

THE TWO SUDANS: OLD AND NEW FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

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Abstract. *Both Sudans are very much open for business today, actively seeking foreign direct investment from West, East, and everywhere in between. During the half-century civil war between the north and the south, a lot of international actors were involved in one way or another. Some of them helped the rebels, some of them imposed sanctions, and others just wanted the oil. This article wants to present all the major actors who were involved mainly in the peace process in 2005, but, most importantly, an analysis of the present and future actions of these actors regarding both states.*

Keywords: *Sudan, South Sudan, Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, oil, China, Beijing, European Union, mediation, Dinka, Abyei, Merowe Dam, IGAD.*

Historical ties of both countries are very different. The South had and still has strong ties with the West, but Juba has made it clear that if the Chinese are first to come and partner in developing the new nation, they will not hesitate to welcome them. Furthermore, China's "no strings attached" political approach and economic cooperation model is as attractive in Juba as it has proven elsewhere on the continent, not least in resource-rich states eager to develop fast. The North has strong ties with the Arab world, Russia and its Asian partners, China, India and Malaysia, with China looking to change sides due to the South oil fields. The involvement of the international community was very important in assisting the peacebuilding process in the area and now it seems that for the future it will play another important role – both Sudans

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becoming day by day nothing else than donors in the „Cold War“ between the East and the West, the main actors being USA and China. Unfortunately, both states failed to understand that in a region where the legal system is based mainly on colonial laws (written or un-written) , which are mostly individual-orientated, the time has come for both states to return to their traditional culture, and why not, to their traditional way of resolving conflicts, as already done in West Africa (Chereji&Wratto, 2013).

For over two decades, the United States has been an important player in efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Sudan and a major donor of humanitarian assistance to South Sudan. During the early years of the South Sudanese liberation struggle, the United States maintained good relations with the government of Sudan until the military coup in 1989 brought President Bashir to power. Relations between the SPLM and the United States began to expand in the early '90s, although access to senior officials did not take place until the late '90s. The Clinton Administration considered the Bashir regime a threat to secular regimes in Africa and the Middle East and a hub for international terrorism (Dagne, 2011). In May 1996, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and subsequently Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called Sudan “a viper’s nest of terrorism.” The United States closed its embassy in Khartoum in February 1996 and moved the remaining embassy personnel to Nairobi because of security concerns. The Clinton Administration also began to support allies in the region in an effort to isolate the Bashir regime and strengthen the SPLA. The United States provided an estimated \$20 million in surplus U.S. military equipment to Uganda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia (Dagne, 2011). The U.S. support to these “frontline states” helped reverse military gains made by the Bashir government in the '90s. Some observers interpreted Washington’s support to these countries as a measure to contain, punish, and facilitate the downfall of the Bashir government in Khartoum. The Clinton Administration also actively sought a peaceful resolution of the Sudanese conflict. President George W. Bush in large part followed the Clinton Administration’s two-prong approach of engagement and containment. The Administration imposed additional sanctions on Sudan and remained actively engaged in mediation efforts. US sanctions prohibit US companies from doing any business in Sudan, except in the Southern part. As a result, the two countries have no economic relations, except for a few exceptions that are allowed by the US administration: import of Arabic gum for Coca-Cola, and a large plant in Khartoum that is owned by the same company. US law does not prohibit investing in foreign multinationals that operate in or sell to Sudan, but a nationwide Sudan Divestment campaign has managed to drive a lot of US money out of companies that are active in the country (Tarrosi, 2011).

In late October 2009, the Obama Administration announced a new policy towards Sudan. This policy focused on three priorities: an end to the conflict in Darfur; implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA); and ensuring Sudan does not become a safe haven for international terrorist groups (Dagne, 2011).

The United States will continue next year to work with international partners to implement the World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund South Strategy in a timely manner and to improve access to capital, particularly micro financing, for agricultural enterprises and local private sector ventures.

The United States will support efforts and initiatives that help increase trade between Sudan and its neighbors. Transparency in fiscal expenditures will be critical to attracting investment, and the United States will support World Bank anticorruption efforts in Southern Sudan.

South Sudan faces serious challenges in the coming years. There are a number of unresolved issues between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan, which could pose a serious threat to peace and stability in both countries. South Sudan lacks the capacity to deliver basic services to its people and demands are likely to increase in the coming years (Dagne, 2011). There are also a number of new rebellions, often backed by the government in Khartoum, against the Government of Southern Sudan.

