

STAND | digest

JUNE 2010 // standcanada.org

SUMMARY // CONTENTS //

HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY ■ The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) suspended its participation in the peace process signed in February 2010. Since February, the Sudanese army and JEM have clashed more 40 times in Darfur. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) continues security patrols after clashes. The number of UNAMID members killed in Darfur increased to 24 after two Egyptian peacekeepers were killed on May 7th. UNAMID announces peacekeepers will react robustly to defend themselves in the future. Sudan asked the Interpol to arrest JEM leader, Khalil Ibrahim. On May 18, three aid workers were abducted in Darfur and JEM released 44 prisoners for humanitarian reasons but warned of more attacks.

NEGOTIATIONS AND PEACE PROCESS ■ Incumbent President Omar al-Bashir of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) will remain in power following the democratic elections in Sudan which took place from April 11th to April 15th 2010. Having won the presidential seat with 68.2% of the overall vote, Bashir has expressed a desire to include all opposition parties in his new Government - merely excluding those parties who dropped out of the elections due to suspicions of fraudulent activities throughout the elections process. Despite this vision expressed by Bashir, many opposition parties and Darfuri rebel groups continue to question the legitimacy and democratic nature of these elections. Following JEM's resignation of participation in the Doha peace process on May 2nd, the Sudanese army has killed over one hundred insurgents and captured a key rebel stronghold area in West Darfur called Jebel Moon. Such concerns have been heightened

DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN SUDAN ■ The aftermath of the Sudanese elections has given way to a predictably unstable environment. With elections monitoring bodies such as the Carter Center calling the results of the past month's national elections dubious at best, electoral disputes and widespread crackdowns on opposition media have become prominent features of the Sudanese political landscape. South Sudan has been no exception with regard to this phenomenon.

DARFUR AND CANADIAN POLITICS ■ Lawrence Cannon has condemned a recent outbreak of violence in Darfur while the Canadian Forces will apparently not be participating in a peacekeeping mission to the Congo or anywhere else. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's controversial maternity health initiative has raised questions about Canada's foreign policy direction in Africa.

DRC: TROUBLE IN THE WEST ■ Tensions between the Congolese government and Canadian mining company First Quantum Minerals Ltd. United Nations Security Council voted unanimously on the withdrawal of up to 2,000 peacekeeping troops from the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) by 30 June 2010, which will also be the 50th anniversary of Congolese independence from Belgium.



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POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS //

- 1** In order to effectively prevent, monitor and address grave human rights abuses and mass atrocities, Stand calls on the Government of Canada to:
- Create a Sub-Committee for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity which should be attached to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

This would allow parliament to:

- **Monitor** the onset of genocide and crimes against humanity and keep MPs informed every step of the way
- **Prevention:** become proactive in its response to such crises, allowing MPs to act early and utilize a wider set of policy mechanisms
- **Coordination:** centralize Canada's institutional approach to the issue of mass atrocities by giving one central committee the mandate to comprehensively monitor, study and recommend courses of actions.

- 2** It is clear that the Sudanese elections held in April 2010 were neither free nor fair, and fell significantly short of international standards. Before the referendum on independence for South Sudan in January 2011 can take place, it is essential that progress be made to correct the irregularities and shortcomings experienced in the last election.

The following steps ought to be taken:

1. Prohibitions on freedoms of speech and assembly under the 1997 emergency laws Darfur need to be lifted to ensure fair campaigning and outreach
2. The National Security Law which gives government authorities the "power of detention without cause," must be revised or suspended before the referendum take place.
3. To improve the democratic deficit, increase voter education programs across the country through organizations like the Carter Centre and the National Democratic Institute (NRI).
4. Support efforts to train as many domestic observers as possible (it takes only 1 week to train a local observer).
5. Correct the logistical and technical problems experienced in the April national elections.
6. Send international observers to monitor the referendum process.

- 3** Civil society participation in the Darfur peace process is essential if a sustainable peace is to occur. The recent inclusion of Darfuri civil society in the Doha peace consultations in Nov 2009 was a positive step in the right direction but mired with impediments. As this process continues, the government of Canada should:

- 1) Ensure that Darfuri society is widely and fairly represented.
 - The first meeting was overrepresented with government National Congress Party (NCP) members as well as other war crimes perpetrators and underrepresented with Darfur diaspora, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and northern Darfur leaders.
- 2) Make sure that the government of Sudan is not imposing restrictions of any kind or hampering civil society members in any way from participation in the consultations.
 - The first meeting was hampered by bureaucratic delays, airport and airline restrictions as well as threats from the government of Sudan against some program participants (the underrepresented).

The best way to avoid these problems is if the Doha organizers define what is meant by civil society and impose specific criteria for member participation. Canada has the capacity to share its expertise about including civil society in public consultations.

