# Sudan's old and new conflicts: A comparative study

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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## Abstract

Recent years have seen new ideologies and political factors being introduced into the Sudanese political landscape. The new war in Darfur has revealed that the traditional North-South conflict is not necessarily a religious war but rather a war that goes beyond religion and ethnicity. Several factors underpin the civil wars in Sudan; principally disputes over religion, identity, inequality, resources, governance, self-determination, autonomy and secession. The attempt is therefore to define the various actors, factors and issues underlying both the North-South conflict and the new war in Darfur, and to analyse and compare the differences and similarities between the two wars.

Both the conflicts in Southern Sudan and in Darfur have their origin in the decay of the Sudanese state and in both cases did political marginalisation resulted in political exclusion. Another resemblance between the two wars is the acute identity crisis that resulted from the long history of stratification and discrimination. Both warring groups want to reassert their distinguishing characteristics in the respective conflicts where ‘Arab’ and ‘African’ have distinctive meanings and are used as racial, cultural, and political identities. The third similarity between the South and Darfur is the ethnic cleansing tactics and policies the Sudanese government has adopted.

The differences between these two wars is that Southern Sudan has developed into a war over national resources while Darfur does not share the same strategic commodities. The second is secession. The South started as a secessionist war while neither of the rebel groups in Darfur have demanded any form of self-determination. Darfur has also seen relatively timely international attention compared to Southern Sudan.

Comparing the two conflicts do reveal that neither religion nor race is at the heart of Sudan’s wars. Instead, the root of the insurgencies is largely founded upon culturally and regionally imposed economic and political marginalisation

coupled with the politicization of ethnic identities. The challenge for Sudan will be to create a new consciousness of common identity and a new meaning of belonging that grants peace, dignity, development and fundamental human rights.

# Opsomming

Nuwe ideologiese en politieke faktore het die laaste paar jaar toenemend na vore gekom in die politieke landskap van Sudan. Die konflik in Darfur het aan die lig gebring dat die tradisionele Noord-Suid oorlog nie noodwendig ‘n godsdienstige oorlog is nie, maar eerder ‘n oorlog wat godsdiens en etnisiteit transendeer. Verskeie faktore is onderliggend aan die oorloë in Sudan. Die belangrikstes is die stryd om godsdiens, identiteit, ongelykheid, hulpbronne, landsbestuur, selfbeskikking, selfregering en afskeiding. Die doel van die studie is om die verskillende rolspelers, die omstandighede en die geskilpunte in beide die Noord-Suid konflik en die nuwe oorlog in Darfur te omskryf en te analiseer om sodoende ‘n vergelyking te tref tussen die verskille en ooreenkomste in die twee oorloë.

Beide die oorloë in Suid-Sudan en Darfur het hul oorsprong in die verval van die staat terwyl politieke marginalisasie in beide gevalle tot politieke uitsluiting gelei het. Nog ‘n ooreenkoms tussen die twee oorloë is die identiteitskrisis wat by die verskillende groepe ontstaan het as gevolg van die lang geskiedenis van volgehoue diskriminasie. Beide oorloë is dus deels ‘n manier waarop die strydende groepe hulle onderskei karaktereienskappe wil herbevestig. Die terme “Arabier” en “Afrikaan” het ‘n eiesoortige betekenis ontwikkel in die onderskei oorloë en word geredelik gebruik as ‘n uitdrukking van rasse, kulturele en politieke identiteit. ‘n Derde ooreenkoms is die etniese suiwerings-veldtogte wat die Sudanese regering teen sy eie burgers gevoer het.

Een van die grootste verskille tussen die twee oorloë is dat Suid-Sudan ontwikkel het in ‘n hulpbronoorlog terwyl Darfur oor geen strategiese hulpbronne beskik nie. Die tweede is afskeiding. Die oorlog in die Suide het ontstaan met die doel om af te skei. Die rebelle in Darfur se eise sluit nie selfbeskikking in nie. Die konflik in Darfur het ook meer spoedige internasionale inmenging gesien in vergelyking met Suid-Sudan.

Die vergelyking tussen die twee oorloë het aan die lig gebring dat nie godsdiens of ras die oorsaak van Sudan se oorloë is nie. Die oorsprong van die konflikte lê eerder in die kulturele- en streeksverwante ekonomiese en politieke marginalisasie tesame met die politisering van etniese identiteite. Die uitdaging vir Sudan sal wees om nuwe bewustheid rondom ‘n gemene identiteit te skep asook ’n gevoel van behoort sodat almal kan deel hê in die vrede, menswaardigheid, ontwikkeling en menseregte.

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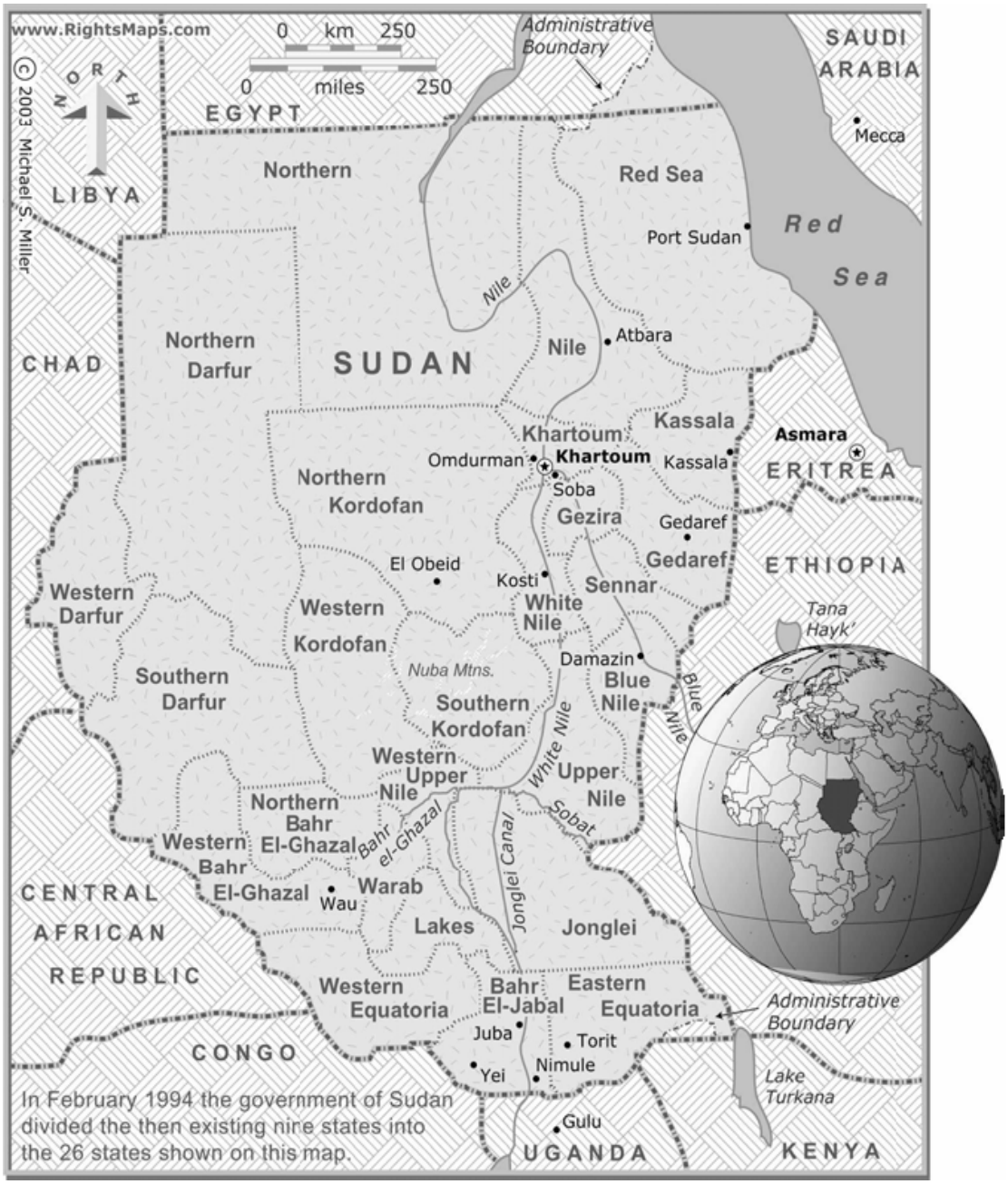
# MAP of SUDAN

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Sudan has been plagued by civil wars that have been raging since independence in 1956. Except for the little more than ten years of negotiated peace between 1972 and 1983, this is arguably the longest civil conflict in the world. The most simple and basic description of the conflict in Sudan would be an Arab and Muslim majority in the North fighting against a black African, and predominantly Christian or animist minority in the South. However, such characterization does not address the complex grievances and deep-rooted bitterness felt, not only by the southern regions, but other marginalized peoples as well. While the conflicts in Sudan follows broad lines of geography, religion and ethnicity, these factors are far from absolute, and it is important not to stereotype and over-generalize both the regional wars' dynamics.

The new conflict in Darfur indicates that Sudan's civil wars are not bound to the North-South divide, and must be viewed as country-wide conflicts that even incorporate other Muslim populations. Much of the tension in Darfur is fed by the same factors that led to the long running war between the North and the South. Since the coup that brought the present government to power in 1989, political and military organizations from the north, east and west have increasingly joined southern groups in opposition. Driving this wider national war is a conflict between the centre and the periphery, as groups outside the small circle of traditionally favoured Northern Arab Muslims began to react against their historic marginalization, and groups throughout the country seek to repudiate the government's dominance as well as the economic and political neglect (see ICG 2002).

This study makes it clear that the situation in Sudan is far more complicated than normally portrayed in the media, or by advocates of particular causes. Several factors continue to underpin the civil wars in Sudan; principally disputes over religion, identity, inequality, resources, governance, self-

determination, autonomy and secession. The problem in Sudan is that the regional uprisings are not only a struggle between a Northern Arab government that is largely Muslim and a black Southern insurgency which is significantly Christian, but also a contest of Black Muslim against Arab Muslim, each with its own brand of political Islam. It is a country-wide struggle against the centralized policies of an abusive government where race-based domination and exclusion help fuel the conflicts on both sides.

Each of these factors is complicated and in many cases has interacted to deepen the country's social and racial divide. It is clear that the causes of both Sudan's civil wars are too complex to trace back to any single source. Besides the intricate causes of the conflict, there is also the issue of competing interests of the various actors and factions that continue to drive the civil wars. Some fight to maintain power or to achieve it. Others fight out of principle or ideology, while yet others are driven by economic greed or grievances (see Collier & Hoeffler 2002; Tshitereke 2003). Thus there is no single issue that, if resolved, would bring peace.

The dilemma deepens, as the regional wars have increased in complexity over the duration of the conflict (Johnson 2003:127). It is clear that there are not only different causes for the conflicts but the nature of the conflicts differs as well. Each war is distinctive, because it arises from a specific set of historical circumstances. The war in the South poses all of the most common characteristics of violent civil conflict. Fighting is conducted between groups of distinct social identities. Their grievances are based upon the concurrence of ethnicity, race, religion and inequality which have escalated into sustained hatred. Oil has raised the stakes of the war and given both sides an increased commitment to the battlefield. The war between North and South is therefore as much a resource war as it is an identity war.

The new war in Darfur doesn't bear quite the same resemblance to the civil conflict in the South. In Darfur, there are no natural resources of note, no oil, the population is overwhelmingly Muslim, and there is no enigmatic leader with some sort of ideological ambitions such as John Garang of the SPLM. It

is thus a case of Muslim against Muslim, a conflict along a racial divide. The causes can be identified as an endeavour for political recognition, as well as an uprising against repression in the process of political and economical decision making. The story in Darfur is therefore as much an account with the emphasis on the east-west axis of Muslim identity (De Waal 2004) as it is a war in which different identities are redefined and reaffirmed within ethnic terms.

Another facet in this already intricate state of affairs is the way in which the Sudanese government considers the Darfur rebellion a power and regime threat. Although the government recruited volunteers to fight in the South on the basis of a 'jihad' or religiously sanctioned war against the non-Muslim southerners, the presence of militia groups like the Janjaweed are "evidence of a dangerous phase in the annals of power politics in Africa, in that leaders will go to any lengths to maintain their grip on the State House" (Ero 2000:29).

Recent years have seen new ideological and political factors being introduced into the Sudanese political landscape. The new war in Darfur has revealed that the conflict is not necessarily a religious war but rather a war that goes "beyond religion and ethnicity" (Nyuot Yoh 2005:12). Therefore, some question have to be asked: What do African and Arab mean in the respective conflicts? Are they racial, cultural, or political identities? How much of the Sudanese wars can be ascribed to the different racial and religious compositions? Did the wars in Sudan originated out of ancient hatreds, or are they merely a response to a range of grievances that includes systematic discrimination, human rights violations as well as inequalities in wealth and political power that happens to fall along the existing social cleavage of ethnicity?

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The problems in the Sudan are complex, and no single approach will solve all of its elements. This study attempts to investigate the underlying factors that trigger both the old and new conflicts in Sudan. However, this study will not

settle on one definite cause but rather make it clear that various current and historical factors are underlying both wars. The general aim of this study will be to assess the dynamics of both the civil war in the South and the new conflict in Darfur. In particular this study considers the factors which promote and maintain civil conflict in Sudan. The purpose of this study is to define, analyse and compare the differences and similarities between the wars in Sudan, those being the ongoing North-South conflict and the new war in the Darfur region.

This will be done by describing the regions in Sudan involved in the conflict, giving specific attention to the history and inherent characteristics of the regions, the factors that gave rise to the hostilities and to how the two conflicts developed into war.

This study will evaluate the various motives and factors underlying both the conflicts and relating them to the different concepts which are used to describe ethnic conflict. These concepts will be analysed from within the context of the situation in both Darfur and the southern regions. Particular attention will be paid to how the conflicts started and who are the actors involved – are they the same, or do they differ? Furthermore, the focus will be on the reasons why the conflicts took place, the grounds through which the civil war has spread from the south to the Western Sudan, and how the government reacted to each of these uprisings. This study aims to enable one to better understand the brutality with which both wars are being waged, as well as the causes that influenced the Sudanese government to arm Arab militias in Darfur and brazenly engage in ethnic manipulation.

Finally, a comparison will be made between Darfur and the Southern Sudan with the emphasis on the actors and factors subjacent to each conflict. The general aim will be to show that the new conflict in Darfur mirrors most of the cultural dynamics of the situation in the south. The conflict in Darfur displays a lot of the same characteristics as the ongoing conflict between the North and the South. And although the marginalised people in Darfur have the same complex grievances and struggle for political recognition as the communities

in the South, the situation in Darfur does differ in some key areas, namely the lack of any noteworthy resources and the fact that both warring parties in Darfur are Muslim. As the focus of this study is comparing the conflicts in Sudan, the approach will be to call attention to the relevant political, economical and cultural issues, so as to establish both the common and distinctive characteristics of each war.

## 1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Few countries are more deserving of attention these days than Sudan, where the scale of human suffering has been mind numbing, and where the ongoing civil wars continue to disrupt regional stability and inhibit development. In particular the situation in the western Darfur region has deteriorated in the last few years to the extent of it being described as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today. There is also an international trend to disregard African conflicts, or to play down the seriousness thereof. This study will advocate an awareness of the situation in Sudan, especially within the larger framework of the African context, where, almost without exception, borders were arbitrarily drawn with scant regard for the ethnic diversity of the population.

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Some argue that Sudan is better understood as a number of interlocking civil wars. However, this study is not about a solution for the complex problems in Sudan, but about a better understanding of the conflicts. One of the major objectives of this study is to assess whether these two conflicts are just about religion, the control of resources or access to state power, as is often alleged, or whether other factors are relevant too. The question is really whether the traditional explanations are sufficient. As the focus is on finding an explanation for the two conflicts, this study hopes to contribute to a greater grasp of Sudan's internal politics as well as the contentious issues within the country and the competing priorities with respect to the ongoing peace processes.

It must be noted that this study were conducted before the tragic death of SPLM/A leader, Dr John Garang in a helicopter crash in July, 2005.

## 1.4 METHODOLOGY

As the purpose of this study is to discuss and illustrate the differences and similarities between the wars in Sudan, it is proposed that this study be conducted within the qualitative paradigm. The strength of the qualitative approach is that it studies a situation or phenomenon to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations for peoples' attitudes, actions and behaviour. This means that an attempt will be made to understand and explain the complexities, tension and issues that lies at the root of the conflict in Sudan, as well as the context in which they function and the frame of reference of the warring parties.

In order to gain insight into the specific details of both these wars, this study will rely on descriptive and explanatory research. The descriptive method will be used to describe the situation in Sudan as well as to identify and portray the characteristics of each the conflicts. Explanatory research is a continuation of the descriptive process. This study will use the explanatory research to go beyond merely describing the characteristics of the wars, to analyse and explain what motivates the political attitudes of the various actors and why the conflicts are happening. Consequently, a comparative approach is called for.