South Sudan also lacks the infrastructure and institutions necessary for governance and delivery of basic services. Over the past six years, the GOSS has taken a number of steps to address these challenges. The 120 mile Juba-Nimulie road, funded by the United States, is the first major highway and is likely to boost trade between South Sudan and Uganda. In 2010, the United States provided \$361.1 million in contribution for UNMIS operations, and an estimated \$289.1 million in 2011. The request for 2012 was \$298.6 million; the same figures were requested for 2013. On June 27, 2011, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1990, endorsing the deployment of Ethiopian peacekeeping forces to the Abyei region. U.S. assistance to South Sudan supports a wide range of programs. According to the FY2013 Congressional Budget Justification report, the United States “will support key stability and security issues through conflict mitigation, preventive diplomacy, and peace and reconciliation work”. The United States will continue to provide assistance in security sector reform, says the budget, in an effort to transform the SPLA from a liberation movement to a professional armed force. The United States will also provide assistance in support of training of Southern Sudan Police Service (SSPS), according to the budget (Dagne, 2011).

U.S. assistance is to focus also on the education and health care. Prof. Hassan Al-Saoury, chairman of the Sudanese Society for Political Sciences, told Xinhua that “the priority in South Sudan’s external relations will be the United States, Uganda, and Kenya”. South Sudan’s relationship with the U.S. will not be a normal relationship because Americans played a great role in the negotiations between north and south Sudan, and almost all the agreements and protocols were written by American pens, he added.

The European Union was, is and will be an important player in the region. Formal cooperation with the European Union (EU) was suspended in March 1990, but substantial

humanitarian assistance continued, evenly divided over the North and the South. In 2001 the EU started a policy of “constructive engagement”. This was inspired less by hopes that Sudan was about to become peaceful and democratic, and more by the opportunities that EU businesses saw emerging in a country with a nascent oil industry that was under full US boycott. Strong public feelings in parts of Europe, and Chinese and Malaysian ability to use the advantage of having been the first to get in, limited serious EU investments to a handful of companies, many of which French. In 2007, three large European multinationals – Siemens AG, ABB Ltd, and Rolls Royce PLC – announced their withdrawal from Sudan, after pressure from campaigners for divestment (Derks, Romer, 2008).

The EU has currently allocated €400 million through the European Development Fund (EDF) for the Sudan, used for food security and education. The European Union has been an important actor with political, relief and development aspects to its engagement. In terms of its political engagement, in recent years the EU’s focus has been to support the CPA process with an emphasis on assisting governance reforms. In the longer term, the EU should continue to focus on encouraging good neighborly relations between the North and South, as well as considering carefully how best it can underpin stability and state-building processes in South Sudan (Attree, 2012). It has been argued that the EU sacrificed political leverage with GoS through its public support for the ICC arrest warrant for President Bashir, and has been considered important rather for its significant humanitarian and development assistance than for any role as a political mediator. The EU is a major relief and development actor. It delivered €650 million of development assistance from 2005 until 2010, and €776 million in humanitarian aid for the same period.

The EU is currently reviewing its comprehensive strategy for Sudan and South Sudan. This is an important priority, since its last projects intended to cover the period 2005-2007. The latter strategy focuses EU development of assistance on the education and food security sectors, but areas in which the EU has provided assistance include rehabilitation and recovery of war-affected communities and infrastructure, support to CPA implementation, capacity development for non-state actors and public administrations, health, rule of law, media and human rights programs.

Canada was a real and pleasant surprise for me, being neutral and impartial, and its projects cover sensitive areas. According to the Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, in 2009, as part of Canada’s new aid effectiveness agenda, Sudan was selected as a country of focus. After the referendum, Canada’s engagement in Sudan and South Sudan continues to follow key foreign policy priorities of freedom, democracy, human rights, and rule of law. It also continues to respond to Canadian public and international interest in having the Canadian government play a diplomatic role, provide development assistance, and contribute to peace and stability in the two countries.