NEGOTIATIONS AND PEACE PROCESS //

BY CHELSEA SAUVÉ

The Sudanese multiparty elections which took place from April 11th to April 15th 2010 were an essential component of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2005- the peace negotiation which ended the 21-year civil war between Northern and Southern Sudan.

The first set of democratic elections to occur within Sudan in 25 years, resulted in the re-election of incumbent President of the ruling National Congress Party (NCP), Omar al-Bashir, having won the presidential seat again with 68.2% of the overall vote. Bashir's opponent of the (Sudan People's Liberation Movement) SPLM, candidate Yasir Arman came second with 21.7% of the overall vote. Simultaneous elections took place in South Sudan where SPLM chairman Salva Kiir re-gained power with 93% of the vote - Kiir is currently the first Vice president to Bashir and the president of South Sudan. Kiir's opponent, Lam Akol received 7% of the vote.

Opposition parties and Darfuri rebel groups continue to question the legitimacy and democratic nature of these elections, and have accused the elections of having been fraudulent. It has been suggested that the elections may have been rigged to as to ensure Bashir's future power in an attempt to maintain Bashir's de facto power and consequently avoid the current demands by the ICC for his arrest based on accusations of warcrimes in Darfur. Others have suggested that Bashir's victory was aided by the withdrawal of his two most important challengers, former Prime Minister Sadiq Al- Mahdi, head of the Umma party, and Yasser Arman, the SPLM candidate of the North. Since the start of the April 11th elections, both parties have accused the ruling NCP headed by Bashir of fraud and vote rigging and therefore refused to take part in the process.

With the exception of those parties who chose not to participate in the elections process, Bashir has announced a desire to include all opposition parties in the future government of Sudan. This vision will include the participation of the

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) along with other opposition parties who participated in the electoral process. In addition to discussions of potential unity governments under the NCP, discussions of alliances in the South under the SPLM have been rampant. The alliance suggested by SPLM leader Kirr, seek to form a new political alliance with the aspirations of establishing a New Sudan which will support the southern Sudanese right to self-determination. In a post elections debriefing session held in Juba, the SPLM defined the political line that they will tow in the upcoming referendum of 2011 which will determine Souther Sudan's self determination. This debriefing also touched upon the future of the relationship shared by the SPLM and the NCP. In recent months the SPLM has accused its northern peace partner, the NCP of deliberately delaying the formation of the referendum commission. This has inclined the SPLM towards the possibility of holding the referendum in the absence of the NCP participation. However, in spite of evident tensions between the North and South, Bashir ensured that Sudan would hold the southern referendum "as scheduled" in his acceptance speech given in April of this year. Such an announcement was meant to ease fears that many observers have expressed, with regards to the return of warfare between the North and South if the referendum is not held on the set date of January 2011. These fears are predominantly related to sovereignty of rich oil reserves located in the South.

Suspicious concerning the credibility of the elections process have been furthered following the Sudan's National Elections Commission (NEC) acknowledgement of vote rigging in the East. The NEC is currently investigating a YouTube video which revealed two cases of vote rigging - the NEC vowed to prosecute those responsible. According to the US based Carter Centre, the elections were ridden with logistical problems and delays including polling stations opening late or not at all, misspelled names and/or names missing from registration lists as well as ballot boxes delivered to the wrong place. According to Carter Centre observers, domestic observers, party agents, and candidates, the Sudanese elections also perpetrated large-scale intimidation,

violence, flaws in administration, manipulation and has suggested that the NEC deliberately skews the results. Despite such observations of incidents which many have suggested Although observers have suggested fall short of international standards, the NEC have deemed the election results as being valid.

On May 2nd, the rebel group called the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) unilaterally disengaged from Doha peace process with the NCP government in protest of continued aerial and ground assaults orchestrated by the Sudanese army. Since JEM relinquished their participation in the peace process, the Sudanese army has killed over one hundred insurgents and captured a key rebel stronghold area in West Darfur called Jebel Moon. The Joint Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassole has appealed to both JEM and the Sudanese Army to foster the cessation of hostilities in order to create a suitable atmosphere to resume the peace process. Analysts have suggested that Bassole may be able to reverse the situation if he is successful in convincing the Sudanese government and JEM rebels to stop the fighting and sign a detailed ceasefire before they engage in discussions focused on the resumption of peace talks.