This study is not based on empirical work but will contribute through the analyses of existing literature. This will include both primary and secondary sources. The starting point of the research will be academic sources while documentation such as magazine articles, newspaper and media reports and information available on the Internet will be collected and integrated with the information obtained. As the conflict in the southern Sudan is one of the "most academically neglected" (Johnson 2003:xiii) and the one in Darfur relatively new, this study will make use of field reports and research papers published by humanitarian and relief organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group and others, in an attempt to add any other nuances that might reside in these sources.

When dealing with the types of research it must be noted that research methods like personal interviews, observations, questionnaires and surveys would allow the researcher to access information that is not directly observable from the existing literature. However, due to the geographical distance and time constrains this study doesn't have the luxury of extensive field work or detailed data analysis, and has to rely on written records. Therefore, this study is an interpretive analysis in the occurrence of the civil wars in Sudan.

## 1.5 CONCEPTS

Different concepts used to describe the conflict in Sudan will be examined, focusing especially on the concepts of identity and the conflict of identities, "Africanism" and "Arabism", ethnic cleansing and genocide, as well as resource wars and militia. These concepts will be analysed against the background of the situation of Darfur and the southern Sudan.

### 1.5.1 Identity

According to Francis Deng (1995:1-6), identity is the term used to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and culture. In Sudan, group, lineage, and family are vital elements of identity. Territory and region are also an element of identification and overlaps more often than not with one or more of the above mentioned factors. In the context of the nation-state conflict of identities occur when groups, or their elites, rebel against what they see as intolerable oppression by the dominant group, often expressed in denial of recognition, exclusion from the mainstream, marginalization, and perhaps the threat of cultural annihilation or even physical elimination. Where the state is weak, as is the case in Sudan, ethnic and religious tensions that have long been repressed begin to manifest themselves in violence, threatening the state with fragmentation, disintegration, and perhaps total collapse. What makes the identity crisis in Sudan even more acute is the fact that the Arab North want to fashion the entire country on the basis of their Arab-Islamic identity. The South on the other hand, is decidedly resistant to the political

domination of the North and the imposition of its racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious identity on the whole country (Deng 1995:6).

### 1.5.2 Arab and African:

The terms ‘Arab’ and ‘African’ have been used to describe both the conflicts in the South of Sudan and in Darfur. The northern Sudanese see themselves as Arabs and deny the strongly African element in their skin color and physical features. According to Deng (1995:3) they associate these features with the black race and see it as inferior and demeaning. Being Arab opens the way to pass into the supposedly superior Arab-Islamic identity and therefore the Sudanese Arabs vehemently resist any attempt by the non-Arab population to identify the country with black Africa. In the context of Darfur the term ‘Arab’ is further used to describe the Arabized, Arabic-speaking groups of nomadic and semi-nomadic people who have been recruited and deployed as Janjaweed militia.

The term African can be regarded as a counter-identity (Deng 1995:4) to the Arabness of the North. Although the term ‘African’ fails to capture the ethnically diverse society of Sudan, it does act as an unifying dimension which encompasses people that has racial, cultural, religious, and national connotations. Since the beginning of the crisis in Darfur, members of the Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit communities have used these terms to describe the growing ethnic and racial polarization, perceived to result from discrimination and bias emanating from the central government (HRW 2004).

### 1.5.3 Ethnic conflict

According to Horowitz (1985:17-18) ethnic groups are defined by ascriptive differences, whether the indicum is colour, appearance, language, religion, some other indicator of common origin, or some combination thereof. Ethnicity embraces groups differentiated by color, language, and religion: it covers tribes, races, nationalities and castes (Horowitz 1985:53). Ethnic wars can therefore also be defined as identity wars. Kaufmann (1996:138) describes ethnic wars as episodes of violent conflict between government and national, ethnic, religious, or other communal minorities (ethnic challengers) in which

the challengers seek major changes in their status … Rioting and warfare between rival communal groups are therefore not coded as ethnic warfare unless it involves conflict over political power or government policy. He also remarks that these opposing communities hold irreconcilable visions of the identity, borders, and citizenship of the state. They do not seek to control a state whose identity all sides accept, but rather to redefine or divide the state itself.

### 1.5.4 Ethnic cleansing

The English term 'ethnic cleansing' originated during the Balkan conflicts in the 1990s as a straight translation of the Serbo-Croat "*etnièko èišæenje*". It was a term used by the perpetrators to describe the systematic and forcible removal of an ethnic group. There is no international consensus to what constitutes genocide. This lack of a definite and clear definition is one of the causes for the hesitation from the international community to intervene in the conflicts of Sudan. Although ethnic cleansing is not formally defined under UN law, a UN Special Commission of Experts (1994) has defined ethnic cleansing as a 'purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas" The means through which this removal occur include:

> "mass murder, torture, rape and other forms of sexual assault, severe physical injury to civilians, mistreatment of civilian prisoners, the use of civilians as human shields, destruction of personal, public and cultural property; looting, theft and robbery of personal property; forced expropriation of real property and forceful displacement of civilian populations…" (Report of the UN Commission of Experts 1994).

### 1.5.5 Genocide

Genocide has been defined as the deliberate killing of people based on their ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, or politics, as well as other deliberate actions leading to the physical elimination of any of the above mentioned

categories. The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as “any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

a) Killing members of the group
b) Causing serious bodily harm to members of the group
c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
e) Forcibly transferring people from the group to another group.

(UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

### 1.5.6 Militia

The simplest definition of militia is civilians that are trained as soldiers but not part of the regular army. The American Heritage Dictionary defines militia as a group of citizens organized to provide paramilitary service. The word militia can refer to an official army, composed of non-professional soldiers as well as the entire able-bodied population of a state which can be called to arms against an invading army. Militia can also refer to a private, non-government force, not necessarily directly supported or sanctioned by the government of which the role and even the mere existence are controversial. In many of these cases, a militia is distinct from a national regular army. It can serve to supplement the regular military, or it can oppose it (Columbia Encyclopedia). In some circumstances, as is indeed the case in Sudan, the enemies against which the militia is mobilized are domestic political opponents of the government, such as the rebels of the SLA and JEM.

### 1.5.7 Resource wars

Johnson (2003:151) defines a resource war as a battle between organized armed groups, with the intention of seizing or holding territory. Resource poor societies that are unable to adapt to the scarcity of resources will fight each other for the resources they need to survive (Le Billion 2001). This is evident with the grazing areas in Sudan which are associated with a displacement of

local populations to marginal lands. Where resources are in abundance as is the case with the oil in Sudan, competing groups will resort to non-cooperation or violence to control revenues (Collier & Hoeffler 2002). The wealth of the oil in Sudan has deeply influenced the political economy of the country and the type of governance, and is generally associated with poor economic performance, greater socio-economic inequalities, and greedy behaviour on both sides of the competing parties (Collier & Hoeffler 2002). From this perspective, a resource war is the violent expression of a distributional conflict associated with the wealth or the paucity of resources, the greed of powerful groups, and the grievances of marginalised groups (Tshitereke 2003; Collier & Hoeffler 2002; La Billon 2001).

# CHAPTER 2: SOUTHERN SUDAN

## 2.1 THE FACTORS

Sudan is a complex country. The strife in the southern Sudan has not only roots in the distant past but also in recent international interest in the natural and mineral resources. There is a profoundly divisive group of factors that fuels the civil war in the southern Sudan. Some of the historical causes of the conflict include the role of religion and the state, the nature of the political system, local perceptions of race and social status (Johnson 2003:1), border disputes, racial discrimination and economic exploitation, a contest of power and resource sharing. These are all elements in the civil war in southern Sudan, but none, by itself, fully explains it. It is nearly impossible to analyze the current North-South conflict in simple cultural, ethnic or racial terms. Therefore, to understand the situation in southern Sudan, one must first understand the factors that led to the racial and cultural incongruity.

Many of Sudan's difficulties arise from the colonial policy of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium which shaped the preconditions leading to the conflicts. Britain and Egypt formed a joint-authority government in 1898. Brittan took over management of southern Sudan while the north was left under Egyptian rule (Mawson 1984:521). Britain developed a divisive "Southern Policy", the primary aim of which was to prevent economic integration of the two regions in order to lessen the Arabic and Islamic influences from the North (Woodward 1995:93). The British saw a distinct south as a buffer that could preserve English values and beliefs, thenceforth isolating the southern provinces from northern contact and promoted development along indigenous lines. While Britain focused its efforts largely on economic and social development, Egypt encouraged Islamic values in the north. In the south, educational standards were low, economic development had been neglected and few southerners held responsible positions in the administration. Consequently, as disproportionate economic and political

power came to be centered in the north, the two regions' cultural and religious identities became more divisive, and the stage was set for discord (see ICG 2002). At the time of independence in 1956 the northern elite took over the political power at the expense of the south and the first seeds of war were sowed within the newly independent Sudan.

The origins of the first civil war (1955-1972) in the south date back prior to independence. There was a growing disappointment from the south and the feeling that they have been cheated and largely omitted from the terms regarding the independence. That, together with 'Sudanization' – the process of replacing colonial administrators by northern nationals (Ali & Matthews 1999:203) – greatly alarmed the southerners. The Arab-led government also reneged on promises to southerners to create a federal system. The marginalization of the south was made greater by a robust program to bring the south "more into line with the north" (Woodward 1995:96) and Arabic and Islam was vigorously promoted. Before long it was obvious that in independent Sudan the southerners were inexorably cast in the role of second-class citizens (Heraclides 1987:217).

Therefore, the growing opposition to the Khartoum administration, the fear of being policed by northern soldiers, and concern over Islamic economic and cultural domination led to a long and bloody civil war (Mawson 1984:521). The Anya-Nya guerrilla movement carried the rebellion to al three southern provinces. (Anya-Nya was the name of the Southern Sudanese rebel and separatist forces in the 1960s and 70s. It covered a series of independent groups of which some were political and others merely bandits. The Anya-Nya drew its support mainly from specific sections of the Nuer in Equatoria, Western Upper Nile and Bahr al Ghazal. In 1987-90 the SPLM won most of them over, but they remained in their home arias and sided with Riek Macher during the 1991 split in the SPLA.) The Anya-Nya however, lacked unity and defied political control, had limited resources and also no clearly defined ideology or pre-existing common institutional apparatus (Heraclides 1987:219). In 1971 a former army lieutenant, Joseph Lagu, united the ethnically fragmented guerrilla bands into the Southern Sudan Liberation

Movement (SSLM). They gave up fight in 1972 with a peace agreement that conceded to the south a single regional government with defined powers. The Addis Ababa agreement between Lagu and president Gafar Nimeiri included power-sharing and security guarantees for southerners, religious rights and, most importantly, granted the south political and economic autonomy.

However, Sudan's peace was short lived. In an attempt to increase his political base in the north, Nimeiri – the Sudanese president from 1971-85, went back on the Addis agreement by subdividing the autonomous South into three powerless administrative provinces (Al-Sashi 2004:77). Southerners were gradually squeezed out of the national political process and Arabic, not English, was declared as the region's official language. The discovery of oil in 1979 in the South increased northern pressure to jettison the Addis Agreement and the financial powers of the south were transferred to the central government. (see ICG 2002). In addition to dramatically re-centralizing political and economic power, Nimeiri officially transformed Sudan into an Islamic state in 1983 by imposing an excessively simplified and brutal form of *Sharia* or Islamic law. In its historically more developed and far more complex form, the *Sharia* is the fundamental code of law by which every Muslim society is supposed to live (Hottinger 1989:26). The south Sudanese saw its imposition as a new, far-reaching and brutal attempt to Islamize their African society. Coupled with the southern grievances and the infuriation felt by the abrogation of the Addis Agreement – civil war with the north broke out once again.

The focus in this chapter will be on the second civil war which erupted in 1983. There are important differences between the first and second uprisings. The first aimed at the establishment of a separate southern state and finally settled for regional autonomy as a substitute (Hottinger 1989:26). The second rebellion has a more ideological base and calls for the national reconstruction of Sudan. The second civil war also saw the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) under the leadership of John Garang rise to the fore. Although the government and the SPLM are the primary combatants in this war, the significance of the second civil war is that it has created numerous

motives for a variety of groups along the margins to feed into Sudan's network of internal wars, leading to many more – and more diverse – combatants that are fighting for different immediate objectives (Johnson 2003:142).

## 2.2 THE ACTORS

### 2.2.1 The Government

Sudan's National Islamic Front (NIF), the ruling party since the 1989 coup by General Omar Hassan al-Bashir, can be described in what David Melvill (2002:7) call an "Islamic association of brotherhoods". It is built around a small, powerful and well-organized constituency. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (2002) the leaders of the National Islamic Front prepared for over a decade before seizing power. They organized constituencies and infiltrated government institutions. The Front recruited bright young men who rose within the ranks of the civil service, universities and the military as part of the broader effort to create cells in the most important institutions of the state. President al-Bashir was one such a recruit.

Membership in the National Islamic Front implies agreement to promote Arabism, with its distinct language and culture, and would require giving preference to Front members and Muslim persons in economic, public and professional life (Melvill 2002:10). After it's overthrown of the previous government, the NIF systematically dismantled democratic institutions and restricted freedom of speech and assembly while an Islamization and Arabisation agenda was imposed on all the public schools and universities. Thousands of opposition members were arrested, deported or tortured, making Sudan one of the most repressive states today (ICG:2002).

Since consolidating its power, the NIF has imposed a militantly religious agenda. The war was intensified and religion was used once more as the mobilizing power. Although the agenda to Arabize and Islamize the south extends back into Sudan's history well beyond the advent of power of the NIF regime, it is the zeal with which this particular brand of Islam is espoused and protected by the Front which is unique. This reflects the Front's sense of

having a ‘divine right’ to govern and the government has held it as faith that those who are not with them are against them and must be treated as deadly enemies (Melvill 2002:11). These developments within Khartoum set the context for the war to be fought on the basis of a *jihad,* and give the legal justification for continued civil war against Muslim opponents.

According to the ruling elite, Sudan is an Islamic state and therefore part of Arab world. In addition, this Islamic country is run according to Islamic principles and institutions, such as the *Sharia* law. There is no room for separation of church and state because the essence of the state’s identity is religion (see ICG, 2002). Finally, Khartoum dictates that due to the Islamic nature of the state that belongs to the Arab world, Sudan’s official language is Arabic.

Melvill (2002:14) notes that under the NIF government practices like slave taking has evolved as part of a systematic effort to undermine the morale of its southern opponents. Other practices involve arming local militia to attack villages in SPLA-controlled areas. There are also other counter-insurgency strategies pursued by the NIF, those being the “forced transfer of victims to another community; subjection to forced labour with no pay; the denial of a victim’s freedom of movement and choice; forced religious conversion, and the prohibition on the use of native languages”.

While religion and culture has been deeply divisive issues, it can be argued that the government is driven more by a desire to hold office than any ideological agenda. The NIF has fully not given up its objective to subdue the South by force and establishment of Islamic State in Sudan, similarly to the Mahdist dream (Ylönen 2004). Although the regime has realized the increasing possibility of it not winning the war by force, the use of violence against the South has become a necessity for the regime. The Islam that has been promoted has been tailored to the needs of Khartoum in order to use it to fight the civil war and devastate southern populations in the name of *jihad* (see ICG:2002). All this has been done in order to secure access to natural resources, especially oil that has been extracted mostly in the southern

territory and has become an important incentive for the government to keep fighting

Therefore, what has started as a conflict between the Arabised, Islamic north and the non-Muslim south has transformed into a fight between a fundamentalist Islamic movement governing the country and a diverse alliance of people and political groups committed to religious and ethnic diversity and challenging the government on all grounds.

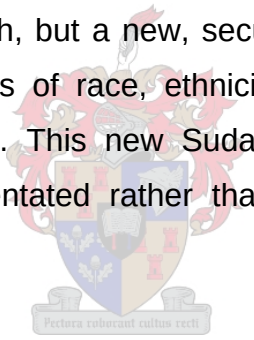
### 2.2.2 SPLM

In broad terms, the reasons underlying the emergence of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) stem from a failed peace process led by a dysfunctional regime. The civil war resumed in 1983 after members of the Anya-Nya and different southern guerrilla groups met in Ethiopia and united in the SPLM/A. The SPLM with its military wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rose as the principal armed opposition group in southern and eastern Sudan. The SPLA was formed in 1983 under Colonel John Garang after attacks by the Sudanese army against mutineers in Bor (Johnson 2003:62). This mutiny accelerated a series of desertions, mutinies and revolts. The combination of the attack on Bor and the subsequent mutinies by officers absorbed from the original Anya-nya into the Sudanese Army culminated into resistance against the national government. This, together with Nimeiri's complete abrogation of the Addis agreement, and his imposition of *Sharia* laws transformed the Bor mutiny into a full-scale rebellion (Sorensen 2001:14).