Canada's approach to Sudan is to coordinate its actions through a task force, of which Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development is a member, along with the Department of National Defense, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Together they are making a contribution toward helping the people of Sudan and South Sudan to address humanitarian challenges, reduce security threats and to support efforts for longer-term sustained economic growth. In terms of children and youth Canada focuses on increasing access to integrated basic services, such as education and health services, for at-risk older children and youth where needs are greatest, in a conflict-sensitive manner. Last year 66 health facilities were built or rehabilitated, as well as 47 buildings at the Juba Teaching Hospital in South Sudan, which receives 100,000 patients each year. A big step was made also by providing reintegration assistance to more than 900 children, of whom more than 500 were formerly associated with armed groups.

In the food security area, Canada provides vulnerable households with a way to generate income by providing employment skills that lead to improved food production and increased market access for agricultural products and livestock. Canada tried to improve livelihoods and provide better access to markets for more individuals and to improve agricultural production, including access to seeds and tools, for more households. Last year, Canada provided seeds and tools to 14,460 households to enable food production and formed 53 Farmer Field Schools, benefiting to over 1,000 farmers. Also very important, Canada supports efforts to help establish government institutions in South Sudan. This includes strengthening the core skills of public servants and improving public financial management; implementing the electronic payroll system for state level and Government of South Sudan ministries and commissions; and also developing training programs in order to strengthen core skills, including training in the English language and computer literacy, for public servants in ministries in states and in the Government of South Sudan.

Among other Western states, UK and Norway contributed a lot during the peace talks. The UK Government states that its objectives for Sudan and South Sudan for 2011-2015 are supporting the peaceful completion of the CPA, including the transition to two countries, working towards inclusive peace and justice in Darfur, supporting national and regional stability, promoting human rights, and encouraging the development of a democratic and accountable government (Attree, 2012).

The UK Department for International Development's bilateral aid review committed the UK to spend £140 million per year in Sudan and South Sudan from 2011 until 2015, to be focused on delivering health and education services, long-term development, reducing hunger and extreme poverty and responding to humanitarian crises. Over two-thirds of this amount has been allocated to South Sudan (Attree, 2012).

As well as continuing to be a major donor to Sudan and South Sudan, the UK is likely to maintain its active efforts to ensure a harmonized international approach both as part

of the troika of donors who supported the CPA negotiations and as an active proponent of multi-donor funding pools.

Norway was also an important factor in the peace process, building on its close relationship with the SPLM/A and its support to the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. Sudan and South Sudan were allocated \$124.1 million dollars of Norwegian development aid in 2010. These resources support recovery, education, health, food security, good governance, return and reintegration of refugees, and IDPs and institutional capacity building. Norway has also played a key role in ensuring inter-donor co-ordination, having hosted major international donor conferences on Sudan on more than one occasion.

At present, Western powers enjoy strong relations with the GoSS. Nevertheless, these strong relations could change, if, in order to encourage it to assume the responsibilities of full statehood and embrace democratic good governance, Western powers find themselves more routinely criticizing the GoSS, however constructively.

China is the most important Eastern actor in both Sudans. Historically, Sudan was the first country in Africa to receive large-scale Chinese oil investment when the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) invested in 1996, followed by the Malaysian owned Petronas and the Indian-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), which financed the development of the current set of oil fields and built the network of pipelines, refineries and export terminals that enabled the sector to grow (Shankleman, 2011).

China is becoming increasingly dependent on oil import and has, unlike Western countries, not been constrained by public concerns regarding human rights issue in the oil fields in Sudan. China has, together with Russia and countries like Poland and Belarus, sold military equipment to the GoS and will continue to do so to gain the government favor in the oil business (Shankleman, 2011). An important action taken by China in order to help Sudan was connected to financial debts and loans. In 2001, it was reported that China cancelled 63 percent of Sudan's \$67.3 million debt. China cancelled a further \$70 million of Sudanese debt in 2007 and provided \$13 million interest-free loans for Sudan to construct a new presidential palace. Another Chinese action aimed at lessening Khartoum's economic isolation was the agreement in 2008, as an element of broader economic co-operation, to open branches of Chinese banks in Sudan (Attree, 2012).

A number of headline infrastructure development projects have been backed by China and built by Chinese firms in the North. Among the most well-known is the Merowe Dam on the Nile. The lead financier of this \$1.5 billion project was China's Export Import Bank (Exim Bank). It was built by Chinese, French and German companies.