In addition to stressing the need for greater support and coordination from the international community, the African Union and the United Nations met in a joint meeting in Addis Ababa, where they called for a holistic approach to be taken in dealing with the various crises in Sudan. Both the African Union and the United Nations stressed the urgency of reaching a political agreement before the referendum concerning the sovereignty of Southern Sudan in January 2011. The AU and UN have also discussed the post electoral context and the peace process in Darfur. In other news, the Sudanese Ambassador to the United Nations, Abdel Mahmood Abdel Haleem was asked to return to Khartoum on May 6th. Abdel Haleem will likely be replaced by Dafalla Al-Haj Ali Osman who is an ambassador in the Sudanese foreign ministry. It has been suggested that this decision was primarily influenced by pressure from the United States special envoy Scott Gration. Gration's pressure

was a consequence of Abdel Haleem's continued opposition to the improvement of Sudanese-US relations. Meanwhile, Sudanese Presidential adviser, Mustafa Osman Ismail, recently travelled to Beirut, Lebanon to ensure Lebanese within the Security Council. The significance of Lebanese support has been relevant to Sudan since January 2010 when Lebanon was elected to a two year term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. In the hopes of gaining Lebanese support within the Security Council, Ismail spoke with Lebanese President Michel Suleiman and the Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri to brief them on the position of the Sudanese government on Darfur and implementation of the 2005 peace agreement.

HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

AND SECURITY //

BY SABRINA IRIARTE

On April 26, 2010, the Sudanese state electoral commission revealed the results of the elections in which Omar al-Bashir and Salva Kiir were both elected as presidents of Sudan and southern Sudan respectively.

On May 2, the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) suspended its participation in the peace process signed in Doha on February 23. Since February, the Sudanese army and JEM have clashed more than 40 in Darfur. The army confirmed the clashes in different statements and accused JEM of breaking the peace process. On May 20, Darfur rebels fought government troops in east Darfur, the latest in a wave of clashes. Suleiman Sandal, JEM commander, said they lost four soldiers while killing over 200 government soldiers.

After the end of clashes between government forces and JEM in North Darfur, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) resumed its security patrols and plans to send its teams to Jebel Moon to assess the security situation and to escort a humanitarian assessment mission. Sudan's state news agency,

Suna, said Sudanese police arrested two men suspected of killing two Egyptian peacekeepers during an ambush on May 7, 2010 in Darfur. The police are looking for the remaining members of the gang blamed for the ambush. Since 2008, a total of 24 UNAMID soldiers and police have been killed in ambushes, carjackings and other violent incidents. In response, Ibrahim Gambari, head of UNAMID and the African Union -United Nations Joint Special Representative in Darfur, said on May 11 that UNAMID peacekeepers will react robustly to defend themselves if they are attacked, and highlighted that "an attack on international peacekeepers is a war crime, a violation of international criminal law."

Sudan's justice minister, Abdel Basit Sabderat asked Interpol to arrest Khalil Ibrahim, leader of JEM. Days after, on May 19, Ibrahim was refused entry into Chad. In a statement, Sudan praised Chadian President Idriss Deby's commitment to the agreement not to allow any armed rebel movement to use its territory to launch attacks on Sudan.

Sudan's state minister for humanitarian affairs, Abdel Bagi Jaylani, told Reuters that three aid workers, two Sudanese and one American, were abducted in Darfur on May 18. Sam Hendricks, a U.N. spokesman in Khartoum, said eight armed men carjacked a two-vehicle convoy and took three aid workers with them just outside Nyala. On the same day, JEM released 44 army prisoners for humanitarian reasons but warned of more attacks. The prisoners were transported to el-Fasher by the International Committee of the Red Cross using U.N. World Food Programme helicopters.

DARFUR AND CANADIAN POLITICS //

BY JOHN MATCHIM

Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon recently issued a statement condemning recent fighting between the Government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement. The Sudanese air and ground assaults have prompted the JEM to walk away from peace talks, and come

only months after the February 23 peace accord between the Sudanese government and the preeminent Darfur rebel group. Cannon urged all parties to return to Doha for continued negotiations.

In Canada, new orders for General Andrew Leslie have settled recent speculation concerning Ottawa's post-Afghanistan military engagements, including possible deployments to Sudan or the Congo. Believed to be earmarked by the government to command a possible mission to the Congo, General Leslie has been instead ordered to oversee a policy transformation of the Canadian Forces following its return from Afghanistan.

The United Nations mission in the Congo is suffering from a lack of appropriate training and experience, and the UN is pleading for a larger Western presence. Governor-General Michaëlle Jean's recent visit to the Congo culminated with a plea by survivors of the Goma massacre to help end the violence. However, with the conflict lasting over a decade now and no central government presence in the rural regions, the United Nations would require significantly more manpower and a mandate tantamount to colonial administration to turn the situation around.

African aid groups are warning that Canada's approach to Africa lacks clear objectives and a recognizable framework. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's recent G8 interest in African maternal health only further confuses Canadian policy while also stirring controversy over his refusal to allow Canadian aid money to finance abortions. With other countries unveiling elaborate African policy agendas, notably Russia, India and China, Canada could find its influence rapidly shrinking.

DRC: TROUBLE IN THE WEST //

BY SARAH KATZ-LAVIGNE

The eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has long dominated news reports about the country, as the focal point of the violent conflict still affecting the country despite the official end of the country's second war in

2006. In recent months, however, it's the province of Equateur that has made headlines. One of Congo's westernmost provinces, Equateur is on the opposite side of the country from the often-discussed eastern region.