The SPLM was founded by people from different parts of the society, and hence sought to represent various regionally based ethnic and religious communities. Therefore, its intention was to bring all the guerrilla units in southern Sudan under one united, integrated liberation army with one common denominator – the government in Khartoum as the enemy. Sorenson (2001:15) notes that the emergence of the SPLM was a result of a larger identity crisis in Sudan. According to the Addis Agreement, both the Arab and African identity were to be recognized. When the African identity was

suppressed by the central government, the SPLM emerged as protector of the southern identification with black Africa. It can therefore be said that root of the SPLM's foundation can be found in the identity clashes, political events, the historical situation and social strife that all converged at Bor in 1983.

The SPLM gained strong support mostly because Southern people, and some Northerners too, identified with the party's non-discrimination objectives (Kalpakian 2003:53). It hence appeared to be a party of solidarity and a unifying instrument for Southerners. The SPLM appeared, unlike some of the other guerilla and liberation movements – better armed and well organized. The leadership of the SPLM was well educated and the political and military elite under the leadership of John Garang helped establish party authority (Heraclides 1987:228; Sorenson 2001:16). The SPLM sought to modernize the political system in Sudan. The stated goal of the SPLM was, and still is, not the secession of the south, but a new, secular, pluralistic Sudan, free of discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, culture or gender (Deng: 2002:62; Kalpakian 2003:53). This new Sudan must be a "Sudan of the peoples" which is Africa-orientated rather than Arab-dominated (Hottinger 1989:25).




But the history of the SPLM has not been without difficulties. Since launching the rebellion, the SPLM has weathered internal splits, lack of confidence in the leadership, pessimism about the south's future, massive government offensives, criticism from within the south and from sympathizers abroad, and other challenges. The collapse of the Mengistu regime in May 1991 in Ethiopia had serious effects on the SPLM's military momentum as Mengistu was one of the main benefactors of the SPLM (Johnson 2003:88). In 1991 a split occurred between John Garang, who is a Dinka, and Riek Machar, a Nuer. These two were the dominant personalities within the SPLM and the split led to factional fighting and the formation of the SPLA-Mainstream (led by Garang) and the SPLA-United led by Machar (Adar 2000:51). The rift between the two leaders was largely due to personal grounds and a contest for the control of the movement.

However, the SPLM managed to recover from the setbacks with greater internal unity and increased international support. The SPLM continues its fight against the Khartoum government, both through armed struggle and sporadic peace talks. The SPLM believes strongly in the cause of a new Sudan and is giving the government a choice about Sudan's future. It argues that the southern provinces should remain in a secular state, exempted from the *sharia* laws (Kalpakian: 2003:53). The SPLM also calls for the separation of state and religion, the creation of federal structures and the inclusion of all underdeveloped areas in the decision making.

## 2.3 THE ISSUES

### 2.3.1 Religion as identity

The essence of the Sudanese conflict is fundamentally a conflict about the "identity" of the country, and has been characterized by Francis Deng (1995) as a "war of visions". According to Deng (1995:1-6), identity is the term used to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and culture. In Sudan, group, lineage, and family are vital elements of identity. Territory and region are also an element of identification and overlaps more often than not with one or more of the above mentioned factors. In the context of the nation-state, conflict of identities occur when groups, or their elites, rebel against what they see as intolerable oppression by the dominant group, often expressed in denial of recognition, exclusion from the mainstream, marginalization, and perhaps the threat of cultural annihilation or even physical elimination.

The relationship between religion, identity and state is perhaps the most controversial of all the forces driving the conflict in Sudan. A lack of national identity has always been a problem in Sudan, due to people identifying rather with their immediate communities and ethnic groups than part of a larger entity, such as a state (Ylönen 2004). In addition, the northern identities have been shaped through a gradual assimilation into Islam and Arabism. In contrast, the southern identities have often been sculpted by the idea of

resistance to the political domination of the North and the imposition of its racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious identity on the whole country (see Deng 1995).

According to the International Crisis Group (2002), Sudan is 65 percent African and 35 percent Arab. Over 70 percent of Sudanese are Muslim, of whom a large percentage is of African decent. Most of the rest follow traditional religions, with 5 to 10 percent being Christian. In Sudan, religion has become more than simply a boundary around which power, prestige or economic gains are competed for. It also enables persons and groups to readily recognize supporters and opponents.

A lack of national identity has always been a problem in Sudan, due to people identifying rather with their immediate communities and ethnic groups than with the state (Ylönen 2004). As a result, the formation of northern identities is centered on a strong sense of being Arab and Muslim. These are the two pillars of personal identity which have been used to unify communities in the North. Furthermore, the Northern view of Arab civilization as more advanced and southerners as inferior, has created a type of social hierarchy in which the northerners have often imposed their political and economic superiority on the South (Deng 1995:488). This perceived superiority has enabled the northern elite to push Arab-Islamic identity for the entire country, camouflaging their further economic and political interests behind the mask of religion and culture (Ylönen 2004). The state is therefore used as an instrument of oppression disguised underneath the unifying ideals of Islam and Arabism (Adar 2000:50).

On the other hand, the southern identities have been shaped predominantly by the prolonged resistance to the imposition of Arab and Islamic culture. Deng (2002:76) holds the opinion that this collective resistance from the South had the effect that the Southerners united as black Africans and geared themselves against the marginalization and repression of non-Muslims. Over time they came to perceive themselves as a distinct ethnic group with clear cultural boundaries and political needs (Lesch 1998:211). The southern

identities have later centered on the concept of revived Africanism and animism that has often been replaced by Christianism. The South tends to receive foreigners with caution, especially the ones from northern Sudan who are different and may pose a threat (see Deng 1995). In addition, the southerners tend to perceive the northern view of them as slaves lacking complex cultures and religions, not only humiliating and threatening, but also colonialist (Deng 1995:488).

Religion on both sides defines identity (Deng 2001). It is the sphere wherein the North and the South's ethnicity, race, culture, and politics are characterized. For Northerners, Islam is not only a faith and a way of life; it is also culture and ethnic identity associated with Arabism. For southerners, Islam is not just a religion, but also Arabism as racial, ethnic, and cultural oppression which excludes them as black Africans and adherents of Christian and indigenous religions.

Therefore, the union of religion and identity has shaped the course of Sudan's institutions, international relations, and internal problems. Religion can be said to play both a conflictual and a unifying role. It serves as an instrument to unify warring parties on both sides but also contributes to deepening the divide between North and South. Since the resumption of the conflict in 1983, the relationship between religion and state, and in particular the role of the *Sharia* laws, has emerged as the central factor in the conflict. The most serious consequence of the *sharia* laws is that it transformed the civil war into a *jihad*, throwing the full weight of both the northern religious passion and identity and southern counter-resistance behind the political struggle. The Christianized and Animist southerners have continued to embrace their religious identity, considering Islam an enemy. Their conviction has been affirmed by the central government policy of religious intolerance and the international support condemning the violent manifestation of the government actions against Christians and animists in the South.

### 2.3.2 Resources

Sudan is a country with bountiful natural resources from land and vegetation to minerals that could foster a rich and dynamic socio-political economy. The reality however, has been the reverse, as Sudan has been plagued with resource-related conflicts (Goldsmith; Abura & Switzer 2002:187). The southern Sudan's natural resource wealth is also the prime reason why the north has always resisted southern separatism. The war between the North and the South has developed, to a great extent, into a resource war. The two resources at the hub of the grievances are water and oil. The primary motivations of this war are simply the control of oil reserves and the access to water resources. There is also a significant link between the map of the Sudanese conflict and the map of the country's water and oil resources.

#### 2.3.2.1 Water

Access to water has also contributed to the recent phase of the Sudanese conflict. Though the river Nile traverses Sudan, water stress attributed to access and quality of water remains high. The Nile, including its tributaries, the White and Blue Nile and river Atbara provide domestic, industrial and large-scale irrigation waters (Goldsmith; Abura & Switzer 2002:201). The Blue Nile, rising from Ethiopia's mountains, flows through the heart of Sudan and is utilized for vast irrigation schemes south of Khartoum. The White Nile forms the Sudd swamps, the largest swamp in Africa and the life blood of the agricultural activities of the south. This is also the natural boundary between the well-watered south and the semi-arid central region. North of Khartoum annual rainfall becomes minimal and the landscape turns into the Nubian Desert. (Deegan 1997:165).

Water has been a historical concern of Egypt for a long time. It is especially important for the stability of the Egyptian state in order to guarantee a sufficient quantity of the Nile waters flowing to the country. It has been part of Egyptian policy since the Sudanese independence, to aid the government to maintain the unity of Sudan rather than letting South use the Nile headwaters that flow through the region for its own development efforts (Ylönen 2004). Egypt's perceived need for increased water lies behind its commitment to the

Jonglei canal scheme and its unwavering opposition to an independent, or even political powerful southern Sudan (Johnson 2003:48).

The Sudanese government announced in 1980 the building of a 360 km canal at Jonglei (which means ‘alien god’ in Dinka) in southern Sudan to improve the flow of the Nile to Egypt. This was a joint project by the governments of Sudan and Egypt and the prime beneficiaries would have been the arid northern Sudan and Egypt (Mawson 1984:522). With this project the Sudanese government proved itself once more to be more concerned with the extraction of the South’s resources than with nation-building (Johnson 2003:48) and showed again a callous disregard for Southern interests (ICG 2002).

In order to accomplish an improved flow, part of the White Nile should bypass the vast Sudd swamps. In a local economy that is largely seasonal and thus dependant on the rainfall and overflow of the White Nile, this project posed many threats. There is much concern about the environmental impact of the Jonglei canal. It is feared that the alteration of the flooding pattern of the Sudd swamps could have a devastating effect on the regional ecology in the south. The canal would block movement of livestock and wildlife and divide communities (Goldsmith; Abura & Switzer 2002:204). Southerners also believe that the canal will suck all the water from other tributaries and the Sudd which will in turn destroy the crazing and water sources of the area (Woodward 1995:101). Many southern Sudanese felt that the project was established to benefit north Sudan and Egypt at their expense. As a result, the plan was unacceptable to the SPLM and after several attacks work stopped on the canal and today the project remains incomplete.

#### 2.3.2.2 Oil

Oil was discovered in the 1970’s in southern Sudan. From the outset it inflamed political feeling in the region (Woodward 1995:10). Oil disrupted the fragile peace and created the perfect incentive for the Khartoum government

to marginalize the southern Sudan. After the discovery of oil president Nimeiri broke the Addis Ababa peace agreement which provided the south autonomy and some leeway to manage its own resources. He dissolved the southern government, imposed Islamic law on all of the Sudan and redefined the borders of the south to include the oil fields in the North to exploit it without restrictions (Melvill 2002:20). The discovery of oil posed the perfect solution for economic future, not only for the south, but the country as a whole. However, the government initiated preparations to build a pipeline from the oil fields to the Red Sea. Instead of refining the oil in the south, the government was to pump the unrefined oil direct to Port Sudan (Woodward 1995:101).

It has been widely agreed that oil development has exacerbated the conflict in Sudan. The government's political stability in the North is at least partially dependant on its control of southern resources, particularly oil, which fuels the war and pays the public sector wages (Ylönen 2004). Therefore, the government resorted to any means to protect the oil, and has been ruthless in doing so. The government has utilized different strategies to conduct war against the South in order to secure the oil fields. It has armed military and employed military groups such as the Mujahedeen militia to clear the land around the contested oil fields by forcibly removing indigenous people living near the oil concessions (Melvill 2002:21). The government has also been engaged in conventional warfare but the targets were mainly civilians living in villages near the oil fields (HRW 2003). Famine was also used as a weapon. The government have at occasions deliberately blocked access to humanitarian relief and, knowing that without external food aid the surrounded civilian establishments under SPLM control would experience starvation. This led to numerous attacks on oil installations by rebels in an attempt to pursue the government to include a Southern share in the oil wealth and revenue. Action by the SPLA resulted in the temporary suspension of the oil program thus preventing the government the abundance of this new found treasure. This was only a passing setback as the pipeline became operational in 1999 with oil and money flowing in earnest.

The success of the NIF government's policies to secure control of oil producing areas must be viewed in relation to the rush of oil companies to claim concessions in Southern Sudan (Goldsmith; Abura & Switzer 2002:226). A network of foreign oil companies provides the expertise, finance and technology for Sudan's oil industry. The most important one is the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC), currently the biggest operational consortium developing Sudan's oilfields and is responsible for most of the production of oil in the country (Adar 2000:58). It compromises four companies controlling 12.2 million acres of concession land. The Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) has a 40% stake, with Malaysia's Petronas holding 30%, Canada's Talisman with 25%, and Sudan's national oil company Sudapet, holding the remaining 5% (Goldsmith; Abura & Switzer 2002:226). They have built production and refining facilities and financed the building of the 1600 km pipeline between the oil fields to the Red Sea. Other major oil companies that are active in Sudan are Agip from Italy, TotalFinaElf from France/Belguim, Lundin Oil from Sweden, Qatar's Gulf Petroleum Corporation and Royal Dutch Shell.

It is often argued that these oil companies are complicit in massive human rights violations and are contributing to the "blood-soaked oil business" (Bock 2002) in Sudan. The government has used the oil companies' infrastructure to support military action while the revenues from oil are funding the expansion of the war. Oil companies such as Lundin, Petronas and CNPC are contributing to the extension of the war by permitting government to clear new areas for them to exploit (see Christian Aid 2001). Canadian company Talisman Energy came under intense pressure from the Canadian government as well as human rights activists over allegations that it co-operated with the Sudanese government in military actions against civilians near its oil fields and that its oil operations are exacerbating the war in Sudan. It later sold its 25% stake in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company to an Indian state-owned company and became the first oil company to disinvest in Sudan due to international pressure (HRW 2003).

A country that is hugely dependent on the oil development in Sudan is China. China needs to secure alternative oil supplies for its growing domestic economy and to fulfil its modernization plans. Sudan is therefore China's largest overseas oil project. The governments of Sudan and China has entered a lucrative partnership that delivers billions of dollars of investment, oil revenue, weapons, and most importantly, diplomatic protection (HRW 2003). From its seat in the United Nations Security Council China has been Sudan's chief diplomatic ally. China has on numerous occasions threatened to veto votes on a series of resolutions aimed at pressuring Sudan's government to stop attacks against civilians and support for militias by threatening to sanction Sudanese oil sales. The Chinese presence in Sudan has, and probably will, continue to help Khartoum in its fight against the SPLM.

It can be concluded that the North-South relations had already been based on violent interaction, domination, exploitation and marginalization and the discovery of oil raised the stakes to control the south even further. As a result, the conflict between the North and South was renewed and a regime of political control was re-established in order to achieve economic gain through the control of resources (Ylönen 2004). The renewal of the war brought also a new purpose in both camps to keep fighting for economic survival and self-benefit. This has been clearly the case in the North where the governments ability to maintain power and maintain a unified Sudan through the use of violence and oppression, has been largely depended on the economic benefit created by the oil exploration According to Keen (1997) a close examination of the conflict in Sudan indicates that the gains of the long lasting war in Sudan has been sufficient incentives for the government to keep fighting, but not win the war. Similarly, the economic benefit created by the war economy in the south has became important means to fund those in charge of the rebellion (Johnson 2003:144; Tshitereke 2003), resulting in disincentives to seek peace. Moreover, oil revenues promise finance for arms and military expansion almost doubled since oil revenue began to flow. Therefore, the conflict in the southern Sudan expanded from a regional insurgence caused

by the marginalization of the South, into a resource war mainly fuelled by oil in which economic gain and control of territory became increasingly important.

### 2.3.3 Governance

Sudan has a long history of bad governance. Freedom House (2004) ranks Sudan as “not free” both for civil liberties and political rights. The UN Human Development Index (HDI 2004) ranks Sudan badly at 139 out of 179 world-wide. Perhaps the primary cause of the continuing war is abusive governance connected with the concentration of power in the hands of a small elite group in the centre of the country. It is precisely these issues concerning the manipulation of power and wealth, the current lack of representation, injustice and the abuse of human rights that initially triggered the conflict. The shifting alliances and counter-alliances struck between various political and military factions over the last two decades have left the country sharply divided. This has generated enormous mistrust and a profound lack of confidence among the diverse and political groups of Sudan.

Paul Savage (2003) identifies a number of problems with governance in Sudan. He asserts that governance in Sudan is first of all power politics. Sudan has a history of government monopolies on political and economic power coupled with the construction of a narrow religious, cultural and linguistic national identity. The current government has ruled by means of manipulation, coercion and conquest. Sudanese politics have been dominated by policies prioritising the rights of a limited section of the Sudanese people. This has meant that tolerance, equality and individual and collective rights have been deliberately abused. There is also a culture in Northern politics of splitting the opposition and co-opting factions to maintain the status quo. Furthermore, Khartoum has a history of refusing to honour signed agreements which includes previous peace accords such as the Addis Ababa peace agreement and the Kokadam Declaration, as well as many aspects of the current peace initiatives.

