

TINABANTU

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Most African Leaders Have No Interest in a real African Union

Sanou Mbaye

The late President Mobutu Sese Seko of former Zaire once declared that the North African countries, which pride themselves on their Arabic descent, should be excluded from the then Organization of African Unity. Mobutu's rule was, of course, deeply flawed, but he was not alone within the Pan-African movement in such thinking. The antagonism between the blacks of sub-Saharan Africa and the inhabitants of the continent's north remains a reality that impedes the prospect of any union between them. Northern hostility, separatism, and racism toward the southerners are at the center of this split. However, in our current era of political correctness, outright separation between the north and the south remains unmentionable.

In declaring that Egypt was an Arab republic, President Gamel Abdel Nasser was falsifying history, erasing 3000 years of a culture neatly intertwined with black Africa. Indeed, for nearly three centuries, from 950 to 663 BC, black pharaohs and queens such as Tii from the "land of Kush" – today's black Sudan – ruled Egypt. More grotesquely, when the Americans decided to finance a film on the life of Anwar Sadat, the Egyptians objected because the actor chosen to play Sadat was black.

Similarly, when Morocco quit the OAU in 1984, it dreamed of European Union membership. Sudan's ruling class – descendants of Arab slaves – have no qualms about bombing, killing and displacing millions of their black citizens in the south and now in the Darfur region, with the backing of the Arab League. And when Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Khadafi, disappointed by the Pan-Arabism he advocated, turned to championing Pan-Africanism, his people continued to riot to chase out black immigrants. Mauritania's leaders quit ECOWAS, the West African regional grouping, to join the union formed by the North African countries.

These countries' attitude reflects that of the Arabs themselves. When al-Qaeda decided to take on the United States, it targeted the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing more than 260 people. With the exception of 12 US citizens, all were black civilians, while more than 4,000 Kenyans and Tanzanians were injured. Justifying the killings of black Africans, a leading Arab commentator invoked Stalin: "One can't make an omelet without breaking eggs."

In Saudi Arabia, the racism against black Muslims is so acute that one wonders if it is worth performing a pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of the Muslim faith. As a Muslim and a world traveler, I have never experienced as much ostracism as I did in Saudi Arabia as a pilgrim.

Why then, should sub-Saharan Africans keep alive the mirage of a union with the North African countries? The Egyptians, with a historical civilization second to none in terms of achievements in all walks of life, want desperately to associate with the Arabs, with whom they have no kinship other than colonization. Likewise, the other people of North African countries are Berbers who, less than half a century ago, were given cash incentives to learn Arabic.

The African Union needs thorough rethinking. Diversity must be a source of richness, not antagonism, and countries that favor the latter must be excluded. This would entail the dismantling of the African Union in its current form, which in any case is built on shaky grounds, since its designers seemed to favor plagiarizing the European Union – hardly a bureaucratic model worth emulating.

But African leaders have no interest in a real African Union. They derive their powers from the fragmentation of the continent, and one cannot expect them to renounce that stance for the sake of the well-being of the masses. Consequently, a United States of Africa would have to stem from the grassroots, through existing institutions of civil society like professional associations, trade unions, and other non-governmental organizations.

It is worth remembering that the people who were instrumental in establishing the best and most enduring union of states in history, the United States of America, were political activists, not heads of states. In Latin America, the only breakthrough that dented post-independence domination by the descendants of European colonizers came from a black freedom fighter and unifier, Simon Bolivar, who united the region before being forced into exile in Jamaica. Now, Bolivar has an heir in Hugo Chávez, and the Latin American political landscape is changing at breakneck speed under his inspiration and leadership.

Inspired leadership is crucial to any process of nation-building, and Africans should look to figures such as Bolivar, Martin Luther King, Jr., Georges Padmore, W.E.B. Dubois, Kwame Nkrumah, and Cheikh Anta Diop to mount a resistance movement against their mostly corrupt and incompetent leaders (a Herculean task, indeed). Only then could they fulfill the dream of a common African identity and the establishment of a United States of Africa.