In April, Congolese human rights group Asadho reported that the Congolese army had killed at least 11 civilians, with a possible 31 more killed, in operations it conducted around early April to retake Mbandaka airport from a rebel group thought to belong to the Enyele community, a sub-group of the Lobala. The attack in early April, in which the Enyele militia group entered the provincial capital of Mbandaka, briefly taking over both the airport and the governor's office in Mbandaka, was the most audacious it had carried out to date. The offensive was pushed back by the Congolese army, with the assistance of the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC).

This is not the first time Equateur Province has been in the news of late. In the six months preceding April, almost 200,000 civilians were displaced from their homes as a result of fighting in Equateur. Last October, fighting broke out between youth from the Enyele community and members of the Boba tribe. At least 100,000 refugees still remain, displaced along the Oubangui River in the Republic of Congo, the DRC's neighbour to the west. At the heart of the violent conflict was said to be continuing tensions between the Lobala and Boba communities over local issues of socio-economic and political relevance, such as access to shared resources including fishing ponds. The rebel movement was then said to have swelled, leading to the April 2010 rebel attack on Mbandaka.

Despite the recent upsurge of violence in Equateur, the Congolese government is still continuing on its quest to have the MONUC mission withdraw from the western region of the Congo as early as June 2010. This would be consistent with a focus on the eastern region as the major epicentre of conflict in the country and the only area still in need of intervention by the MONUC mission in its concluding phases. Yet, if anything, the violence in Equateur is indicative not that the situation in eastern Congo is unique, nor that it is

exceptional. Rather a holistic approach is needed to examine the underlying issues leading to the outbreak of patterns of violence similar to those that have long held sway in the east. The importance of localised issues in leading to a larger dynamic of conflict and displacement is also a key factor in eastern Congo. So, too, is the evidence of abuses carried out against civilians by the Congolese army. In eastern DRC, the Congolese armed forces have long been known as one of the greatest human rights abusers in the region. Clearly, then, it would be unwise to consider the Equateur violence as an isolated outbreak without relevance for the eastern conflict – as the BBC does in a recent piece on the situation, noting that “the dispute in Mbandaka is separate from the unrest involving numerous armed groups in eastern DR Congo.” This may be so, but it would be unwise not to seek lessons from the east in understanding and dealing with the situation in Equateur.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN //

BY STEVEN CHUA

The aftermath of the Sudanese elections has given way to a predictably unstable environment. With elections monitoring bodies such as the Carter Center calling the results of the past month's national elections dubious at best, electoral disputes and widespread crackdowns on opposition media have become prominent features of the Sudanese political landscape. South Sudan has been no exception with regard to this phenomenon.

With respect to political news, the conclusion of the elections has been followed by widespread accusations of vote counting fraud and poorly executed polling procedures. The most credible of elections monitoring bodies, the Carter Center has called the vote tabulation “highly chaotic, non-transparent and vulnerable to electoral manipulation.” Furthermore, it recalls “accounts of intimidation, arbitrary detention and violence against election management, party agents and citizens” that were commonplace during the poll-

ing and counting process. Needless to say, such a post electoral atmosphere provides the breeding ground of armed conflict, which is indeed becoming one of the main concerns South Sudan. Army general George Athor provides a clear example of how the faulty polling process has been used as an excuse to resort to armed violence. Having lost his run for the governorship of Jonglei, Athor has accused the authorities of rigging the vote and has rallied a number of armed supporters (speculated to number at about 100) and has engaged the South Sudanese army four times to this date. In addition, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has accused the North of funding and arming a number of proxy militias in an attempt to destabilize the South. Yasir Arman, a prominent SPLM member, has claimed that this is an attempt of the North and it's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) to render the South incapable of voting for secession in next year's referendum. As a result, he has called upon the United Nations to verify and monitor Northern actions in hot spots in order to deter such actions. In light of all these ongoing events, Salva Kiir, the first elected president of South Sudan has been sworn into office.

However, political unrest has also taken the form of media censorship in South Sudan. Recently a South Sudanese minister reprimanded a UN radio station for holding an interview with rebel leader George Athor. In addition to voicing his displeasure, the minister asserted that he had the power to close down the station permanently and would exercise it if necessary. Needless to say, such a declaration has put the future of South Sudanese freedom of speech into question.

DARFUR DIGEST STAFF //

MANAGING EDITOR // EDITING DONE BY AUTHORS

EDITOR // DESIGNER // MOYA MILLER, DAVID SEAL

WRITERS // CHELSEA SAUVÉ, SABRINA IRIARTE, JOHN MATCHIM, SARAH KATZ-LAVIGNE, STEVEN CHUA

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