The government uses the legal and constitutional frameworks, based on the *sharia* law, to maintain and control all aspects of political, economic and social activity. These controls have profoundly undermined the readiness and capacity of the Sudanese to organise themselves socially, culturally or politically, and have resulted in a state of fear with strict-censorship (Savage 2003). The state security apparatus acts with impunity against anyone opposed to the regime. This security apparatus is comprised of myriad organs which include semi-autonomous security forces, tribal militia and popular defence forces, armed bands and a large conscripted army. It is ever-present and is often acting independently of any unified and accountable authority (Savage 2003). Armed militia groups, often supported by the Sudanese government, continue to target civilians in the south and the bordering provinces and inflame further unrest and instability.

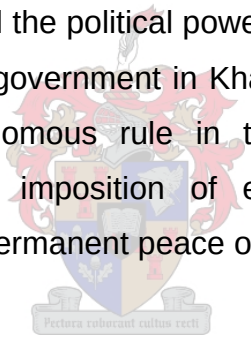
The Sudanese government is notorious for its economic neglect, marginalisation and underdevelopment in many regions in the south and on the periphery (Savage 2003). There is an elite monopoly on the use of natural resources such as land and oil. This has resulted in large-scale abuses against populations from resource rich areas, asset stripping, and exploitative labour practices such as the forced displacement of people. Employment opportunities in the formal economic sector are restricted to those who are politically affiliated with the current regime. The benefits of political correctness include access to contracts, concessions and business permits (Savage 2003). Food security is another matter that has been chronically undermined by government policy, resulting in famine, displacement and the loss of sustainable livelihoods.

Social and cultural marginalisation are brought forward by government policies which denies equal opportunities to many social groups as well as seizing land from already marginalised people. Social planning in Sudan has become synonymous with programmes and actions of economic, political, cultural and religious manipulation of vulnerable communities aimed at limiting

the diversity of Sudan's cultures. Racial discrimination is another problem facing Sudan. Those of African decent perceive themselves to be second or third class citizens, and southerners in particular feel that racism has been institutionalised within the government since the colonial period (ICG 2002). Race-based domination and exclusion help fuel the conflict on both sides and will continue to do so until a creative compromise can be achieved.

### 2.3.4 Self-determination

The objective of the southern struggle is communicated as self-determination. Therefore, the possibilities of an autonomous rule within the framework of a united Sudan were always a motive activating Southerners and other oppressed Sudanese Africans (eg. the groups in Nuba, Beja, Ingessana and even in Darfur) to continue the struggle against the domination of the political elites in Khartoum who control the political power and state administration (El-Tigani 2001:50). The central government in Khartoum has consistently acted in ways that aborted autonomous rule in the south, either by military intervention or through the imposition of economic dependency. Both strategies failed to establish permanent peace or development.




At the heart of the all the peace agreements and negotiations lay the issue of self-determination for the southern Sudan – that the people of the South will be given the opportunity to vote in a referendum to stay united with, or become independent from, the rest of Sudan (Blume 2005). This is a controversial issue, for even in the south there are contradictory views on the sharing of power and wealth in Sudan. According to John Nyuot Yoh (2005:14) there are unionists and separatists in the south who both reject the current structure of the Sudanese state, but disagree on how it should be changed. The unionists favour the paradigm of a 'New Sudan'. The south is regarded as the base for the political mobilisation of all the marginalised regions in the Sudan. This design includes developing a new political contract between the centre and the regions, which would provide a new basis for changing the distribution of power and wealth in the country. The restructuring

process should not favour the centre, but the regions where the majority of Sudanese live.

The separatists advocate the 'Two Sudans' formula (Nyuot Yoh 2005:12). This is the dominant ideology in the south and calls for the partition of Sudan into two separate, political independent units. It developed out of sustained southern Sudanese attempts to convince both the British-Egyptian colonial powers and various Sudanese central governments that the South was characterised by distinct historical, political, and socio-economic realities that were not necessarily similar to those in the rest of the country (Nyuot Yoh 2005:12).

For the North, self-determination is synonymous with secession. Therefore the government has warranted concerns on the impact that southern self-determination will have on national politics. Southern secession will also deny the North and northern elites in Khartoum access to the oil wealth of the South. Nearly all of Sudan's abundant oil resources are in the South and southern secession will mean that the North can claim no share in any revenue or economic gain through oil. This will leave the North without its biggest source of income.

Although self-determination may appear at first glance to be an exclusively Southern issue, it is truly a national concern. Many of the marginalised areas argue that, like the people of the South, they have also been marginalised from national politics, and that, although they are Muslim, they have not been allowed to occupy representative positions in the government. The national and international recognition of the legitimacy of Southern Sudanese demands for self-determination have opened the possibility to other regions that they can also attain recognition (Blume 2005:41) The possible separation of the South will be likely to set a precedent for other regions to move to breakaway.

Further complicating the southern Sudan's pursuit for self-determination are the attitudes of key neighbouring states who remain opposed to an independent south, mostly out of self-interest and fears of unleashing several regional separation processes. Egypt's position on this issue is critical. For the reasons already discussed, Egypt will not countenance any process that might lead to the creation of a new state in the southern Sudan and, therefore strongly oppose any form of self-determination. According to the International Crisis Group (2002) will Egypt's influence make it difficult for the government in Khartoum to hold a different position on this issue.

The government's current position on the peace talks is that only the South has the right to participate in the referendum for self-determination and that this right should be confined to the 1956 boundaries (Deng & Khalil 2004). In contrast the SPLM has insisted that areas such as the Nuba Mountains and the Southern Blue Nile, albeit their location in the North, constitutes part of Southern Sudan because of its marginalisation by the regime in Khartoum (Adar 2000:51). This will continue to be a complicated and controversial issue, and will probably only be resolved when all Sudanese recognize that they are one nation with different people, ideologies, ethnicities, and religions.

Pectora roborant cultus recti

# CHAPTER 3: DARFUR

## 3.1 THE FACTORS

The origins of the current conflict in Darfur, which erupted in 2003, are accounted for by numerous factors that include historical violence in the region, ethnic divisions as well as social, political and economic marginalization. These factors are similar to the conflict in Southern Sudan and are rooted in the constant struggle over power-sharing, under-development and the lack of diverse political representation in government structures. Quach (2004) argues that the crisis in Darfur is not simply a 'humanitarian crisis' but an explosion of structural violence rooted in constant struggles for control of national wealth and power between Sudan's central government and its periphery. Structural violence, in the form of pervasive discrimination, marginalization and inequality, created resentment and resistance that triggered the overt conflict.

A Darfurian identity has not historically been clearly asserted in the region. Violence and external engagement has shaped identity formation in the past in Darfur, just as it is doing today. Identity clashes were promoted and fueled by Khartoum's Islamization during the 1980's (Quach 2004). In the competition for land and resources, intermingling and intermarriage have made Darfurian identity interchangeable between Fur farmers and Arab nomads. But today, this class politics that had little salience in the past are extremely powerful, and the overwhelming reason for this is the repulsive violence inflicted on the people. De Waal (2004) notes that the identity formation in Darfur serves as a marker of difference from the government and its militia and, in the context of forced displacement and threats of further dispossession, a claim to indignity and residence rights.

Darfur is Sudan's largest region, on its western border with Libya, Chad and the Central African Republic. It is mostly semi-arid plains and covers roughly one-fifth of Sudan's territory. Although almost all the region's people are

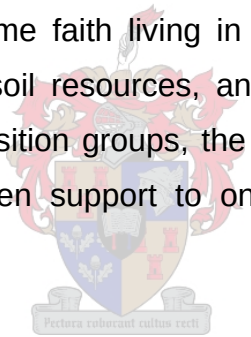
Muslim, Darfur is not predominantly Arab (Johnson 2003:130). Darfur can be divided into three ethnic zones. The northern arid region is inhibited by Arabic camel nomads; the agriculturally rich central region is inhabited by African sedentary farmers such as the Fur, Masalit and other cultivating tribes while the south is the home of the cattle herding Arab tribes (O'Fahey 2004). The main ethnic groups are the Fur (after whom the region is named) and the Arab speaking Baggara. Others include the non-Arab Zaghawa and Masalit. Many of these ethnic groups also have significant populations in neighbouring Chad, especially the Zaghawa and Baggara. These different tribes are in no way ethnically, linguistically, or culturally homogenous and language and occupation are used to describe the ethnicity of the people in Darfur.

A particular important difference between Darfur and other parts of Sudan is the importance of land (De Waal 2004). Nomads are accustomed to moving south in the dry season in search of water sources and grazing. Several disputes have erupted in the past between Arab nomads and the African subsistent farming communities over access to grazing land and water sources. These traditional conflicts were generally sporadic and at low levels of violence and the disputes were resolved by agreement and without much aggression. In recent decades, a combination of extended periods of drought; the competition for dwindling resources and increasing desertification led to these clashes to became fiercer and the conflict developed a more political character. Fighters began identifying themselves more broadly as Arab or African, and fighting was conducted along ethnic lines. The conflict has also taken on a racial dynamic because of farming communities from the African tribes of Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa organizing themselves against the nomads who are of Arab stock (Taban 2004:11).

There were also contentious political issues in the region. The Arab tribes in Darfur considered they were not sufficiently represented in the Fur-dominated local administration (HRW 2004). A number of Arab tribes formed what became known as the "Arab Gathering". This alliance of Arab tribes in Darfur was aiming to establish political dominance and Arab control in the region. But within this aims lurked an agenda of Arab supremacy (De Waal 2004). A

wide-reaching administrative reorganization by the government of president al-Bashir gave members of Arab ethnic groups new political power as well as military support. The Fur leaders, like their Masalit and Zaghawa neighbours, saw the increasing tendency of the government to favour Arab causes as an attempt to undermine their traditional leadership role and the power of their communities in their homeland (HRW 2004). This has led to a fear of Arab domination and the coupled marginalization of non-Arabs.

The current conflict in Darfur is but the latest result of a lingering problem, yet there are fundamental differences between the recent conflict and earlier skirmishing. The current conflict has developed serious racial, ethnic and ideological overtones with groups positioning themselves along the Arab-African divide, with ethnicity the major mobilizing factor on both sides (HRW 2004). This is one of the reasons why the Darfur conflict is arguably more complex: followers of the same faith living in the same region are fighting each other over water and soil resources, and outsiders – which includes northern based Islamist opposition groups, the government and the SPLM – are either giving tacit or open support to one faction or another (Taban 2004:12).




Overtly, the conflict in Darfur pits the government of Sudan and allied militias, known as the 'Janjaweed', against an insurgency composed of two groups, the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M), and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The grievances of the rebel groups developed from containment in the process of political decision making and demands for the political recognition of non-Arabs in Darfur. Both the SLA and JEM are fighting political and economic marginalization and both groups are advocating autonomy from the central government's administrative system which is believed to favour Arab tribes. Thus, the violence in Darfur was triggered by a rebellious movement, but it was precipitated and exacerbated by the predatory government's policy to expand and exert absolute power over the peripheral regions (Quach 2004). This Arab-ethnocentric policy deepened the ethnic divide and paved the way for the Arab militias to begin the ethnic cleansing campaign against African opposition in Darfur.

## 3.2 THE ACTORS

### 3.2.1 Government

The government of Sudan is engaged in a scorched-earth policy against the rebels in Darfur. The government tactic for stamping out the new insurgency is to attack not just rebel fighters, but civilians as well. The government is attempting to follow its tested policy of sowing division among the ethnic groups in Darfur as part of a divide and conquer strategy (ICG May 2004). This military campaign was developed to undermine the ethnic alliances between the Fur, Masaleit and Zaghawa fighters that are the core of the SLA and JEM movements. This strategy coincides with earlier government policies that were instrumental in converting 'traditional' tribal conflicts over access to receding grazing land and water into a new type of conflict driven by a broader ethnic agenda (ICG 2003). The old competition over natural resources was considerably aggravated by the government's deliberate policy of co-opting Arab nomadic tribes in its war against disgruntled elements within Darfur. This strategy led to the gradual militarization of the tribes in the entire region of Darfur, further alienating the African groups from the government.

According to a Human Rights Watch report (2004), the government forces together with Janjaweed militias have inflicted a campaign of forced displacement, murder, pillage, aerial bombings, and rape on hundreds of thousands of civilians since the emergence of the Darfur rebellion. Civilians suspected of aiding or sympathizing with the rebels have become the main targets of the government supported raids. Most of the attacks are carried out against the non-Arab Fur, Masaleit and Zaghawa groups, as well as some other smaller tribes, resulting in even greater ethnic tension (Amnesty International 2004). These attacks are aimed at destroying any real or perceived support base of the rebel forces. Human Rights Watch also cited the government's role as the key difference between the recent militia activity and clashes with Arab militias in prior conflicts. In addition, these attacks manifest Arab supremacism (De Waal 2004). The spiral of increasing violence, robbery, destruction, and especially rape as a form of sexual

violence is systematically and deliberately used for the purpose of the identity destruction of non-Arab Darfurians.

The government of Sudan has persistently tried to portray the events in Darfur as more criminal than political. Khartoum was quick to point that the insurgency in Darfur is a racist attempt by African groups to “rid Darfur of the Arab race” (Global Agenda 2004). The government has repeatedly chastened the international media for giving a political character to what is said to be an ordinary event carried out by a group of armed bandits (Nickmeyer 2004). The government has also claimed that the violence reflects “ordinary problems” between farmers and pastoralists, compounded by armed raids between tribes and a spillover effect from wars in neighbouring countries like Chad and the Central African Republic (ICG 2003). This attitude has led the government to the negotiating table but without a real desire to tackle the underlying problems. The government perceives Darfur as a security issue and doesn’t want to recognize it as a legitimate political conflict (Blume 2005:43). This is because the government has never faced insurgency throughout the North and fear that it might spark similar rebellions in other Muslim regions.

The government has the regional support of Libya and Chad. Not only do they share a long border, but President Idriss Deby has launched his bid for power in Chad with ethnic militias partially based in Darfur. Deby has long been close to the janjaweed and the Sudan government. Khartoum originally supported Deby to take power while there are also economic ties between Deby and the Sudanese. Libya supports Khartoum’s assertions that the conflict in Darfur is primarily a local problem of tribal conflict. Libya’s intervention has consisted of convening huge meetings of Darfurian rebel, tribal and civil society leaders prior to each round of the Abuja peace talks. It seems that the main objective of Libya’s goal is to minimize the role of the US and international organisations in resolving the Darfur problem. President Mummar Ghadaffi sees Darfur as Libya’s backyard and is not keen to see an international force stationed there.

### 3.2.2 The Janjaweed

The Sudanese government has a long history of using Arab and non-Arab ethnic militias to fight rebels who sprang from their traditional enemies (HRW 2004). The government of president Nimeiri initially armed *muraheleen* militias against the southern rebel SPLA. These fighters included Darfurian Arabs from the Baggara tribe as well as nomadic and semi-nomadic Arabs from neighbouring regions. They operated independent from the regular army without interference but always with impunity. The government arming of Arab militias has now been imposed on Darfur and Arab nomads are given arms and immunity to attack the African farmers who they have long been at odds with – all in the name of government counterinsurgency (see Amnesty International 2004; HRW 2004).

The term 'Janjaweed' has been used as a blanket term to describe most of the Arab gunmen active in Darfur today. The word is an Arabic colloquialism which roughly means 'devil with a gun on a horse' (Koerner 2004). The UN has described the Janjaweed as being made up of Sudanese and Chadian horse and camel riding Arab nomads, opportunists and criminals (IRIN 2003). The International Crisis Group (March 2004) adds that some Janjaweed build on a tradition of social bandits among the Arab tribes. These are robbers rejected by their communities for flouting established traditions and doesn't act under the authority or control of any tribe. Other elements are thought to be professional criminals who have probably been attracted by the possibilities of government-sanctioned robbery (ICG March 2004). Building on existing ethnic tensions and a raider culture, the government armed the Janjaweed to supplement the army and gave free rein for looting and rape (Hoile 2004). As most compensation comes from war booty, there can be no doubt that these militias, and criminal gangs, will be hard to stop once a peace settlement is reached.

Both victims and international observers allege that the Janjaweed are no longer the scrappy militias of yore, but rather well equipped fighting forces that enjoy the overt assistance of the Sudanese government (Koerner 2004). They are organized along the lines of the Sudanese army and have close ties to the

government in coordination, sympathies and a campaign of terror. The difference between the behavior and dealings of the Janjaweed and the Arab nomads in the past is that much of the plunder and pillage is an essential part of a deliberate policy of forced displacement and is usually accompanied by widespread killing (HRW 2004). Racism is used as a rallying point to encourage the militia to systematically attack and destroy African villages, food stocks, water sources and other items essential for survival.