Prosecuting Jim Crow's Ghosts: The Racist 'Past' Lives

Paul Street



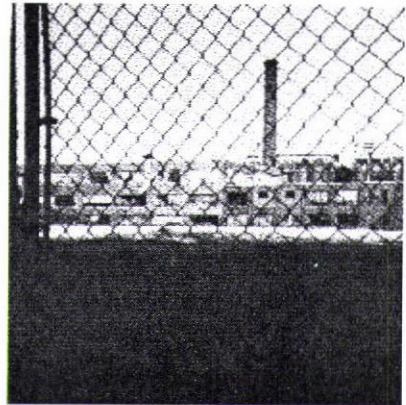
The FBI, which once covered up anti-Black crimes committed by its racist "informants" in the Deep South - and its own crimes against activists in the Black Freedom Movement - now vows to leave no stone unturned in a review of 100 cold-case murders in Dixie. Although justice delayed is better than murder with total impunity, there is also the danger that white America will conclude that racism is finally a problem of the "past," to be buried with the dead. Meanwhile, institutional racism is alive and well, daily deforming and limiting the life-prospects of millions.

"The main problem is a failure to distinguish adequately between overt 'state-of-mind' racism and covert institutional, societal, and 'state-of-being' racism."

'Justice to the End'

The fifty- to sixty-year-old ghosts of racial terrorism in the late Jim Crow South are making some interesting news lately. According to NBC, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has reviewed at least 100 cold cases involving racist white murders committed in the United States South during the 1950s and 1960s. A dozen are currently under active investigation, the FBI claims.

As the Associated Press reported two weeks ago, FBI Director Robert Mueller is vowing to "pursue justice to the



end...no matter how long it takes" to resolve unsolved racially motivated slayings from the middle of the last century.

There's already been some serious action on such killings. The FBI recently brought charges against James Ford Seale, a 71-year-old white Southerner accused of participating in the kidnapping and murder of two black men (Charles Eddie Moore and Henry Dee) in 1964 in southwest Mississippi. Last June, an 80-year-old former Ku Klux Klansman named Edgar Ray Killen was convicted of manslaughter in the butchering of three civil workers in Mississippi in 1964.

In 2001 and 2002, the white Southern racists, Bobby Frank Cherry and Thomas Blanton, were convicted of killing four black girls in the bombing of a Birmingham, Alabama church in the fall of 1963(3).

Nobody concerned about racial, social and human justice should be unhappy to see racists in their seventies and eighties facing the music for horrible crimes committed many decades ago. Let would-be racist murderers fear that they will be haunted by their possible crimes into old age.

Too Little, Too Late

Still, there are three basic problems with, or downsides to, the convictions of geriatric, white, southern racist killers like Seale, Killen, Cherry and Blanton. The first, most obvious and irremediable problem is that the punishment is too little, too late. The racist murderers have lived most of their lives without paying appropriate penalties for horrible transgressions. If Killen dies at age eighty-five, he will have served just six years after living free for forty-three years, after killing three fellow human beings who were trying to advance racial equality.

Racism's Different Levels

"This deeper racism has an equally ancient history that has outlived the explicit, open and public racism of the past."

The second problem is both less obvious and more remediable. It has to do with the fact that the dominant nature and form of racial oppression in the U.S. has shifted in the U.S. since the 1960s, thanks in part to the welcome but double-edged victories of the civil rights movement.

The main problem with conventional white wisdom is that it insinuates that racism no longer poses relevant barriers to blacks in post-Civil Rights America is a failure to distinguish adequately between overt "state-of-mind" racism and covert institutional, societal, and "state-of-being" racism.

The first variety of racism has a long and sordid history. It includes such actions, policies and practices as the burning of black homes and black churches, the murder of "uppity" blacks and civil rights workers, the public use of derogatory racial slurs and epithets, the open banning of blacks from numerous occupations, the open political disenfranchisement of blacks and the open segregation of public facilities by race. It is largely defeated, outlawed and discredited in the US.

The second variety lives on, with terrible consequences. It involves the more impersonal operation of social, economic and institutional forces and processes that both reflect and shape the related processes of capitalism in ways that "just happen" but nonetheless serve to reproduce black disadvantage in numerous interrelated key sectors of American life. It includes racially segregating real estate and home-lending practices, residential "white flight" (from black neighbors), statistical racial discrimination in hiring and promotion, the systematic under-funding and under-equipping of schools predominately attended by

blacks relative to schools predominately attended by whites, the disproportionate surveillance, arrest and incarceration of blacks and much more.