In 2010 Chinese consortia or corporations reportedly won contracts of \$838 million, \$711 million and \$705 million to build the Upper Atbara, Shereik and Kajbar Dams

respectively (Attree, 2012). In February 2011, a subsidiary of the state-owned China Communications Construction Company also won a contract worth \$1.2 billion for its role in the construction of Khartoum's new international airport, which is co-financed by the Exim Bank alongside banks from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey. Other major Chinese projects involve power, water and transport infrastructure. In March 2010, Exim Bank agreed on a loan of \$274 million to fund the construction of a 630 km network to supply electricity from the new Al Fula power plant (Attree, 2012). The latest news about China's aid came from the Sudanese Finance and National Economy minister, Ali Mahmood Abdel-Rasool, who told the national assembly less than a month ago that his government is in talks with China to obtain a \$500 million loan to construct the Merowe dam canal (AllAfrica, 2013).

Abdel-Rasool, who was testifying on a proposed law for additional FY (Financial Year) 2013 appropriations, noted that Beijing suspended credit to Khartoum following the secession of South Sudan and the loss of oil reserves that existed when the country was united. Sudanese officials said that oil was used in the past as collateral for Chinese loans and following the country's partition there were reports that Khartoum offered gold mine concessions instead to maintain the flow of loans, mainly because the US sanctions and accumulation of debt arrears prevents Sudan from obtaining other loans through international financial institutions.

In the wake of Sudan's partition, Beijing accelerated a re-orientation of its engagement in the resulting two states, most significantly through a new courtship in Juba (African Studies Centre, 2013). China's historical support for Khartoum left a sour legacy in the South, but the potential for mutual economic benefit it means that a new chapter in bilateral relations is now being written. Balancing new friends in Juba with old friends in Khartoum, however, has proven a delicate dance. China has been drawn into a high-stakes oil crisis between the two, the consequences of which may temper an otherwise rapidly expanding relationship with Juba. As South Sudan prepared for its 2011 self-determination referendum, China recognized the increasing inevitability of independence (African Studies Centre, 2013). Eager to maintain stable relationships and the continuity of its oil investments, now situated primarily in the South, its stance evolved to reflect changing political realities. Beijing is keen to preserve and expand its projects in South Sudan's oil sector, but Chinese companies are also looking to other sectors, above all to build infrastructure in a country that has almost none. The number of Chinese nationals and commercial actors in Juba has spiked dramatically in the last two and a half years since independence. Besides oil, Chinese companies are most interested in infrastructure, and South Sudan needs everything: roads, bridges, telecommunications, hospitals, power plants, schools, dams and irrigation systems, and new oil infrastructures.

As negotiations toward a North-South oil deal foundered dangerously in late 2011, the role of China gained center stage, and many in the international community (and in the

two Sudans) thought Beijing would be forced to intervene (International Crisis Group, 2012). Juba wanted help in pressuring Khartoum to cut a reasonable deal, and when the North began to confiscate Southern oil instead, it interpreted China's inaction as passive complicity and moved to leverage its increasingly uncomfortable position. Both sides, as well as many international actors, assumed China would weigh in more assertively, though perceptions of Beijing's influence and readiness to employ it were unrealistic. The shutdown of the oil fields, abduction of Chinese construction workers in Southern Kordofan and expulsion of the head of a Chinese-led oil consortium added to Beijing's vexing political problem and generated anxiety among Chinese nationals in North and South. Both Sudans continue to try to pull China into their respective corners, but Beijing has resisted taking sides, as its principal objective remains balanced relations with North and South (International Crisis Group, 2012). Also, given the considerable investment in developing and operating the oil sector, the Sudans remain important for China National Petroleum Company the state-owned oil giant, and thus a focus for the government.

A further area of investment that appears to lie at the crossroads between economic investment and human development is China's growing interest in supporting the development of agriculture in Sudan and South Sudan (Attree, 2012). Co-operation in this area could be crucial to the challenging task of diversifying the two countries' economies in time to stave off declining oil revenues – and could make an important contribution to the food security of the wider region and other external trading partners. However, although Chinese actors have made some positive contributions through such projects, there have also been criticisms of the approaches taken and the impacts on peace and conflict dynamics of some Chinese projects. For example, while the Merowe Dam benefits Sudan by providing irrigation water and doubling the supply of electricity, it has also been criticized for displacing 50,000 people from the Nile valley, amid violently suppressed protests.