But as the impact of the Janjaweed raids became known and the government's counterinsurgency strategies came under increasing international scrutiny, the Sudanese government denied any links to the militias and claiming the government was intent on bringing them under control (ICG March 2004). However, the Janjaweed will be very tough to stop. According to O'Fahey (2004) they have a fully developed racist ideology, a warrior culture and weapons. In addition, association with the military, looting, occupying land and operating a protection racket, are all sources of income in an otherwise very depressed economy and marginalized area of Sudan. These livelihood linkages are part of the rapidly emerging war economy in Darfur (Young et al 2005).

### 3.2.3 SLA and JEM

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) emerged in 2003 in reaction to the failure of the government and the traditional leaders to address the problems in Darfur. The SLA, initially known as the Darfur Liberation Front, is the larger of the two rebel groups and is aggressively secular and black nationalistic. The SLA brought together members of Darfur's three largest African tribes, the Fur, Masaleit and Zaghawa to rebel against the government who they accused of deliberately fueling ethnic strife in the region (IRIN news article 2003). They presented a political platform strikingly similar in all key respects to that of the southern Sudan's SPLA. It denounced political and economic marginalization and under-development and called for the separation of religion and state within the framework of a "united democratic Sudan" (Plaut 2004). The SLA further issued statements that it does not seek independence, but demand greater

political autonomy and a more equitable share of resources from the central Sudanese authorities.

Although JEM seems to share similar objectives to those of the SLA, their origins are rather different. They are more influenced by trends of political Islam and base their agenda on a type of manifesto – the 'Black Book', a detailed tract which ventilated the long-held grievances of the Darfur region (Gberie 2004). It accuses the Arabs of having disproportionate representation at the top levels of government and administration. The JEM is also believed to be linked to the followers of a Sudanese opposition leader, Hassan al-Turabi. Turabi was the former speaker of Sudan's parliament and the ideologist of the Islamist revolution and was removed from office when he introduced a bill reducing the powers of the presidency (Plaut 2004). It was these African Muslims from Darfur who were purged from government together with al-Turabi, which founded JEM.

Although the SLA and JEM come from different ideological backgrounds they have managed to cooperate in the face of a common enemy. It is noteworthy that the two movements did not argue their case from a tribal point of view, but rather spoke on behalf of all Darfurians. The strength of the joint SLA/JEM participation lies in the much greater military force of the SLA together with the stronger political agenda of the JEM, while marrying the grievances and demands of the various groups that join (ICG March 2004). Both movements accuse the government that their new administrative boundaries have disrupted the traditional balance of power and peaceful coexistence between Darfur tribes.

There are also substantial differences between the two groups. The JEM are considered part of the ruling regime as they have links with al-Turabi. In contrast the SLA sympathies lie with the South and they have no problem cooperating with the SPLA. The JEM do not undertake military training – theirs is a political cause only. They do not have much power and are scattered while the SLA has more ground support from the people of Darfur (Young et al 2005). The JEM are not only focused on Darfur and feel that they

do not have to localize their issues. The SLA is a secular movement and wants to do away with Islamic law (*sharia*), while the JEM, despite its Islamist links, has not taken a position, suggesting it would support whatever legal system the Sudanese choose democratically. The JEM split into two factions in May 2004; the JEM and the National Movement for Reform and Development.

In spite of their very different agendas the SLA and JEM act as one military. In April 2003 the two rebel groups mounted an inspiring offensive against Sudanese government forces, attacking the el Fasher airport and destroying several military aircraft while capturing arms, munitions, vehicles and other strategic supplies. The offensive was highly significant and demonstrated that the SLA/JEM is a political and military force which should be reckoned with. As De Waal (2004) noted, this singular success went to show that the Darfur groups had what it takes to make a successful guerrilla army: mobility, good intelligence and popular support. This was alarming for the Sudanese government as they had justifiable fears that the new rebel groups would form an alliance, based on racial affinity, with the Southern rebels. It can be argued that the Sudanese government considers the Darfur rebellion a power and regime threat which had to be crushed instantly, hence the fierce reaction from Khartoum to the rebellion.

Regional support for the rebels stem mostly from Eritrea. Eritrea remains the only government in the region openly supportive of the SLA and JEM, as well as rebel groups fighting in East and Southern Sudan. The Eritrean government opposed the NIF's military coup and have a strong ideological disliking in Khartoum's Islamic fundamentalist agenda. Despite the reluctance of the Chadian president to support the Darfur resistance, the SLA and JEM get much help from the Chadian military, who sell weapons and some supplies to the groups. The US has been of the most aggressive international critics of Khartoum's brutality in Darfur. The SLA in particular sees the US as its most powerful ally. Although there has been no direct financial or military support the US has advised the rebels on negotiating positions and political strategy.

## 3.3 THE ISSUES

### 3.3.1 Dividing policies

The emergence of the SLA and JEM in 2003 was not the beginning of the war in Darfur, merely its most visible flare-up. The government introduced policies in the 1980's that manipulated ethnicity in the interest of central politicians and their provincial allies. The current ethnic war is the culmination of two decades of misguided policies by successive central governments (ICG March 2004). As the NIF government set out to create an Islamic paradise they in effect brought about an exclusionary ideology that justifies efforts to restrict, persecute and eliminate groups that are perceived as inferior (Smith & Walker 2004). As the Middle East and Africa converge in Sudan, successive governments have sought to form a national identity around the Arabic language, Arabic culture and Islam through the implementation of Arabisation and Islamization. In Darfur, however, Islamization has given way to Arabisation with Arabs seeing themselves as true Muslims and African Muslims as both inferior Muslims and lesser beings.

The emergence of an Arab supremacist ideology in Darfur coincided with the efforts of Libya's Colonel Gaddafi in the 1980s to create an Arab belt across Africa (Gberie 2004). He armed disillusioned Arabs across the Sudanese border in Chad to form an Islamic Legion. They used Darfur as a rear base, pillaging crops and cattle from the local population (Abrahamson 2004). Although Gaddafi's dreams were short-lived, the residual effect of his efforts endures in Darfur. The Arab supremacist ideology surfaced in Darfur through an organisation called the 'Arab Gathering' (Smith & Walker 2004). Their exclusionary ideology depicts Arabs as the standard bearers for religion culture and civilization while disregarding generations of intermarriage and peaceful coexistence. At one level, the Arab Gathering was simply a political coalition that aimed to protect the interest of a disadvantaged group in Darfur, but it also became a vehicle for racial polarization (De Waal 2004).

As a result conflict erupted between the Fur and the Arabs in 1987. In what began as a conflict over water and grazing rights, approximately 5000 Fur

were killed and ten thousands of their homes destroyed. The losses from the Arab groups were also substantial (Johnson 2003:140). The evidence from this conflict indicated intent by the Arabs to destroy the social and economic base of the Fur. The Fur argued that the aim of the Arabs was to eradicate them totally from their land. On the other hand, the Arabs claimed that the current problems started when the Fur started to talk about “Darfur being for the Fur” and that the Arabs should leave (Young et al 2005). In 1996, a change of administrative structure in favour of Arabs led to conflict between the Masaleit and Arabs. The new administrative units were mostly created at the expense of black African groups, further alienating them from the government. Against this background of state repression, Arab militias began raiding and torching Masaleit villages. Attacks were timed to coincide with the harvest and hundreds were killed on both sides (Johnson 2003:141). These attacks is an indication of the ethnic manipulation by the government isolate the Fur, Masaleit, Zaghawa and other groups that were in revolt.

The government’s mismanagement and its manipulation of the local processes is another root cause of the conflict in Darfur. President Nimeiri replaced the Native Administration with a local administration and abolished the administrative authority of the tribal leaders of Darfur. This meant that one tribe could be controlled by another (Young et al 2005). This created a bureaucracy controlled by parliamentarians from Khartoum that had little or no concern for the region It infuriated the traditional authorities and some argue that this reorganization was the first factor that triggered tribal conflicts on a wider scale in Darfur (Young et al 2005). Since the NIF took power local administration processes has been subject to structural and mandatory changes to conform to the Islamic orientation of the state. In 1995 the government further intervened in the administration of Darfur by re-dividing Darfur into three separate states. This happened despite fierce opposition and protests from the people of Darfur (Young et al 2005). This is widely held to have weakened the social infrastructure and the integrity of the region. Khartoum’s deliberate political and developmental marginalization introduced two inter-connected processes which are evident today: conflicts over the land

itself, for example tribal territories and access for other groups, and secondly, conflicts over local governance and local power struggles.

### 3.3.2 Regime threat

In many respects the civilian and military authorities in Khartoum considers the Darfur rebellion as a regime threat. The Darfur rebels pose a far greater danger to the government stronghold than the SPLM and the South ever did. The reason is that both the SLA and JEM are Muslim groups and they could garner support to form a Darfurian alliance that could garner support from other tribes in the neighbouring provinces. The Darfur rebels pose in more ways than one a danger to Khartoum's attempt to exert power over the region. The attacks on the government's military installations were in effect an attack on Arab leadership and challenged the government's supremacy and identity (Quach 2004). Therefore, when the rebels attacked the regime's authority, they became a paramount threat. Khartoum's intention to permanently eradicate that threat was not only a strategic goal but also an immediate and decisive solution for the government to preserve its power (Quach 2004).

A strong dominance on Darfur is crucial for the Sudanese government's power relationship with its other peripheral regions. Khartoum's supremacy has always depended on the absence of a challenge by groups living on the periphery (Kasfir 2005). The government's actions in Darfur are but the latest example in which Khartoum has used its policy of Arabisation in an effort to bolster or restore its hegemony. According to Quach (2004), the government fears that tribalism and regionalism in Darfur could become a hindrance to the Arabisation program that is in process throughout the country. Arabisation is the government's antipode for secession and separatism, given the current situation in the South. Losing a strong grip over Darfur would cause the loss of Khartoum's influence and legitimacy over the country – which would result in the demise of government's elites' economic and political absolutism (Quach 2004).

Both the fighting in the Southern Sudan and its resolution has influenced the motives of actors involved in the Darfur conflict. The Comprehensive Peace

Agreement that ended the civil strife in the South have not only cost Khartoum the control over the southern Sudan, but may also have strengthened the prospects for rebellion in other parts of the country (Kasfir 2005). The Darfur rebels were excluded from the negotiations between the government and the SPLM. However, the lesson that the SLA and JEM took from the success of the peace agreement is that rebellion pays. To be taken seriously as a negotiating partner it is necessary to rebel first (Kasfir 2005). Khartoum surely understands that if they negotiate an agreement similar to the generous one it signed with the SPLM, it greatly impose the probability of several new rebellions. As the International Crisis Group (2004) reports, “such an event would sent a clear signal to the Beja in the east, the Nubians in the north and other disenfranchised communities on the periphery that armed revolt is the only mechanism available in Sudan for securing rights and freedom.”

The uprising in Darfur is not only an open challenge to the national identity of Sudan, it is also a case of regime survival for the government. This, together with the threat of rebellions spreading throughout the periphery can explain why the government persists in causing so much devastation to civilians in Darfur. Losing control of one region may cost the government another one. Therefore, according to Nelson Kasfir (2004), to prevent the emergence of simultaneous rebellions, the government is sending a message to potential guerrillas everywhere that if they rebel, civilians in their region will face atrocities on a scale similar to those in Darfur. As John Ryle (2004) noted, “the ruthlessness of the government’s response to the Darfur insurgency is a sign of fear: any hint of weakness is liable to encourage other insurgencies…”

Maintaining political power over Darfur is of the utmost importance for the government’s authority over the whole of Sudan. Loosing control in Darfur will have an irreparable impact on the military superiority, economic control and political power of Khartoum.

## 3.4 ETHNIC CLEANSING AND GENOCIDE

### 3.4.1 Naming the crisis

How to name the nature of the atrocities in Darfur has been the subject of a contentious global debate. While Darfur is certainly ethnic cleansing, some argue it doesn't really fit the lay definition of genocide as covered by the 1948 Genocide Convention (De Waal 2004). On the other hand, consensus around what constitutes genocide is consequently frustrated by different actors' divergent self-interests. The term genocide invokes clear international obligations and requires signatories to intervene pro-actively.

Ethnic cleansing remains one of the primary evils of modern times. Michael Mann (2002) describes ethnic cleansing as "the removal by members of a self-identifying ethnic group of those they consider an ethnic out-group from a territory they define as their own." In Darfur, the perpetrators are the government backed Arab militia, the Janjaweed, who uses murder and mayhem to terrify the local Africans from fleeing the area. The deliberate targeting of the civilian population has resulted in the forced displacement of an estimated 1.7 million people within the Darfur region. The Sudanese Organisation Against Torture (2005) estimates that over 70 000 people have been killed in 2004 alone and over 200 000 have fled to neighbouring Chad. Sexual violence against females has also become a vital component of the conflict.

Mann further notes that the practices of ethnic cleansing are not sporadic, coincidental or carried out by disorganized groups or civilians who cannot be detained. Evidence hereof is the systematic attacks in Darfur which have been twinned with military intelligence, accompanied by aerial bombardment and then followed by ground attacks carried out by militia forces. The patterns of conduct, the manner in which these acts are carried out, and the length of time over which they took place, all combine to reveal not only evidence of a purposeful, systematic and coordinated government policy of ethnic cleansing, but also of genocide.

A report by Human Rights Watch (2004) notes the government's recruiting and arming of militia forces, the forced displacements, the bombing and killing of civilians, the repeated raids and abuses, the looting of civilian property and the related violence, the deliberate destruction of homes and water sources and the subsequent denial of humanitarian assistance are "not merely a scorched earth tactic or an element of counter-insurgency. The aim here appears to be the removal of the African groups from large areas of the region and redistribute the population to government-controlled towns where they can be concentrated, confined and controlled" (HRW 2004).

These planned actions by the government are not only evidence of ethnic cleansing, but amounts to genocide with the intend to destroy a portion of the population. The United Nations continues to hesitate on declaring the disaster in Darfur genocide. The United Nations Commission of Inquiry (COI) into the accusations of genocide in Darfur released a report in the beginning of 2005 concluding that the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed militias has in fact carried out mass killings and actions which "may amount to crimes against humanity" but fell short of calling events in Darfur genocide (SOAT 2005). The commission found that it "does recognize that in some instances individuals, including government officials, may commit acts with genocidal intent." Therefore, the COI recommended that the case be referred to the International Crimes Court in order for them to investigate evidence of widespread abuses, including rape, torture, killings of civilians and pillaging. Moreover, the report provided that the scale of crimes committed in the region were systematic in nature. However, the government in Khartoum rejected the accusations of its compliance in atrocities committed by the militias and called it unfair and incorrect (SOAT 2005).

### 3.4.2 International response

The international response to the crisis in Darfur was dithering and characterized by great evasiveness and passivity. The United Nations Security Council took more than a year to pass a resolution on Darfur, which was done only in July 2004. The resolution called on the Sudanese government to disarm the local Arab militia and ease and halt attacks against

the civilian population, or else face sanctions. Eleven of the fifteen council members voted in favour of the resolution, while China, Russia, Pakistan and Algeria abstained, claiming that sanctions cannot resolve the problem (Mahmoud 2004:10). When the deadline passed, there were no sign of compliance by the Sudanese government and little or no international reaction.

Hugo Slim (2004) mentions a couple of factors that played a part to the fairly feeble international response in Darfur. The most important of these are the competing priorities, the lack of political will as well as the political and economic interest of states. Major powers in the UN had reasons to avoid confrontation with Khartoum. Western powers feared that pressing the Sudanese government too far on Darfur could put the peace agreement about to be finalized between the government and southern Sudan, at risk (Cohen 2005). The United States had invested heavily in the peace process and wanted to give no excuse for the government to walk away from the negotiations. The Naivasha peace talks were not only an opportunity to end Africa's longest running civil war, but also a change for the United States to improve its relations with Sudan. The United States interest in Sudan is motivated by the strategic importance of Sudan's location, the fear of state sponsored international terrorism and the boundless opportunities for US oil companies (Rajab 2004).

The international system is broken when it comes to Africa. International intervention requires political will – the willingness of a country to become involved in the conflict management aspects of a crisis despite the potential cost of casualties, monetary expenditures, and domestic public approval (Mays 2003:108). Many Western governments do not consider it to be in their national interest to take the political, financial and political risks needed to stop killings on the African continent. While many governments are ready to denounce the atrocities and provide generous humanitarian help, the costs are considered too high to become involved (Cohen 2004). The case of Darfur is therefore another example that governments' decisions to intervene are based on the political calculations of the state.

The international community's hesitation and indecision to intervene suggests that Darfur has become a case of *realpolitik* where economic interests are priced higher than human lives. For the UN to intervene in Darfur all five of its permanent members have to agree, but a unanimous decision is highly unlikely because of China's oil interests. China is the main foreign investor in Sudan's oil industry and did everything to delay and weaken international action on Darfur. Instead, the Chinese and other Asian investors have put all their energies into supporting the Sudanese government with the single goal of ensuring continued oil operations (Mahmoud 2004:13). Sudan's oil is important to China because China has become the world's second largest oil consumer and need to diversify its sources of energy (Cohen 2004). China, therefore abstained on resolutions that threatened sanctions against Sudan, in particular against its petroleum sector, and also threatened to use its veto right against resolutions it considered too strong.