Richly enabled by policymakers who commonly declare allegiance to anti-racist ideals, this deeper racism has an equally ancient history that has outlived the explicit, open and public racism of the past and the passage of justly cherished civil rights legislation. It does not necessarily involve individual white bigotry or even subtly prejudiced "ill will" against blacks. Consciously or even unconsciously prejudiced white actors are not necessarily required and black actors are more than welcome to help enforce the New Age societal racism of the post-King era. This entrenched, enduring, and more concealed societal racism does not depend on racist intent in order to exist as a relevant social and political phenomenon. It only needs to produce racially disparate outcomes through the operation of objectively racialized processes. It critically includes a pivotal failure and/or refusal to acknowledge, address, and reverse, the living (present and future) windfall bestowed on sections of the white community by "past" racist structures, policies and practices that blatantly discriminated blacks.

"Black actors are more than welcome to help enforce the New Age societal racism of the post-King era."

The racism that matters most today does not require a large portion of the white population to be consciously and willfully prejudiced against blacks or any other racial minority. "State-of-being" or structural racism generates racially disparate results even without racist intent - "state-of-mind" racism - on the part of white actors. It oppressed blacks with objectively racialized social processes that work in "routine" and "ordinary" fashion to sustain racial hierarchy and white supremacy often and typically without white, racist hostility or purpose. As Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton perceptively noted at the beginning of their book *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*:

"Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutionalized racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be recorded by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. The second type operates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first type."

Carmichael and Hamilton illustrated their distinction between overt-"individual" racism and covert-"institutionalized" racism with some compelling historical examples:

"When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of the society. But when in that same city - Birmingham, Alabama - five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, shelter and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutionalized racism. When a black family moves into a home in a white neighborhood and is stoned, burned or routed out, they are victims of an overt act of individual racism which many people will condemn - at least in words. But it is institutional racism that keeps black people locked in dilapidated slum tenements, subject to the daily prey of exploitative slumlords, merchants, loan sharks and discriminatory real estate agents. The society either pretends it does not know of this latter situation, or is in fact incapable of doing anything meaningful about it."



The Ironic Price of Past Victory

Sadly, the fact that level-one (overt) racism has been defeated while the deeper racism survives is not just a matter of the social and racial justice glass being half-full. It's more complicated than that. The second and deeper level of racial oppression may actually be strengthened by civil rights victories and related black upward mobility into the middle and upper classes insofar as those victories and achievements encourage the illusion that racism has disappeared and that the only obstacles left to African-American success and equality are internal to individual blacks and their community - the idea that, in Derrick Bell's phrase, "the indolence of blacks rather than the injustice of whites explains the socioeconomic gaps separating the races."

"The second and deeper level of racial oppression may actually be strengthened by civil rights victories and related black upward mobility."

"It's hard," Leonard Steinhorn and Barbara Diggs-Brown have noted, "to blame people" for believing (falsely in Steinhorn and Diggs-Brown's view) that racism is dead in America "when our public life is filled with repeated affirmations of the integration ideal

and our ostensible progress towards achieving it." In a similar vein, Sheryl Cashin notes that "there are [now] enough examples of successful middle-class African-Americans to make many whites believe that blacks have reached parity with them. The fact that some blacks now lead powerful mainstream institutions offers evidence to whites that racial barriers have been eliminated; the issue now is individual effort."

Furthermore white-run culture, and its regular rituals of self-congratulation over the defeat of overt, level-one racism - the Martin Luther King national holiday, the playing of King's "I Have a Dream" speech over school sound systems and on television, the routine reference to integrationist ideals in political speeches, etc. - tend to reinforce the dominant white sentiment that the United States no longer has much of anything to answer for in regard to its treatment of black America.

Belated though it may be, the prosecution and conviction of older white, racist killers from the dying days of the Jim Crow South reinforces the ritual cultural denial about the living and even deepening racism that matters most in the post-Civil Rights era - the one that "operates in the operation of established and

respected forces in the society." "See," some whites are certainly concluding, "the U.S. is so militantly opposed to racism that we even prosecute these old Klan types at the end of their lives."

'Long Ago' Racism Still Matters: The Living Windfall of Not-So 'Past' Racism

The third problem is that the pursuit and conviction of these ancient Deep South killers tends to reinforce the ubiquitous white American notion that racism is something from the now relatively irrelevant and distant past, and something that existed only, or at least, mainly beneath the Mason Dixon line. "Wow," contemporary Americans are encouraged to say, "the U.S. used to have some really terrible racism down South. It's good we got our racial house together and fixed all that. Too bad some of the worst perpetrators managed to live into their seventies and eighties without being punished. Still, King would be gratified to see people like Killen getting prosecuted, and with good reason."

"King and others were deeply concerned that the defeat of open segregation and racial terrorism in the South would reinforce the white majority's tendency to avoid more covert and nation-wide forms of racial oppression."