A further contentious issue is that despite significant Chinese-backed development projects in Sudan, in South Sudan such projects are not yet comparable in scale. The perception that this is the case is widely shared among South Sudan's people and officials.

South Sudan continues to face profound security challenges both within its borders and along the new and restive international boundary with Sudan, as events over 2013 have made clear. Chinese commercial operations in South Sudan have increased sharply since 2005, when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement brought Sudan's long-running civil war to an end. According to statistics from the Chinese Embassy in South Sudan, by January 2013 about 100 Chinese companies had registered in the country, mainly working in oil production and infrastructure construction. By April 2013, Chinese companies had signed Memoranda of Understanding for more than 60 projects in a range of sectors including roads, schools, telecoms, energy, and bridges. The demand for this

kind of infrastructural development in South Sudan is massive, with the World Bank estimating the annual infrastructure funding gap at 879 million dollars a year. It is undeniable that economic cooperation and infrastructure investments have had positive impacts in South Sudan, fast-tracking the construction of roads across vast and remote locations and stimulating local economies. However, when local communities are not adequately consulted and their security concerns not satisfactorily recognized, new economic developments also risk making insecurity worse, as is the case of the Merowe Dam.

The perception that Chinese actors have not sufficiently helped communities could, unfortunately, inflame local grievances and fuel wider patterns of insecurity. But community engagement failures also carry significant risks for China, potentially putting company operations in jeopardy, citizens at risk, and damaging China's reputation both at a local level and internationally. Moreover, the oil impasse may temper the pace of Chinese engagement in the South but is unlikely to stall it. Angered by the sense that China still treats South Sudan as a province rather than an independent state, Juba will continue to make demands, particularly with regard to management of its oil sector (International Crisis Group, 2012), but if managed pragmatically, the opportunities for mutual economic benefit should surpass episodic tensions. Sudan is Africa's fifth country when it comes to foreign direct investments by Asian countries. Sudan's three biggest investors are China, Malaysia and India. Japan is the country's major Asian donor (Derks, Romer, 2008). China and Malaysia have shown to play a rather different role than Western nations, as they do not seem to question Sudan's internal policies. Malaysia is Sudan's second largest investor, with Malaysia's state oil firm Petronas alone having investments worth 1.45 billion dollars. With major shares in all blocks currently under development, Petronas may soon take over from CNPC as Sudan's leading oil company. The company is assessing engineering bids with Sudan's Ministry of Energy and Mining to build a 100,000-barrels-per-day refinery in Port Sudan but plans have been frequently postponed and no progress has been reported. Like China, Malaysia is urging western nations not to impose sanctions on Sudan over its failure to resolve the conflict in Darfur.

In January 2006, India signed an agreement with Sudan for a 350 million dollar loan for setting up a 500 MW power project by state-run Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. The total project costs of about 500 million dollar shared by the two countries. In addition, Sudan and India signed a loan agreement of 41.9 million dollars for the Singa-Gedarif transmission line and sub-station. Sudan had and still has strong relations also with the oil-producing states of the Persian Gulf, in particular Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. During the serious economic crisis in the 80s, Saudi Arabia provided Sudan with military aid, concessionary loans, outright financial grants, and oil at prices well below the international level. Relations however have not always been smooth. In 1991 some 200,000 Sudanese migrants were expelled from Persian

Gulf countries because of Sudan's support for Iraq in the Gulf war, while Saudi Arabia suspended grants, project loans, and concessionary oil sales. Arab investments surged between 2001 and 2005 15 times to 2.3 billion dollars. The jump after the signing of the CPA in 2005 is most remarkable. Contrary to the Asian investments, they cover the full specter of Sudan's economy, oil of course, but also telecommunication, agriculture, industry, construction, and transportation. Investors from the Gulf States have very high interests in Sudan's banking sector.