If there is indeed a positive feature to have emerged from the conflict in Darfur, it is the role played by the African Union (AU). As Smith & Walker (2004) noted: "The need to protect citizens was understood more in the AU than it was among the wealthy UN member states." The AU's founding document says that the organisation has a right to intervene in a member state in the case of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity (Cohen 2004). In Darfur, the AU negotiated the April ceasefire between the rebels and the government in Darfur and employed several observers to monitor it. In July 2004 the AU Peace and Security Council passed a resolution which called for a proposal for transforming the observer force into a fully fledged peacekeeping mission with the requisite mandate and size to ensure the effective implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement (Smith & Walker 2004). However, when the observer mission was eventually expanded in October 2004, it still had no peace-keeping mandate although its remit was extended to include security and help for the return of displaced peoples and protect civilians from "imminent threat".

Although the AU force is much too small and the organisation is dependent on external logistic capacities, the intervention in Sudan marks an important

departure from the Organization for African Unity's (OAU) handling of such events, which was characterized by inertia (Gottschalk & Schmidt 2004:145). The AU's timely response to the crisis in Darfur indicates that they do not suffer from the OAU's hesitation and impotence to address an ongoing crisis.

What is important of the AU's intervention in Darfur is that the combination of regional involvement backed up by international support has the potential to become a more viable and permanent for responding and to conflict and displacement in Africa (Cohen 2004). Perhaps Western powers can learn from the AU's response and simply needs to recognize that there are shades of success, while incomplete, are still infinitely better than doing nothing at all.

# CHAPTER 4: THE PEACE PROCESSES

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

No study on the wars in Sudan will be complete without a discussion of the various peace initiatives and their failure to reach a lasting resolution. Although there have been a number of peace talks aimed at ending the conflict in Sudan, all of these efforts have been lightly regarded by the warring parties. Given the regional and international agendas regarding Sudan, and the complex divisions within the country itself, it comes as no surprise that there are also a host of competing priorities with respect to making peace (ICG 2003).

Nearly all of the major peace efforts have been complicated by often competing regional and international political and strategic considerations resulting in no actual commitment from the different groups. Talks are mostly manipulated to each party's own end and most of the peace initiatives have only succeeded in undermining each other. There has not only been an absence of coordination between the main peace-making efforts, but none of these peace processes can lay claim to continuous negotiations. There is no real negotiation in any of them, only the reaffirmation of the different parties' position of the issues on the table. Perhaps the biggest contribution to the failure of the different peace initiatives was the fact that few were backed by consistent pressure from the international community.

Therefore, some of the most important peace efforts deserve discussion. This chapter will begin with a brief overview of the various peace processes that have been taken up since the eruption of the second civil war in 1983. Against this background, the achievements of the IGAD peace initiatives will be discussed and reviewed. Finally, the focus will be on the Darfur peace process and the political talks between the government of Sudan and the SLA and JEM.

## 4.2 PREVIOUS PEACE EFFORTS

### 4.2.1 Koka Dam Declaration

One of the first efforts at peace-building after the resumption of the civil war in 1983 was the Koka Dam meeting in Ethiopia in March 1986. The meeting was held between the National Salvation Alliance, which included representatives from the Umma Party, as well as various secular, pan-Arabist, revolutionary, progressive and regional parties (Johnson 2003:71) and the SPLM/A. It was significant, however, that key major parties such as the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the National Islamic Front (NIF) refused to attend the meeting.

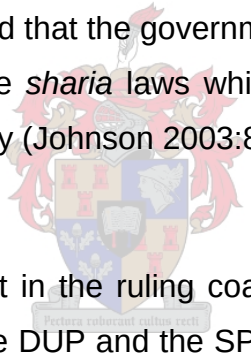
The resultant Koka Dam Declaration floated the idea of a constitutional convention to be attended by the government and all political forces to talk about the whole of Sudan's problems and not the so-called problem of the South. Some of the points to be discussed were among other things the 'nationalities question', the 'religious question', basic human rights, the system of rule, development and uneven development, natural resources, the regular forces and security arrangements, the 'cultural question', education and foreign policy (Johnson 2003:71). At the same time the state of emergency would be lifted, the *sharia* laws and other restrictive codes repealed and the 1956 constitution would be adopted as an interim constitution with the additional amendment to incorporate regional government. In addition, the SPLM/A also called for the abrogation of all military pacts between Sudan and other countries and both the government and the SPLA would endeavour a ceasefire (Johnson 2003:71).

In May 1986, Sadiq al-Mahdi, the leader of the Umma Party became Prime Minister, leading a coalition government made up of the Umma and DUP parties. The NIF emerged as the third largest party. After the holding of the national elections, Sadiq al-Mahdi met the SPLM/A leader John Garang. The SPLM/A wished to see the Koka Dam declaration elaborated upon and implemented. Al-Mahdi however, stated that despite an Umma presence in the government, the Umma Party was no longer bound by the declaration

because the DUP and the NIF did not participate in the deliberations at Koka Dam and was not a party to any decisions made at the Koka Dam declaration. Thus, the Koka Dam agreement fell apart and the talks that gave hope for stopping the war and attaining peace were renounced.

### 4.2.2 DUP-SPLM Agreement

In 1988 there was a widespread discontent in the North with Sadiq al-Mahdi's governance and his failure to address the major issues facing the country. With the elections drawing near, the DUP's attitude towards the SPLM took a whole new direction. Between 1987 and 1988 the DUP held a series of meetings with the SPLM, culminating in a direct meeting between the two leaders, Osman Al-Mirghani and John Garang (ISS 2004). Together they signed the DUP-SPLM Agreement, which was basically a modified Koka Dam declaration. This agreement essentially affirmed all the SPLM/A's demands. The SPLM dropped its demand that the government dissolve itself and agreed merely to a suspension of the *sharia* laws while a constitutional conference settled the future of the country (Johnson 2003:84).



However, Sadiq faced dissent in the ruling coalition and refused to approve the peace plan reached by the DUP and the SPLM/A in November 1988. The DUP withdraw from the coalition, leaving the Umma and the NIF. This agreement was strongly opposed by the NIF and in 1989 a group of army officers with ties to the NIF, led by Lt-General Omar al-Bashir – the current president of Sudan, staged a pre-emptive coup and seized power. This government overthrow signaled not only the end of the DUP-SPLM agreement, but effectively ended all internal Sudanese efforts at peace-making (ISS 2004). As a result, all the other peace initiatives were to be managed by the regional and international communities. Moreover, the 1991 overthrow of the regime of Mengistu in Ethiopia - the SPLM/A's foremost foreign supporter, and the split in the SPLM in the same year seriously weakened the bargaining power of the South (ISS 2004). This led the NIF government to increasingly look to a military victory, and not peace negotiations, to bring the conflict to an end.

### 4.2.3 Abuja Peace Process

The Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida invited the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A to peace talks in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, in May-June 1992. These talks were initiated because of the importance of the issues of race, religion and self-determination that were at the core of the Sudan dispute (ISS 2004). Prior to this pivotal meeting, however, the SPLM/A had split into two factions and as a result the government entered the talks with increasing confidence. Both factions of the SPLM/A advocated a secular democratic system and the right for the south to hold a referendum on self-determination. The government firmly rejected the process of self-determination and stated that the constitution should be based on *sharia*. The Northern majority were also to have the right to decide on a state religion for the entire country (Johnson 2003:174). For the government, the unity of Sudan and the centrality of the Islamic state were non-negotiable. This led to the rapid collapse of the peace talks.

The second round of the Abuja peace talks took place in May 1993. Again, the issues on the table were power-sharing, balanced development, and the issue of self-determination. The government rejected secession and proposed a constitution that did not refer to Islam as the state religion and exempted the South from certain provisions of *sharia* (ISS 2004). The SPLM/A rejected the government's proposals and called for a confederation and a secular, democratic "New Sudan". The SPLM/A not only championed the right to self-determination for the South, but also for the "marginalised territories", these being Abyei, the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile (ISS 2004). The second round of the Abuja talks ended with the government and the SPLM/A sharply disagreeing over the critical issues of the separation of state and religion and self-determination.

Even after the failed Abuja peace initiative, Nigeria remained committed to the conflict resolution in Sudan. In 2001, Nigeria launched another peace initiative through the auspices of the Millennium Action Plan. The Millennium Plan is a cooperative effort among African leaders to promote Africa's development in

the global economy (ICG 2003). This initiative was aimed at helping the SPLM/A and other Southern Sudanese leaders reach a local consensus on future peace negotiations. However, these efforts also failed as key actors, including the government and the SPLM/A, had serious reservations about the initiative. The International Crisis Group (2003) noted that the government of Sudan's most imminent fear was that the Southern groups would coalesce around a self-determination agenda while the Northern groups would press for more democracy. The major drawback of the Nigerian initiative was that it again approached Sudan's war as a strictly north-south matter, rather than a national struggle involving other marginalised areas.

### 4.2.4 Egyptian-Libyan Initiative

The joint Egyptian-Libyan Initiative was launched in 1999 with concern about the apparent African domination of the peace processes as well as an upset at the lack of a formalised role for Egypt in the negotiations, given its considerable interests in Sudan (ISS 2004). Both Egypt and Libya have long had ambitions to form a broader Arab unity incorporating their countries and Sudan in some form of union. Therefore, both Egypt and Libya want to keep Sudan within the Arab fold, and neither want to see Southern self-determination (Johnson 2003:176), because of the possible threat to Cairo's access to the waters of the Nile, which flow through southern Sudan.

The Egyptian-Libyan Initiative failed to address the key factors driving the war – religion, self-determination and resource-sharing, and consists of nine rather vague points. These are: preserving Sudan's unity; making citizenship the basis of rights; recognizing Sudan's diversity; safeguarding democratic pluralism; guaranteeing basic freedoms; establishing a decentralised government; forming an interim government; and implementing immediate cessation of hostilities (ICG 2003). Khartoum unreservedly agreed to the Egyptian-Libyan principles and the SPLM/A accepted them in principle, but made it clear that it wanted the document revised to include self-determination, secularism and merger with the IGAD peace process (ISS

2004). The SPLM/A made it clear that it cannot negotiate in a framework that does not include self-determination and this Initiative rules it out.

The general suspicion concerning the joint Initiative is that it represents the interests of Egypt and Libya more than it is a sincere effort to achieve piece. Although the Egyptian-Libyan initiative largely withered, it represented a strong statement of Egyptian fears about Sudanese self-determination. The Initiative also made clear that the engagement of Libya and particularly Egypt, which has the closest relations with Sudan and the most significant interests in the country and the peace process, should not be overlooked (ISS 2004).

## 4.3 THE IGAD PEACE PROCESS

### 4.3.1 Background

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is Sudan's longest running peace initiative. IGAD is a regional organization that was established in 1986 to focus on the problems of drought and desertification. At the same time the Authority took upon it the related tasks of conflict resolution and development in the Horn of Africa (Adar 2000:40). The original founders of the IGADD (the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification) were Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Later on Uganda and Eritrea joined the renamed Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The IGAD peace process began with the view among the mediators that the Sudan conflict was having serious repercussions not only in the country but also in the region. It also sought to deal with the root causes of the conflict and has redefined the conflict as one rooted in a clash of national identities (Nantulya 2003:10). The ideological starting point of IGAD's various principles and protocols has been that Sudan is a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society whose diversities must be reflected in the national framework. The IGAD process challenged the national identification framework by providing that a secular and democratic state must established in Sudan and that religion and state must be separated (Nantulya 2003:10).

The first important milestone of the IGAD peace initiative was the Declaration of Principles (DoP) formulated in 1994. The DoP has formed the basis of the IGAD peace initiative ever since. The declaration stated that lasting peace cannot be achieved militarily (Terlinden & Debiel 2004).The DoP included a number of provisions relating to human rights but it also held that the unity of Sudan be given priority. It further favoured legally guaranteed political and social equality, extensive self-determination by the Sudanese people, separation of religion and state, the appropriate sharing of resources and an independent justice system. The DoP also provided that the people of Sudan (North and South) had the right to determine their future through a referendum if the two parties fail to agree on major principles contained in the Declaration (Adar 2000:53). While the SPLM/A fully endorsed the DoP, the government of Sudan opposed the Declaration (ISS 2004). The most contentious issues were secularism and self-determination, which the Khartoum government refused to concede.

However, military setbacks and intense international pressure forced the government back to the negotiating table in Nairobi in 1997 and it formally accepted the Declaration of Principles. The government's return to the IGAD process was, in part, recognition of the government's failed effort to attract other mediators supportive of the NIF government positions but also a product of military pressure and international isolation (ICG 2003). The outbreak of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998 and the increasing involvement of Uganda in the Congo war markedly decreased regional pressure on the government of Sudan and the IGAD peace process began to falter (ISS 2004). This, together with disagreements on the role of religion in politics and the territorial definition of southern Sudan for the purpose of a referendum on self-determination made it clear that outside support and pressure would be necessary if the peace process was not to come to a complete halt. This international engagement eventually came from the United States.

The American initiative was kept under the auspices of IGAD, which had been the framework for mediation in the Sudan conflict since the mid-1990s. Many

point to the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 and the ensuing US-led "war on terror" to explain the heightened US interest in Sudan. However, the US had already shown itself ready for military action in 1998 when, after US embassies were bombed in Tanzania and Kenya, the US bombed a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory because of its alleged production of chemical weapons (Terlinden & Debiel 2004). US diplomacy used the Sudan Peace Act to put massive pressure on the Sudanese government and also threatened further sanctions if the government was found to be not participating in the peace negotiations (ISS 2004). These measures send a powerful message to the warring parties and the international engagement, led by the US, breathed life into the faltering IGAD peace process. This sustained engagement proved critical to the breakthrough of the Machakos Protocol and the continuing progress since then.

Of all the past peace efforts, the IGAD peace process did the most to help narrow the differences between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A. But multiple factors prevented the initial IGAD process of finally resolving the Sudanese conflict. One of the most serious obstacles to peace in Sudan is the government's notion that the war can be won and the SPLM/A defeated (Dagne 2003). Another factor is the regional dynamics in the conflict-prone Horn of Africa that contributes to the persistence of the conflict. The government and the SPLM/A have relied equally on the support of regional actors. This support enabled both sides to survive setbacks and it also created a sort of balance of power between them (Dagne 2003). Shifting alliances, however, ensured continued instability in the Sudan. Some further believe that the policies of the international community focused more on isolating Sudan than pursuing peace efforts. This, together with competing regional peace initiatives, such as the one pursued by Egypt and Libya, is undermining the IGAD efforts.

### 4.3.2 Machakos Protocol

On the 20th of July 2002, after five weeks of talks in Machakos, Kenya, a Framework Agreement was signed between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A to end the war in southern Sudan. This Agreement was seen by

mediators as a major breakthrough in the long stalled IGAD peace process. The Machakos Protocol calls for a six year transition period and a referendum on the political future of southern Sudan at the end of the transition period (Terlinden & Debiel 2004). Both parties made important concessions. The government of Sudan agreed on a referendum to determine the political future of Southern Sudan after the six year transition period. Although the government had previously accepted self-determination in principle for Southern Sudan, it had not, until Machakos, signed an agreement to that effect (Deng & Khalil 2004). In exchange for Khartoum's commitment to self-determination the SPLM/A gave up its demand for a secular Sudan. Instead, according to the provisions of the protocol, the South would be ruled by a secular administration and legislation and the North would remain under Islamic *sharia* law (Dagne 2003).

In spite of the Machakos Protocol's significant breakthroughs on self-determination and the issue of Islamic law, numerous highly contentious issues remained unresolved (Al-Shahi 2004:81). One of the most difficult hurdles in the negotiations was the place of religion in the system of law and government in Sudan. The government of Sudan has traditionally been committed to building a society along an Islamic belief system. The SPLM, and other liberation movements before it, have rejected this notion in all negotiations (Nantulya 2003:10). Although the term 'religion' crops up in a number of provisos of the Protocol, nowhere is there a provision to the effect that religion shall be separated from politics or state affairs (Deng & Khalil 2004). Rather, the Protocol provides for: freedom of worship and belief; no religious discrimination; eligibility for public office based on citizenship and not religion, and religious laws to be confined to the personal or family realm (Nantulya 2003:10). For its part, the Sudanese government accepted these principles, mainly because they are silent on explicitly separating religion from state.

The issue of separating religion and state resurfaced in the negotiations on the status of the national capital. At previous talks both sides agreed that the South would be exempted from *sharia* and the North could have *sharia* laws.