Reality is more complex. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders were actually most concerned by the middle 1960s, about the deeper institutional and societal racism that existed across the entire country - a racism that is still very much alive and well today. King and others were deeply concerned that the defeat of open segregation and racial terrorism in the South would reinforce the white majority's tendency to avoid more covert and nation-wide forms of racial oppression while encouraging whites to falsely conclude that all the United States' racial problems had been solved.

At the same time, it is critical to note that the older, more open racism of the long pre-Civil Rights past continues to cast more than just an incidental shadow over contemporary racial inequalities. Most white Americans object strenuously to the idea that "past racial discrimination matters in the present." But, as anyone who examines capitalism in an honest way knows, what people get from the present and future so-called "free market" is very much about what and how much they bring to that market from the past.

"Long ago" racism continues to exact a major cost on current-day black Americans, raising the question of whether unresolved historical inequity is really "past." Slavery and then Jim Crow segregation in the South and for that matter the open racial terrorism, discrimination and apartheid imposed on black northerners in places like Chicago and Detroit "long ago" continue to shape present-day racial inequality.

As Michael K. Brown and his colleagues note in their study *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society*, racial "inequalities are cumulative, a fact adherents of the new public wisdom on race ignore in their rush to celebrate [racial] progress." Because the "inequalities accumulate over time," the authors argue, the distinction frequently made by "racial conservatives" between "past and present racism" is often inadequate and deceptive."

The ongoing need for historical acknowledgement and correction, commonly called reparations, is developed quite well in the following useful analogy advanced by political scientist Roy L. Brooks:

"Two persons - one white and the other black - are playing a game of poker. The game has been in progress for some 300 years. One player - the white one - has been cheating during much of this time, but now announces: 'from this day forward, there will be a new game with new players and no more cheating.' Hopeful but suspicious, the black player responds, 'that's great. I've been waiting to hear you say that for 300 years. Let me ask you, what are you going to do with all those poker chips that you have stacked up on your side of the table all these years?' 'Well,' said the white player, somewhat bewildered by the question, 'they are going to stay right here, of course.' 'That's unfair,' snaps the black player. 'The new white player

will benefit from your past cheating. Where's the equality in that?' 'But you can't realistically expect me to redistribute the poker chips along racial lines when we are trying to move away from considerations of race and when the future offers no guarantees to anyone,' insists the white player. 'And surely,' he continues, 'redistributing the poker chips would punish individuals for something they did not do. Punish me, not the innocents!' Emotionally exhausted, the black player answers, 'but the innocents will reap a racial windfall.'"

Seen against the backdrop of Brooks' living "racial windfall," there is something significantly racist about the widespread white assumption that the broader white majority society owes African-Americans nothing in the way of special, ongoing compensation for singular black disadvantages, resulting from past explicit racism.

Roy Brooks' surplus "chips" are not quaint but irrelevant hangovers from "days gone by." They are weapons of racial oppression in the present and future.

The common, negative, white reaction to the notion that whites should pay through programs like affirmative action or even reparations for slavery and discrimination that took place before they were born is typically accompanied by the admonition to "let bygones be bygones." "The unjust enrichment gained by whites over centuries should be forgotten," the argument runs, even though, as sociologist Joel Feagin noted in 2000, "some black Americans are [still] only a couple of generations removed from their enslaved ancestors" and "the near slavery of legal segregation only came to an end in the 1960s, well within the lifetimes of many Americans alive today." As Brooks and Feagin argue, even if the contemporary socioeconomic system had become free of racial discrimination and bias in its current operation, compensatory programs, including reparations, would be required to undo the racially disparate historical "windfall" and thereby generate actual equality of opportunity for African-Americans. Official public "apologies" for slavery, like the one recently issued by the state of Virginia, cannot change this harsh reality.

"The very distinction between past and present racism ought perhaps to be considered part of the ideological superstructure of contemporary white supremacy."

Given what is well known about the relationship between historically accumulated resources and current and future success, the very distinction between past and present racism ought perhaps to be considered part of the ideological superstructure of contemporary white supremacy functioning as an ongoing barrier to black advancement and equality.

It is important to remember that the explicit and overt southern racism whose defense turned Killen, Seale, Cherry and Blanton into killers was about more than the sadistic infliction of racial terror in and of itself. That open racism served and enforced the economic exploitation and material subordination of southern blacks. That long exploitation gave rise to a historically cumulative racial wealth and power gap whereby contemporary disparities are deeply fed by past inequalities.