In my analysis I reserved a special place for the African actors involved in the war and peace talks between the two Sudans, mainly their neighbors. During the war, the SPLM maintained strong ties with many African countries and received political, financial, and military assistance from some governments. In East Africa, the SPLM enjoys strong ties with the governments of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Speaking about these friendly states, Al-Saoury described the future relationship between South Sudan and Uganda as "strategic", as most of the major commodities and labor force come to South Sudan from Uganda. He also added that because of the rebellion in the north of Uganda on the border with South Sudan, the two countries needed to establish a strategic relationship to end the existence of the Lord Resistance Army militias which threatened the stability of the region. Regarding South Sudan's relationship with Kenya, the same Al-Saoury said that Kenya was a neighbor country of South Sudan and it was the patron of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), so it had a specialty in the relations with the new-born state. Kenya will develop more projects in the future, the most important ones being in infrastructure and mass-media. Kenya has launched construction of a 5.2 billion dollar railway line which when completed will link Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. The 1,250-kilometer-long railway will be constructed with funding from China and will initially cover the Mombasa – Nairobi route. The initial line is expected to be completed by 2017, with further extensions to Uganda, eastern DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan to follow. The railway line is expected to boost Kenya's status as a regional economic hub and also promote economic integration of the East African Community through the sharing of infrastructure facilities among member states (AllAfrica, 2013). At the same time, journalist unions in Uganda and Kenya are to conduct joint programs with their colleagues in South Sudan in order to strengthen the capacity of journalists in the two-year-old nation to defend press freedom, organize their union and conduct advocacy campaigns. Their main goal is to help South Sudan to develop the capacity to handle press freedom advocacy campaigns and have a strong union of journalists according to UJU secretary-general Stephen Ouma.

In addition, South Sudan is seeing expanded trade and business activities locally and with the neighboring Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo due to the new 167 mile road in Western Equatoria. A number of towns now have electricity, thereby increasing their business activities. The GOSS has also taken steps to expand primary school enrollment, especially for girls, over the past several years.

Under successive governments, other countries like Ethiopia provided significant political and military support to the SPLM/A (Dagne, 2011). Eritrea provided major military assistance in the '90s, especially to SPLM/A and its allies in eastern Sudan. The SPLM leadership has maintained ties with Egypt over the past two decades, although the government of Egypt under Hosni Mubarak was not supportive of the South's right to self-determination. The involvement of the international community is an important factor in assisting the peacebuilding process in the country. International actors such as the USA had applied significant pressure on both the GoS and the SPLM/A to reach a conflict settlement in January 2005. Moreover, the peace agreement would probably not have been signed without the concerted efforts of the IGAD and the international community led by the Friends/Partners of IGAD, given that the two negotiating parties lacked confidence in each other (Dagne, 2011). IGAD is now playing a supervisory role through the evaluation commission which recently was established by the Presidency, while the mandate to monitor the implementation of the peace process lies with UNMIS (United Nations Mission in Sudan).

Over the past fifteen years, two trends are worth stressing related to the position of Sudan within the region and the role of regional actors in the Sudan's conflicts. First, the GoS has managed to move away from almost complete isolation to substantial regional support, though relations with Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda remained tense; second, the conflict in the South has been mainly mediated by Sudan's Southern neighbors. By contrast, the Darfur conflict enabled Sudan's Northern neighbors and other „marginalized mediators” like Nigeria to accomplish a diplomatic comeback under the auspices of the African Union (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006). Most recently, the Egyptian government seized the chance to offer its services by hosting talks in Cairo with the Northern opposition. The distribution of roles therefore reflects geopolitical realities around Sudan's conflicts and the strategic interests of the 'mediating' governments and security interests, not humanitarian concerns, usually drive the regional actors' involvement in peacemaking activities (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006).

Only two countries played a genuine peacemaking role, in the sense that they have never been party to the conflict they proposed to mediate. Kenya's support for the SPLM/A has never been of a military kind and the Kenyan authorities have always managed to keep cordial relations with Sudan. This may explain why Kenya has been at the forefront of peace diplomacy. The other one, Nigeria, has long-standing political and cultural ties with Sudan. The countries share no border but are similarly divided along North-South and Muslim-non Muslim fault lines. The Nigerian authorities mediated, unsuccessfully, the Southern conflict in the early 1990s and tried again a decade later with respect to the Darfur crisis (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006).

The involvement of Arab leaders and the Arab League inevitably impacted the conduct and contents of the negotiations in a way that the GoS did not object to. Hence,

Nigeria's position on Darfur has seemed to come increasingly closer to the first group of this typology. Nevertheless, as it provides troops to the AU mission in Darfur and may contribute to the UN mission in the South, Nigeria's role in peace implementation may remain critical for the years to come.