But the status of the capital was never discussed. The government maintained that Khartoum needed to be retained as the national capital and that it would remain Islamic (Nantulya 2003:10). The SPLM, on the other hand, insisted that the national capital, which has a large number of non-Muslims southern Sudanese, should be secular and accessible to all religions (Al-Shahi 2004:83). The government refused to compromise on this issue. As a counter-proposal, the SPLM suggested that an enclave in Khartoum should be *sharia* free and the rest of the capital could continue to have Islamic rule (Dagne 2003). The government rejected that too. Although the disagreement on this issue seems minor, the influencing factors behind the disagreement are very serious. At the core of this debate is the role of religion and politics, the very same issues that led to the civil war of 1983 and could create future conflicts during the transition.

Although the Machakos Protocol accepted a new framework for the sharing of power and wealth, significant differences and difficulties lingered between the two parties. On the issue of sharing wealth there was a general agreement that more funds should be allocated for the southern Sudan. However, there were significant disagreements on ownership of natural resources, economic policy, and on revenue sharing (Dagne 2003). The government maintains that all land belongs to the state, while the SPLM/A contends that land belongs to the community. According to Nantulya (2003:11) the Sudanese government saw this as an attempt by the SPLM/A to secure access to the strategic resources located in the South, thereby denying the government control over the oil and other natural resources in the future.

The SPLM/A also argued that because of the historical neglect of the southern Sudan a significant share of oil revenues should go to the South. The SPLM/A demanded that 60% of the oil revenues should be reserved for the South, while the government only offered 10% (Terlinden & Debiel 2004). The government argued that the National Government will require significant funds to finance reconstruction and development of the entire country during the transition period, not only the South (Dagne 2003). Another source of disagreement was the Sudanese banking system. The SPLM/A introduced an

alternative currency in southern Sudan, arguing that the current banking system is based on Islamic laws and was therefore incompatible with the cultural and economic system in southern Sudan (Nantulya 2003:11).

In the areas of power sharing, significant differences also remain. The SPLM/A initially proposed to have a rotating presidency during the transitional period but after a contentious debate dropped its proposal. The SPLM/A also advocated the creation of a vice president with executive powers (Dagne 2003). After this notion was initially accepted, the government rejected it. A compromise solution was offered with several vice presidents, reserving the position of first vice president with broad powers in matters of national security and administration of the federal government, for the SPLM/A. The percentage of representation in the organs of state could also not be agreed upon. The SPLM/A proposed that the South should have a representation of 40% in the Lower Chamber and 50% in the Upper House. The government rejected this proposal on the grounds that the southerners represent only 20% of the population and thus do not deserve to have so many seats in the Legislature (Dagne 2003). However, the parties agreed to an 'equitable' representation in both chambers of the Legislature without specifying the composition of the parties. The limited successes of power and wealth sharing issues in the Machakos Protocol hinges completely on the idea of 'equitable' sharing of wealth and power.

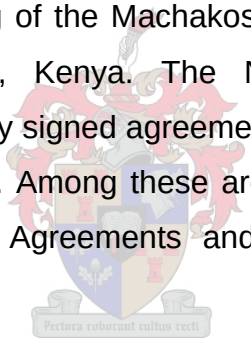
The status of the so-called 'marginalised areas', the Abeyi regions, the Nuba Mountains, and the Southern Blue Nile Province were another controversial issue. The three areas, although part of the North since independence, are ethnically and linguistically part of the South and have participated in successive southern-based liberation movements, including the SPLM/A (Nantulya 2003:12). There seems to be a consensus that the aforementioned areas shall be autonomous in the transition phase and thereafter have the right to participate in the referendum. However, given the strategic significance of the three areas in relation to natural resources (including oil in Abeyi) and their geographical position, the government may not risk losing them in a referendum (Deng & Khalil 2004). It is therefore a highly

controversial question whether all three the regions shall have the right to participate in the planned referendum after the six years transition period (Terlinden & Debiel 2004).

The Machakos Protocol were characterised by a series of remarkable breakthroughs. Despite the gaps and ambiguity on certain issues, the Protocol laid the foundation for the signing of the final peace agreement and gave the first steps towards settling the conflict.

### 4.3.3 Naivasha Peace Agreement

The Naivasha Peace Agreement (also referred to as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement) represents the final step in over two years of intensive negotiations since the signing of the Machakos Protocol. It was signed on 9 January 2005 in Naivasha, Kenya. The Naivasha Peace Agreement incorporates several previously signed agreements and protocols between the government and the SPLM/A. Among these are the Machakos Protocol, the Power and Wealth Sharing Agreements and the Security Arrangements Agreement.




The cornerstones of the Naivasha agreement are political autonomy for the southern Sudan during the transitional period leading up to the 2011 referendum on independence for the South, and equal sharing of oil revenues. The terms of the agreement includes the following provisions: The peace process will extend over a six year transitional period, which will end with a referendum to allow the population of southern Sudan to choose between independence or remaining in Sudan. After three or four years elections will be held across the whole country. Until the referendum has been held, the South will be an autonomous region within Sudan with its own president and parliament (CPA document).

According to the Power Sharing Protocol of May 2004, the SPLM/A will receive 28 percent of the ministries, of posts in the transitional government,

and of seats in the transitional parliament. The ruling NIF of President Omar al-Bashir will receive 52 percent of ministries and seats in parliament, with the rest going to political parties that are either close to the government or part of the opposition coalition (CPA document). The position of first vice president in the transitional government will go to the SPLM/A as well as the president of the new Government of Southern Sudan. (John Garang was sworn in as first vice president just weeks before he died in a helicopter crash in July 2005.) The Wealth Sharing Agreement of January 2004 provided for a new national currency and parallel central banks for North and South. The central government and the South are to split all oil and other revenues derived from the South equally (CPA document).

Various protocols cover security arrangements. The parties agreed that the Sudanese army is to withdraw from the South within 30 months while the SPLM/A has one year to leave the areas of the Nuba Mountains, Abeyi and the Southern Blue Nile in central Sudan (CPA document). The military disengagement process is to be accompanied by the creation of joint integrated army units with equal numbers from the SPLA and the Sudanese Army. These could form the nucleus of a new national army if the South were to remain in Sudan in 2011 (Tull 2005). The security agreement provides in effect for the elimination of the pro-government militias of the South Sudan Defense Forces (SSDF), since no armed groups other than the SPLA and the Sudanese Army are permitted. The SSDF is to be integrated within one year into the security structures of the government army or the SPLA, or disarmed (CPA document).

Although the peace agreement is undoubtedly a historical achievement, a successful implementation is by no means a foregone conclusion. The most important point to consider is that the peace agreement is a strictly bilateral accord (Tull 2005). The Naivasha Agreement reflects the direct interests of only the SPLA and the Khartoum government. All of Sudan's remaining political, military, and civil society actors, for example the opposition groups in the national government, are excluded and so are other marginalised regions like Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, Abeyi and eastern Sudan. The exclusion of

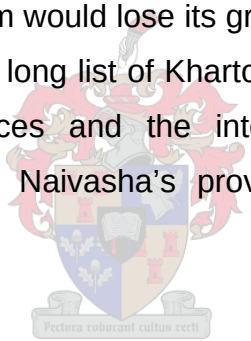
Darfur and the many other groups on the periphery could have major ramifications for the long-term viability of the agreement (Okello 2005:20).

According to Denis Tull (2005) there is no reason to believe that either the SPLM/A or Khartoum would voluntarily put the peace process on a broader footing by including other actors and groups during the transition period. Since 1999 the SPLA welcomed the rise and mobilization of other actors and regional groups because it broadened the front against Khartoum (Tull 2005). However, the closer the North-South peace process came to an agreement, the less willing was the SPLM/A to include these groups politically. Bringing in more actors would have meant redistribution and a loss of concessions and resources that the SPLA had previously extorted from the government. Nor did the government have any interest in increasing the number of parties to the negotiations (Tull 2005). The al-Bashir government is sticking to its standpoint that the agreement with the South should be regarded as an exception and that political compromises with other regions and groups are out of the question. Consequently, other groups and regions were systematically shut out of the negotiating process.

Another challenge facing the implementation of the peace agreement is the reorganising of the SPLM from a rebel movement to a government, a political party and professional army (ICG 2005:13). It is uncertain whether the SPLM will be effective as a national party or if it will be bogged down in southern politics. The SPLM's gradual shift of focus towards the South with the establishment of the Government of Southern Sudan not only risks alienating its northern members and undermining its broad appeal, but also presents a threat that war could resume if people feel that they are not directly benefiting from peace (ICG 2005:13). Furthermore the SPLM has to overcome a legacy of centralised decision-making that stems from more than twenty years as a military movement. The delivery of oil revenues has been delayed pending the creation of the Government of Southern Sudan, and may be further delayed due to the dispute whether the borders of the oil-producing areas are in the North or the South. Seeing that the agreement on oil revenue states that 50 percent of net oil revenue from "oil producing wells in southern Sudan" is to be

allocated to the Southern Government, such disagreements have the potential to delay disbursements of oil indefinitely (ICG 2005:18). This would seriously undermine the SPLM's ability to implement the peace accords.

Against this, the lack of political will on the side of the government has emerged as an added troubling obstacle in the implementation of The Naivasha Peace Agreement. The government must have realized that fundamental change would come at the expense of their special interests (ICG 2005:21). Given that Khartoum needed the peace accords and partnership with the SPLM in the short-term, especially to deflect international pressure over Darfur it can be argued that, from a government's point of view, Naivasha cannot represent a satisfactory medium-term solution. The concessions to the SPLM/A are so far-reaching that they represent a serious threat to the regime's political and economic base (Tull 2005). If the South would opt to secede, Khartoum would lose its grip on most of the oil fields and the associated revenues. The long list of Khartoum's broken promises should challenge all Sudanese forces and the international community to do everything possible to bring Naivasha's provisions to life as quickly as possible.



## 4.4 PEACE IN DARFUR?

There was a hope among the international community that the Naivasha peace agreement would act as a catalyst for resolving the Darfur conflict. On the contrary, the Darfur crisis has complicated the quest for peace and has added several pertinent issues which remained unresolved with the signing of the Naivasha Agreement. The agreement contains a number of provisions and models that could provide the basis for a political solution in Darfur. However, the continuing attacks on civilians by the Janjaweed militias as well as the violations of the ceasefire agreement and the emergence of new armed groups in both Darfur and the neighbouring Western Kordofan, shows that not all Sudan's problems can be resolved by a North-South agreement.

The government of Sudan had generally resisted any foreign interference in Darfur insisting that it was internal and sovereign affairs and should be handled as such. The government, however, welcomed the efforts of Chad to mediate the Darfur crisis (Cornwell 2004:50). Chad's role in the initial negotiations in 2003 between the government and the SLA and JEM was grossly flawed and counterproductive, as it consistently manipulated the process to satisfy Khartoum's demand of treating the crisis as an internal security problem, devoid of any political significance. The Chadian mediation's somewhat "clumsy diplomatic interventions" (Cornwell 2004:50) led to an ambiguous ceasefire agreement in April 2004 in the Chadian capital N'djamena. The outcome was a ceasefire agreement that failed to explicitly require the government to disarm and hold accountable its proxy Janjaweed militias in Darfur. It also afforded the government some cover from those international players eager to see the successful completion of the North-South peace process (Cornwell 2004:50).

The African Union's intervention in Darfur eclipsed Chad's role to some degree. The AU hosted talks between the government and the SLA and JEM in Abuja and placed a small force of military observers into Darfur. These AU-sponsored talks culminated on 9 November 2004 with the signature of protocols on humanitarian and security issues for the better implementation of the humanitarian ceasefire concluded in N'djamena (ICG 2005). The Abuja negotiations focused on four issues: humanitarian, security, political and socio-economic. Although agreement was reached on the humanitarian issues, the parties were far apart on the security protocol. The international community urged the SLA and JEM not to press maximum demand on the security issues because those were being dealt with in the UN Security Council resolutions and the AU Peace and Security Council (ICG 2005). The rebels adhered to this appeal but ten days later Security Council Resolution 1574 was passed in Nairobi. Previous resolutions had concentrated primarily on the Darfur conflict and threatened the Sudanese government with sanctions but Resolution 1574 did not repeat the government obligation to disarm the Janjaweed (Tull 2005). Nor has the AU yet expanded its force in Darfur and strengthened its mandate sufficiently to make a significant

improvement in security. The direct result of this was that both the government and the rebels launched new offensives.

Even though the government of Sudan is enforced to disarm the Janjaweed, it is unclear how much direct influence they still have on the militias and the processes in Darfur (Cornwell 2004:51). The question really is whether the current government possesses the means to disarm or neutralize the Janjaweed? Tull (2005) points to another possible threat to the peace process in Darfur. He is of the opinion that some of the NIF regime's hard-liners may well put up considerable resistance regarding any compromise on Darfur as it would be regarded as yet another defeat. It does seem that new political leadership of Sudan exhibits a distinct lack of political will to find a peaceful solution for Darfur. A political settlement would undoubtedly lead to renewed calls by Darfur and other marginalised groups for a modification of the Naivasha Agreement (Tull 2005). Whether the SPLM/A or the al-Bashir government would pay heed to demands which would reduce their power remains to be seen.

There is no doubt that the Darfur crisis has cast a shadow over the Naivasha peace process. Even though the signing of Naivasha has concluded one civil war in Sudan, it is still unclear how the IGAD peace negotiations can be used to bring about a resolution of the conflict in Darfur. While attention to the newfound peace is welcome, the Naivasha Agreement is unlikely to succeed unless the tragedy in Darfur is ended. And that will not happen as long as there is no challenge to the government's confidence that it can escape serious international repercussions for the atrocity crimes for which it is responsible and its failure to implement a series of solemn commitments.

# CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

## 5.1 SIMILARITIES

### 5.1.1 Political marginalisation

Both the conflicts in southern Sudan and Darfur have their origin in the decay of the Sudanese state; and in each case the Sudanese government's response has been the same. These wars should thus be viewed as the logical result of repressive government policies imposed by a state dominated by minority interests. The result of these dividing policies were culturally and regionally defined political marginalisation. The imposition of Arabism and Islam has become a means of nation building and those who do not identify with these pillars of 'national' identity have been politically marginalised and economically excluded. Therefore, political marginalisation and the coupled socio-economic grievances is an essential and similar factor in the conflicts of southern Sudan and Darfur.

In both the cases of the South and Darfur political marginalisation manifested in political exclusion. Local populations have been denied access to effective political representation and administration positions while its economic interests have long been disregarded. This, together with the lack of development efforts, weak central government control and the deliberate destabilisation of the traditional local administration in order to replace it with government-dominated institutions have contributed to the political distress in both regions (Ylönen 2005:125). The rebel groups in the South and in Darfur have demanded an end to the political and economic marginalisation and the lack of development in their respective areas. These demands have later been specified as calls for equitable development, land rights, education, health services, and local democracy.

In Sudan, the peripheral regions have suffered most from the deliberate political marginalisation. Not only have the South and Darfur been largely deprived of economic development but they have also been crippled by the extraction of resources by the central government. Political marginalisation is

used by Khartoum to safeguard its political and economic power, therefore government oppression and the coupled political grievances are intimately linked with the formation of the civil wars in Southern Sudan and Darfur.

### 5.1.2 Identity

Political marginalisation has led to a renewed awareness regarding identity. Another resemblance between the civil wars in southern Sudan and Darfur lies in the acute identity crisis resulting from a long history of stratification and discrimination and the coupled transformation of cultural identities into political identities through the practice of “state exclusive policy of citizenship in the post-colonial period” (Idris 2005). In both conflicts, the warring groups want to reassert their distinguishing characteristics which derive from a long history. Each side fights for particular ends, such as the lives of its people and their corporate identity and consciousness. Therefore, the politics of identity is one of the root causes in both wars and both the conflicts can be labeled identity wars.

One of the ends the South fights for is Africanism. The culture and value system of southern Sudan negate the possibility of assimilation into the Arab culture. Their religions are indigenous to Africa, while most of the educated elites and leaders are Christian with a Western orientation. The South share a history of devastating slave raids by Arab traders. This has served to deepen a consciousness of African identity among them and has brought about a general consensus of accepting and treating their territory as exclusively of African identity.

In Darfur, on the other hand, all parties involved in the conflict – whether referred to as Arab or African – are equally indigenous and equally black. All are Muslim and all are local (Mamdani 2004). Thus, the conflict in Darfur is the result of an identity repudiation. The non-Arab groups were always considered part of the Arab-Muslim identity the Sudanese government wanted to portray. Later on, these groups began to see that not only are they not the Arabs they have been projected to be, but they have actually been discriminated against on racial grounds.

Southern identity is grounded in a definite demarcation and a distinct “politics of belonging” (Brinkman 2003:196) where a cultural boundary is drawn between Southerners and Northerners. The collective identity in the South is further used as a resource to generate a sense of worthiness and acts as a form of mobilization to blacken and exert violence towards the Northern Arabic culture. Identity in the South is thus an instrument to highlight clearly the differences from the Arabian identity.