In addition, reflecting and feeding present, racial inequalities, the post-Civil Rights United States currently conducts a giant program of racial reparations in reverse. Under the regime of mass black incarceration, droves of younger black males serve as the essential raw material for "economic development" in predominantly white and rural prison towns. Most of them serve time and carry the crippling lifelong mark of a felony record for drug and/or drug-related activities that do not lead to prison in most of the rest of the world. Many spend much of their adult lives moving in and out of deadly "correctional" facilities, including some of the same prisons that now warehouse Killen et al. at the end of their lives, enjoyed until long after the commission of truly terrible crimes.

The Policies of De-Nubianization in Egypt and Sudan: An Ancient People on the Brink of Extinction

M.J. Hashim

Introduction

This paper deals with the officially explicit and implicit policies aimed at marginalizing the Nubians in both Egypt and the Sudan by, first, driving them away from their historical homelands by systematically impoverishing their region; secondly, re-settling Arab groups in the lands the Nubians left behind; thirdly, pushing the Nubians into Arabization through biased educational curricula at the expense of their own languages and culture; fourth, nursing a culture of complicity among the Nubian intellectuals so as to help facilitate these policies. Three cases will be discussed in this regard; (1) the case of the governor of Asuan, Egypt (the capital of the Nubian region in southern Egypt) in granting leases of land and built homes to non-Nubians; these are the lands from where the Nubians were evacuated under the pretext of building the High Dam in 1964. So far, the incessant complaints of Nubians have fell on deaf ears. 2) The official guarantees made by the then Minister of Interior of the Sudan (General-Brigadier Abdul Rahim Muhammad Husain- presently the Minister of Defense) to the Egyptians regarding the safety of Arab settlers from Egypt into the Nubian basin in northern Sudan. 3) The recent decision taken by the minister of Education in the northern State, forbidding Nubian pupils from uttering a word in Nubian languages within the precinct of the schools.

The paper will also draw on the racist Arab culture toward Nubians, in both countries with special emphasis on Egypt. It will discuss the racist, anti-black approach of Egyptian policies toward Nubians in particular. Concerning Sudan, it will draw attention to the fact that the unethical premises of the slave trade are lurking behind the scene, targeting non-Arab people in general. This paper discusses the recent massacre of Sudanese refugees in Cairo on December 30th 2005, at the footstep of the UNHCR office, and in front of the cameras of international media.

In conclusion, the paper will shed light on how it is possible, and predictable for Nubians in both Egypt and Sudan to join the rising tide of ethnic rebellion in Sudan, thus holding Egypt accountable, along with the Islamo-Arabist regime of Sudan. It concludes with certain recommendations for this conference to adopt.

The De-Population of the Nubian Region in Sudan and Egypt

In 1964 the construction of the High Dam in Aswan was completed, a project that resulted in an area of 500 km along the Nile course (310 km in Egypt, 190 km in the Sudan) being submerged under the reservoir. The reservoir, i.e. the lake, bears two names, 'Lake Nasser' in Egypt, and 'Lake Nubia' in the Sudan. This has led to the resettlement of about 16500 Nubian families in Egypt (with a similar number of Nubian families on the Sudan side) away from their historical lands. In the case of Egyptian Nubians, the area resettlement was a barren place called Koum Ambo near Aswan. In the case of the Sudanese Nubians the area of resettlement was a place called Khashm al-Girba in middle-eastern Sudan, known to be of rainy autumn, contrary to the Saharan Nubian region.

In 1963 the Aswan Regional Planning Authority (ARPA) was founded by the Egyptian government to be developed in 1966 upon recommendations from both the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) into Lake Nasser Development Centre with a Six Year Plan. In lieu of project findings, the High Dam Development Authority was established in 1975. Developmental planning has continued up to the present time with constant help from the UNDP. Two economical activities have been available to the local people; namely fishery and agriculture. In this regard it is worth mentioning that the majority of the either the fishers or the farmers are not Nubians, but rather are people coming from other areas with the encouragement of the Egyptian government which monopolizes marketing (for fishery, *cf.* Lassaily-Jacob, 1990; for agriculture, *cf.* Fernea & Rouchdy, 1991).