Arab countries and organizations have never shown great sympathy for the Southern Sudanese cause and the prospect of an independent South. Egypt's concern with NIF fundamentalism in the 90s was counter-balanced by its fear of seeing the SPLM/A getting control over the Nile headwaters. For its part, Libya supported the SPLM/A until the fall of Nimeiri, but then realigned its policy and worked to improve both relations with the NCP and its image as regional peacemaker (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006).

In the Darfur conflict, Arab countries tend to support, partly for domestic reasons, the GoS on behalf of Arab solidarity. This group also includes Ethiopia, which shifted sides following the outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea in 1998 and has since built a mutually benefiting alliance with Khartoum.

Sudan's neighbors have played a significant role in Sudan's civil wars. The relationships between the governments in the region have been riddled with distrust and tensions caused by disputes over resources and issues of culture and religion. Several of Sudan's neighbors (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and in the past Libya) support or have supported the SPLM/A and the NDA in Sudan, while the GoS has supported insurgent movements in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Chad, this tendency does not bene it any of the states but, rather like other vicious spirals of conflict, it has been self-sustaining.

Egypt is a very important regional actor and its position regarding the North-South conflict is crucial for any peace settlement to be sustainable. Egypt would like to see a moderate cooperative and united Sudan and is opposed to the radical Islamist line of the NIF government, which has close affiliations to fundamentalist Egyptian groups. However, the main issue determining the relationship between Egypt and Sudan is that of war given Egypt's interest in and dependence on securing or ensuring access to as much of the Nile water as possible. The birth of a new country would make it necessary to renegotiate the Nile Waters Agreement from 1959, which as it stands is in Egypt's favor, and therefore Egypt will be very much against new negotiations (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006).

Uganda has been the SPLM/A's most important foreign supporter since Mengistu's downfall in 1991. It has provided a haven and military support for the movement and Ugandan troops have even participated actively in SPLM/A offensive. The GoS has supported the Ugandan rebel movement, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Allied Democratic Forces. While Bashir claimed in 2001 that it had stopped all support for the LRA, we may argue that this is not true and that the GoS now provides its support through different channels.

Eritrea also has a highly tense relationship with the GoS. It harbors the NDA headquarters and the GoS have supported the Muslim insurgent movement Eritrean Islamic Jihad. The border with Eritrea has been seen as a potential new frontline, which would place the GoS under further pressure. However there are indications that both countries are trying to review their relationships so that they could return to normality for the benefit of both countries.

The last two actors presented in this area will be the African Union and UN because they behave like true mediators, being impartial and neutral in the conflict and most importantly because they are not actors in the Cold War of Eastern and Western donors.

On October 27, 2013, the Ngok Dinka community in the disputed Abyei region of Sudan held a unilateral vote to determine whether Abyei would remain part of Sudan or join South Sudan. The African Union (AU) strongly condemned the referendum as unacceptable and irresponsible. The AU maintained that the referendum violated AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) decisions and could further complicate the search for a common solution based on the framework of existing commitments, given that the issue of voter eligibility had not yet been resolved. Just before the vote, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) members had expressed grave concerns about the extremely unstable situation in Abyei, saying the referendum could fuel tensions between Sudan and South Sudan and hamper a solution to the border disputes in the area. The Misseriya, a largely nomadic tribe in western Sudan who use Abyei seasonally for grazing, have in turn threatened to hold their own referendum. In April 2012, the PSC adopted a road map aimed at resolving differences between Sudan and South Sudan, including the final status of Abyei. According to the road map, if the negotiating actors still failed to reach consensus, the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) would formulate a proposal that would then be authorized by the PSC as an ultimate and compulsory resolution. The AUHIP proposal on the Final Status of the Abyei Area (published on September 21, 2012) made provisions for a referendum in October 2013, but once again it proved impossible to get the buy-in of both governments. The AU has not yet picked a new date for the Abyei referendum. The two documents exclude the Misseriya from voting due to their largely nomadic and seasonal use of the Abyei region, although the AUHIP proposal allows them continued use of the area for cattle grazing. Some claim that including the Misseriya will unfairly bias the vote towards unity, in favor of the more developed Sudan. By not waiting for the conclusion of the ongoing AUHIP process, holding a referendum suggests a sense of despair among the Dinka that the two Sudans will ever reach an agreement.