However, in Darfur identity has taken on a different dimension. Arabism was embraced by almost all the groups in Darfur and was never used to define groups. In fact, through the process of periodical migrations and the cultural practice of intermarriages between various cultural communities, a flexible cultural and social identity has been created that have blurred racial, cultural and religious boundaries. The Darfurian identity was for centuries stronger than any racial identity. Despite all this, Khartoum’s racialised policies have succeeded in sharpening the distinction and increasing the antipathy among different groups. This has lead to the politisation and racialisation of cultural differences between groups and ended in a war in which different identities are constantly redefined and reaffirmed within ethnic terms.

Pectora roborant cultus recti

### 5.1.3 Ethnic cleansing tactics

A third similarity between the South and Darfur is the ethnic cleansing tactics and policies the Sudanese government has adopted. While the situations in the South and in Darfur have obvious differences, such as the religious identities of the victims, the geographic location and the timing of the aggression, there are striking comparisons and parallels. In both Darfur and the Southern Sudan, the violence started with local rebellions. In the South, as in Darfur, the government was putting down the rebellion with wanton cruelty against the civil population. These armed attacks included bombings, massacres of unarmed villagers, sexual violence meted out to women, and the methodological destruction of villages (Kasfir 2005:195). Over a decade the Sudanese government killed over two million Southerners and displaced another five million more. It is estimated that around two hundred thousand

people have died in Darfur and nearly two million people have been displaced (Nordlinger 2005: 41) - astounding figures for a war that began only in 2003.

In both the South and in Darfur, the policies of the government have had racial and ethnic overtones and involved struggles over resources. In the South it is oil and in Darfur agricultural and grazing land. But more significantly, the government has been motivated in both cases by a radical Islamist agenda to impose its extreme religious beliefs. Khartoum waged a long “jihad” against the South in an attempt to Islamize and Arabize the region. Though the tribes in Darfur are Muslim, they are not of the same particular brand of Islam favoured by the NIF government. This has led to systematical discrimination against Darfur in providing development opportunities, government services and positions of power.

In Darfur, just as in the South, the government has shifted the blame from themselves to the tribal militias. The Southern conflict involved attacks that, while similar in character to the crisis in Darfur, were more limited in area and involved a few hundred or thousands of casualties, not the hundreds of thousands estimated in Darfur (Kasfir 2005:106). Militias were largely responsible for looting and destroying of economic assets, such as livestock and farms. In both conflicts it is apparent that the militias were allied with the government, formed part of the government’s strategy and were armed by them.

Deliberate mass starvation was the government’s most lethal weapon in the South. After the civilian population were driven from their land by the militias, Khartoum banned the distribution of humanitarian relief for varying lengths of time, resulting in a kind of “terror-famine” (Nordlinger 2005:39). The identical tactic of blocking humanitarian aid to the displaced is also occurring in Darfur.

## 5.2 DIFFERENCES

### 5.2.1 Resource war

One of the distinguishing differences between the two wars is that southern Sudan has developed into a war over natural resources. The civil war in southern Sudan had generally been regarded as a typical ethnic and religious conflict, but oil and water have added a new dimension. It has transformed the nature of the war from a classic ethnic strife into a resource war. Although some commentators argue that the war in Darfur can also be regarded as a resource war due to historical competition between the different groups over scarce land, water and other natural resources, it does not share the same strategic commodities compared to southern Sudan. For one, there is no oil in Darfur. (Some studies reported that there are some oil and natural gas deposits in the southern parts of Darfur, but nothing have been extracted yet).

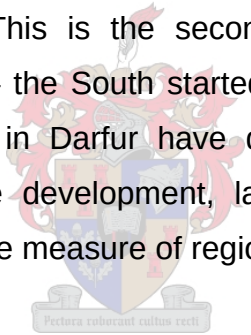
The discovery of oil has introduced new players, resources and new agendas that shifted the parameters of the north-south conflict in Sudan, and gave rise to new configurations of power among factions in both the north and south (Seymour 2001). Since oil is a source of power, the distributive issues raised by imminent oil revenue initiated new modes of uncompromising political conflict. Where inequality, political repression and ethnic divisions are the main grievances in the Darfur conflict, oil has replaced irreconcilable identities, racism, inter-ethnic feuding and the hegemonic tendencies of the Northern elite as the primary driver of the war in southern Sudan.

Another distinction between the resource conflict in southern Sudan and the war in Darfur is the alleged role played by external private-sector actors. The private involvement in the extraction of oil in southern Sudan have resulted in the internationalization of the southern war. While there is no evidence of private actors directly involved in Darfur, oil companies have been linked to state violence against local communities in the South. The correlation between planned corporate oil-exploration sites and subsequent Sudanese military offensives is striking. Military operations against rebel forces and military operations designed to secure the oil fields are not distinct from

another. In fact, indigenous rural communities are considered a security threat by military forces protecting oil company property. Companies such as the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Malaysia's Petronas have shown no regard for the humanitarian consequences of their operations and have readily cooperated with the government's counter-insurgency strategies. Human Rights Watch (2003) claims that Malaysia is implicated in covert arms transfer to Sudan. Similarly, China is Sudan's main arms patron and protects the Sudanese government in the UN Security Council.

### 5.2.2 Secession

Natural resources have been related to most of Africa's secessionist wars but southern Sudan is one of the exceptions. The conflict in the South erupted in 1956 as a separatist war in which anti-government movements advocated independence for the South, long before oil was discovered in Sudan (oil was only found in the 1970s). This is the second major difference between southern Sudan and Darfur – the South started as a secessionist war while neither of the rebel groups in Darfur have demanded self-determination. Instead, they seek equitable development, land rights, social and public services, democracy and some measure of regional autonomy.




The origin of the separatist movement stemmed from the arguments that the Southerners were suffering from a racial and cultural domination and assimilation by the Arabs of northern Sudan. It was alleged that the people from the South were being treated as 'slaves', without any culture worthy of respect, and that they were suffering from a 'harsher form of colonialism' simply by virtue of being and wanting to remain African (Heraclides 1987:222). In addition it was argued that the people of southern Sudan had an historical record of separate identity and resistance to any form of Arab intrusion. The separatist further protested that they were never consulted as to the fate of Southern Sudan after independence and that they had once more fallen victim to the machinations of the 'perfidious' and 'dastardly' Northerners (Heraclides 1987:218).

The secessionists, however, had no clearly defined or revolutionary ideology, other than black nationalism. This, together with nearly no economic viability, the lack of an articulate international campaign and ethnic rivalries and differences between southern politicians and rebel leaders discredited the Southern case for self-determination in the 1960s. Today, the SPLM/A had recast the war from secession to the liberation of the whole country. As a result, the SPLM/A is in contact with various aggrieved and marginalised non-Arab groups in the North, East and West, something which the secessionists of the first civil war had meticulously avoided. Furthermore, the rebel groups in both southern Sudan and Darfur advocate for a 'New Sudan'. This refers to a change in regime from the current Islamic fundamentalist, military dictatorship to a genuinely liberal democratic, secular state that respected all religions and cultures and sought to promote development for all of Sudan's people as well as limited autonomy for its major regions.

The most recent Comprehensive Peace Agreement has put Southern secession back on the agenda. The Agreement gives the south the right to decide through a referendum after a six year period whether to remain within a united Sudan or become fully independent. There is no doubt that at present, most Southerners would prefer the secessionist option. However, there is the possibility that, as Francis Deng (2004) has noted, "Southerners may be persuaded that, with a new Sudan emerging, their interest would be better served by being partners on the larger national scene rather than carving out a small piece of a potentially great nation"

### 5.2.3 International attention

A third difference between the two wars is the relative timely international attention to Darfur compared to southern Sudan. The first UN Security Council resolution on the Darfur issue was passed in July 2004, just over a year after the war started. This was preceded by fact-finding missions and advocacy work done by the missions of the UN High Commission for Human Rights, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Secretary General. A key difference between Darfur and the South is the international commission of inquiry, authorised by the UN Security Council, to conduct

investigations into serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law that have been committed, as well as identifying perpetrators of war crimes in Darfur.

Political commitment as well as continuous and determined diplomacy from the international community, notably the United States, the UK and the European Union, was another important feature. Furthermore, the AU made a significant appearance from the start of the Darfur crisis. They took over the role as the official mediator and send armed forces and monitors in on the ground, helping bring both the SLA and JEM into international talks.

In contrast, a second southern war has been going from 1983 and the first real international intervention in southern Sudan happened only in 1989, and then only through the UN-led Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) – a UN relief effort for those communities most affected by the fighting. The UN seemed oblivious to the war in southern Sudan. The first UN peacekeeping mission to Sudan (UNMIS) was established only in 2005 with the aim to support the implementation of the Naivasha Peace Agreement signed by the government and the SPLM/A, and also because the Security Council deemed the situation in Darfur to be a “threat to peace and human security”. The AU’s predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity, had not fared any better. Due to the OAU’s mandate not to interfere in the affairs of member states, the war in southern Sudan was left to continue unabated. It was only through the diligence of IGAD that peace negotiations eventually started in 1994.

The reasons why Darfur has attracted such timely international response is open for speculation. The most conspicuous explanation is oil. Sudan’s oil industry is mostly dominated by Chinese, Malaysian and Indian companies.
The 21 year civil war in the oil-rich South, as well as pressure from human rights activists have excluded Canadian and several European oil companies from the Sudanese oilfields while US sanctions against Sudan prohibited any American investments. Therefore, it was necessary to secure a peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the rebels as it would enable the US to lift its economic sanctions and give US and European

companies renewed access to Sudan's oil wealth. An informal cease-fire agreement was reached in 2002. However, the escalating crisis in Darfur threatened to ruin the North-South peace deal and prevent the opening up of the lucrative oilfields to the world powers. The result were an international condemnation of the conflict in Darfur. The US even started waving threats of UN sanctions against Sudan. But many of the Western governments' concern about the sharp humanitarian deterioration and intensified war in Darfur goes hand in hand with prospective oil matters.

Another explanation for the international response, especially from the AU, could be that the events Darfur gives the AU the opportunity to prove itself capable of managing African crises. The position taken by the AU – that this is an African problem to be solved by Africans – has put the AU at the centre-stage of all international effort at resolving the crisis. Darfur has presented the AU with the unique opportunity to re-write the poor record of its predecessor, the OAU, in conflict management and peacekeeping within the continent. Through its intervention in Sudan the AU is also eager to rid the reputation of weakness associated with the non-interference clause of the OAU. An effective and successful resolution in Darfur will reinstate international confidence in African conflict management and add authority to the AU as a credible organisation.

A third reason could be the threat of international terrorism. The events of September 11 and the war against terrorism gave a new focus to American efforts in the region. Sudan is considered a rogue state by the US because of its reputation to serve as a haven, meeting place, and training hub for a number of international terrorist organizations, including al-Qaeda, Hizballah and Hamas. These organizations have not carried out attacks within Sudan but planned and supported terrorism elsewhere. Sudan has been on the United States' list of states that sponsor terrorism since 1993, and the UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Sudan from 1996 to 2001 because of its involvement with terrorism. Therefore, the crisis in Darfur is of much concern to the US because of fears that the government's jihadist ideology can lead to Sudan becoming a recruiting ground for future terrorists. For now,

according to Andrew McGregor (2005), the insularity of Sudanese Islamism and a distrust of ambitious foreigners preclude active terrorist involvement in the Darfur crisis, but a sudden break in the security partnership with the US and the rest of the international community could see a return of foreign militants.

### 5.2.4 Summary

In sum, a comparison between the conflicts in southern Sudan and Darfur skews the notion of neatly compartmentalized theories with regard to the causes and motivations of civil wars. For the conflict in southern Sudan has had many stages, has been fought for various reasons and has evolved since fighting began in 1956. Even Darfur has transformed from a society where different groups were tied together by rules and laws to a society where ethnic groups hope and plan to eliminate each other. Sudan's conflicts highlights the limitations of any theory attempting to explain the complexities of the civil wars in terms of a tightly knit theory.

However, comparing the two conflicts do reveal that neither religion nor race is at the heart of Sudan's wars. Instead, it is a case of shared socio-economic and political grievances against an exploitative and abusive government. Given this reality, any attempt to end the political violence in Sudan has to confront the existing racialised and centralised state. The rebellion in Darfur against the domination from Khartoum has changed the traditional view that, because of Southerners anti-Islam and anti-Arabism stance, only South Sudanese have grievances against the governance of the country. Other actors in other parts of the country are also preparing themselves to turn simmering grievances into open conflict. Thus, the root of the insurgencies in Sudan is largely founded upon culturally and regionally imposed economic and political marginalisation, coupled with the politicization of ethnic identities.

The war in Darfur has showed that the over simplified characterization of North versus South or Arab versus African does not account for the insurgencies. Both wars are rather the result of a environment where the government's interpretation of religion has produced a counter productive

political climate of us-versus-them. This has led to a clash of identities where race is not anymore a “function of colour or features, but a state of mind and a case of self-determination” (Deng 2001).

The challenge for Sudan is to create a new consciousness of common identity and a new meaning of belonging that grants peace, dignity, development and fundamental human rights. This can only be achieved through political restructuring based on equality as well as viewing the peace process in terms of the whole country and moving beyond the North-South paradigm. Otherwise Sudan will, yet again, fall victim to regional rebellions and the devastating violence will continue.

## 5.3 LESSONS LEARNED

Perhaps the most significant lesson to be learned from Sudan is the difficulty in managing or resolving identity conflicts. The mere differences in race, ethnicity, culture or religion do not in themselves generate conflict. It is the discrimination on these grounds and disparities they create which are often the source of conflict. In many cases, the difference on which discrimination is based is usually a case of self-perception and imagined inequality, since there is always considerable integration between opposing groups. This is particularly true of Sudan where, despite subjective cleavages and some visible evidence of racial and cultural differences, there is a considerable racial and cultural intermingling between those who consider themselves Arab and those who are labeled African or Black.

As is the case with Sudan, most African countries face crises of identity in varying degrees. The problem is that no doctrine or formula has been developed for resolving or managing conflicts of identity. Sudan has showed that the dilemma of identity conflicts can not be resolved by obliteration, but calls for a sustained dialogue aimed at openly and courageously addressing the nature of the relations and ways of readjusting them to make and sustain peace.

Furthermore, the crisis in Darfur has shown that political solutions to crises should address the grievances and inequities of all the ethnic groups in a country. Everyone should benefit from the power and wealth sharing agreement. The number of potential “spoilers” in Sudan is high. The conflicts elsewhere in Sudan, e.g. Darfur, could potentially bring down the entire peace effort if war spreads or gain support among those who feel their own grievances have not been addressed.

Darfur has shown yet again that there is an urgent need to set up a mechanism to address the root causes of conflicts and provoke timely action by the UN Security Council to prevent social hatred spiraling into ethnic cleansing or genocide.

## 5.4 RELEVANCE OF THE METHODOLOGY

This study was a comparative study of the similarities and differences between the wars in Sudan and relied on descriptive and explanatory research. One of the qualities of the comparative approach is that it allows the researcher to identify and analyse the congruent attitudes, actions and behaviour that occurred within both wars. This methodology was used to explore and recognize the linkage between the two wars and the respective events that generated discontent and the coupled rebellions. The relevance of descriptive and explanatory research lies in the ability to show the nuanced sensitivity of both wars to cultural, socio-economic and political conditions. Furthermore, these methods place great explanatory importance on the actors, the factors and the issues in both wars, describing how each of these categories influenced the causally connected events that led to the final outcome of war.

This study did not have the opportunity to collect information first-hand and had to rely on already published sources. Therefore, something that could be added in the future when conducting studies like these, is the use of personal interviews, observations and surveys. This will result in more up to date information from a broader spectrum of sources. It further allows access to

information that is not publicly available, or that is too new to be found in the literature.

## 5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

One of the most important subjects for future studies will be to see if a country like Sudan can have more than one type of governance. Will it be possible to have a federal Islamic state with different regions governing themselves according to different principles, such as secular democracy? Can free expression and religious equality be guaranteed in a country scarred by religious extremism? This will imply the possibility of creating some of the western, eastern and northern regions of Sudan after the Southern model. It might well proof to be the best way to accommodate outstanding grievances.

A question that needs to be addressed in future is the notion regarding accountability for past human rights abuses. Currently, there are no provisions for any kind of justice mechanism in the North-South peace accord. This means that senior members in the Sudanese government responsible for heinous policies and abuses will get off scot-free. The question will then be: Should there be prosecution or punishment, a truth commission, compensation for victims, or should bygones be bygones when protracted civil wars are resolved?

Another subject will be the transformation of institutions that relied on a war-economy, such as the SPLM/A, to government structures and institutions of peace time that promote economic and social interactions among all the actors in the Sudanese economy. With this economic transformation goes the political transformation facing the SPLM/A of transforming itself from an autocratic rebel movement, fighting a protracted war in the bush, into a political party in a democratic government.

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