must focus on socially responsible engagement. Hydroelectric dams and oil extraction can be harbingers of positive change, but not if they continue to discriminate against local people, ravage their environments and violate human rights.

Not only governments, but businesses, banks and investors must adhere to internationally agreed upon human rights, such as those outlined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, basing financial decisions not only on their pocketbooks, but also on the potential impact on the environment and people of the regions they invest in. **Investors in Eastern Sudan must acknowledge the importance of developing socially beneficial infrastructure there. Oil companies drilling along the North/South border must also call for the fair distribution of revenues to local populations and cooperate with local civil society and the international community to ensure that their behavior facilitates, no complicates, the border demarcation process. North of Khartoum, Chinese and Arab investors and European contractors must also reassess the impact of the construction of dams in the Nubian homeland.**

The ultimate source of Sudan’s humanitarian crises and violent conflicts is that for too long, Khartoum has reaped the benefits of its country’s resources without paying heed to the political, economic and cultural needs of local populations. Both political power and economic resource must be more equitably distributed among the different ethnic groups and regions of the country. For peace to be comprehensive, and crimes against humanity like those in Darfur avoided, the different peoples of Sudan must have a political outlet to voice their concerns, their frustrations and their desires.

U.S. policy must recognize this reality. This does not mean pushing unilaterally for regime change. It does imply engaging multilateral diplomatic and economic pressure on the GoS to assent to UNAMID’s deployment and fully implement the CPA. The U.S. must approach Sudan within a long-term policy context that acknowledges the distinctions and linkages Darfur and the North/South war have with these other three regions. Although not explored here, a regional understanding of Chad, Sudan and the Central African Republic is also essential to productive U.S. and international engagement.

Even though the picture painted of these three crises for the future of Sudan may be grim, there is still hope. The Sudanese people do not want war and violence to continue and the international community can help these communities bring about change if the U.S. and other international leaders ground their policies in people-driven priorities and sharp analysis of all the overlapping conflicts in Sudan. **With such knowledge as power, advocates and concerned U.S. citizens can be both more sophisticated and more effective in their push to end crimes against humanity and promote peace and prosperity for all of Sudan.**

This resource was written by Matt Levy with support from the Africa Action staff.

Africa Action

1634 Eye Street, Suite 810, NW ♦ Washington, DC 20006 ♦ (t) 202-546-7961 ♦ (f) 202-546-1545 ♦ www.africaaction.org