On the one hand, despite challenges on the ground, the AU – as one of the leading actors seeking to explore solutions to the challenges in the area – has been criticized for lack of action.

Moreover, the delays in Abyei are a result of Khartoum and Juba's failure to come to an agreement, and neither the PSC nor AUHIP have adequate leverage, or so-called ,car-

rots and sticks', over the real actors behind the Abyei standoff. What does this mean for the AU's ability to mediate in the region? A referendum in Abyei is possible, but Sudan and South Sudan need to negotiate in good faith, particularly with the view to settle existing border issues, making use of the AU and other actors such as the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). For its part, the AU should continue to uphold its commitments through assertive leadership and not be seen to be neglecting the issue of Abyei at the PSC level. The AU should push for inclusive grassroots level dialogues that adequately represent all communities involved, and agreements and recommendations should be integrated into high-level approaches. The AU also needs to identify points of leverage and stress mutually beneficial outcomes to enhance its mediation efforts. This should increase the chances that agreements be finalized and respected, and emphasize the importance of a mutually beneficial outcome for Sudan and South Sudan. It is only through strong commitment to the process, inclusive dialogue and an innovative use of incentives on the part of the two governments that agreement can be reached.

On June 27, 2011, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1990, endorsing the deployment of Ethiopian peacekeeping forces to the Abyei region. Its mandate comprises also human rights- and democracy monitoring. UNMIS is active in all parts of the country. Besides monitoring activities at different levels and tracks, UNMIS is also involved in awareness raising and education activities with MPs, politicians and activists through e.g. workshops and seminars on democracy and human rights. Operating within the overall UN goal of achieving peace, development and human rights for all, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is the latest element in the UN system in Sudan. UNMIS was established by Security Council Resolution 1590 of March 24, 2005, under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, as a peacekeeping mission and lead agency for all UN agencies in Sudan. On November 25, 2013, The Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations peacekeeping force for Abyei which is tasked with overseeing the demilitarization of an area that is contested by Sudan and South Sudan. In a unanimous vote, the 15-member Council extended the UN Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA) until the end of the following May. The mission was set up by the Council in June 2011 following an outbreak of violence after Sudanese troops took control of the area, displacing tens of thousands of people in the weeks before South Sudan became an independent State after seceding from Sudan.

The United Nations has provided human rights training to the commissioners and heads of police in Unity State's seven counties in an effort to protect citizens from human rights abuses. During the training, the human rights section of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in collaboration with the government's Human Rights Commission emphasized the importance of observing human rights laws. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan, through its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration work is providing intensive training to the South Sudan security services in order to create a national Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control. A composite group

from South Sudan's army (SPLA), the South Sudanese Police Service, National Security, Wildlife and Prison Services participated in an intensive 12-day training funded by the UNMISS under the guidance of experts from international companies who specialize in marking and tracking the flow of weapons. The training also taught the students the legal background to small arms control, weapons identification, and safe weapons handling procedures.

In 2014 the government, with the support of UNMISS, will work to implement a national weapons marking campaign of all government held small arms. Although UNMIS has no direct responsibility for sustainable development, its activities would complement ongoing work in this area, including the Millennium Development Goals. The work of the UN and the African Union in Sudan is complementary; they maintain strong relations at operational and strategic levels. Assistance to the AU is part of the Mission's responsibility. The mandate of the peace support operation could take approximately seven years including the pre-interim and interim periods (Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, 2006).

As Juba opens up to new investments, it should take two critical factors into consideration. First – the potential correlations between the economic partnerships it forges, the character of the state that emerges and its foreign policy. While it hopes to remain politically aligned with the West, time will tell whether expanding economic partnerships with China or others will have a gravitational effect. For now, it wants to welcome, and leverage, the interest of all actors. Secondly, in the midst of a mounting budget crisis, Juba must consider how to secure and direct investment so as to best serve its development agenda, calm its own domestic insecurity and prevent even greater state fragility. It must actively shape new economic relationships rather than become a passive recipient of foreign-authored investment. Given limited government capacity and an untested legislative framework, its economic planners must take care to harness such an investment for its own benefit, lest Africa's newest state be overrun in a resource scramble.

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