The main question here is why the Egyptian and Sudanese government evacuated the area if they were keen on development. No development, even the most mechanized, can be achieved without man power. The Nubians were driven away from their historical home lands on the bank of the Nile at gunpoint. This experience has proved to be very traumatic to them, a matter that their endeavours to go back and resume living in their old villages have been reflected in their vocal music and songs (Mannan, 1990). A new genre of songs of homesickness has been developed of which the late Hamza Eldin (1929-2006) with his melancholic melodies and music stands as an example (*cf.* www.hamzaeldin.com).

The anti-developmental nature of the depopulation of the Nubian region is demonstrated by the fact that a scheme of compensation had been implemented to redeem the evacuated Nubians. A true developmental approach to the whole project could have been achieved. Nubians could have remained in their historical lands at the banks of Lake Nubia, with new houses built in the same characteristic, architectural and decorative design (*cf.* Wenzil, 1970). With such an approach one would not be in need for compensation. Even so, the compensation was not enough, as usual in such cases, even though some scholars and officials might argue against that (for the case of Egyptian Nubians, see Fahim, 1972; for the case of the Sudanese Nubians, see Dafalla, 1975).

The Non-Nubian Re-Population of the Region

The Nubians in both Egypt and the Sudan did make many attempts to go back and establish small colonies of settlements and agriculture. They farmed the drawdown areas by pumping water from the reservoir (Fernea & Rouchdy, 1991). However, all these attempts were occasionally aborted by the fluctuating water

level of the reservoir, an action the Nubians believe to be intentionally driven by the authorities who never encouraged them to go back.

By the 1990s, the Egyptian government began following a policy of repopulating the evacuated Nubian regions. It began encouraging Egyptians, other than Nubians, to settle in the evacuated areas around the reservoir lake. It did this while the Nubians were kept away from their own historical lands, living in a pigsty-style of life in their barren area of Koum Ambo. The same thing happened in the Sudan, with tacit encouragement from the government to the Arab Bedouin, who began settling in the evacuated area. The repopulation of the Nubian region in Egypt has become an official policy entrusted to both the Minister of Agriculture and the Military Governor of Aswan. Villages with full facilities and utilities were built by the Egyptian government and distributed to individuals and families from outside the regions with bank loans to start with. The latest development in this regard is the inauguration of the settlement at the old Nubian village of Kalabsha with 150 non-Nubian families, which was opened by the Minister of Agriculture Amin Abaza (*cf. al-Wafd Newspaper*, 18/05/2006). On 11/06/2006 the *Al-Hram Newspaper* (the unofficial voice of the government) announced that tens of thousands of feddans were to be distributed in the Nubian region to people other than Nubians. When the Nubians demanded that their lands be returned to them, they received an arrogant reply from the military Governor of Aswan: "If you want your lands, go fetch them beneath the water (*cf. Rajab al-Murshidi in Rousa al Yousef Newspaper*: www.rosaonline.net)

At the same time, Nubians who were striving to build their own colonies and farms in their old lands began facing obstacles. No one from the international community has come to help Nubians in Egypt. They began voicing their problems through the internet, making use of numerous Nubian websites, which mostly revolve around home-villages bearing their names (*cf. www.abirtabag.net; www.jazeratsai.com; www.karma2.com; www.3amara.com; www.nubian-forum.com/vb; www.nunubian.com*).

This racist and Apartheid-like policy has been adopted by the Egyptian government in order to contain the discontent among its Arab population who had been negatively affected by the 1992 Agricultural Law, which came into effect in 1997. This law liberalized land rental and tenure by returning it to its old feudal owners, thus compelling the peasants to re-hire it all, with the threat of rental price increases looming over their heads. During the 1990s the price actually tripled, and recently quadrupled (Roudart, 2000/1). This caused turmoil and unrest among peasants who began seeking other jobs. Migration of peasants to other areas where agricultural schemes existed for reclaimed land, away from their home village, was encouraged by the government. The Egyptian government adopted a policy of inter-migration so as to solve (1) it's the ever-increasing problem of a population explosion, and (2) to compensate those who had been negatively affected by its land liberalization law. Re-settlement in the reclaimed land of the New Valley in Sinai was officially encouraged, a matter the peasants were not enthusiastic about. Reliant on river rain throughout history, such a move was too much for them. That is how the Egyptian government began re-settling them in Nubian regions which were evacuated four decades ago, against the will of its historical people, the Nubians. In doing this, the Egyptian government is consciously pushing Nubians into being completely assimilated and Arabized, a policy pursued by successive Egyptian governments.

The Settlement of Egyptian Peasants in the Nubian Region in Sudan

Those who were affected by the construction of the High Dam, like their brethren in Egypt, were evacuated from their land and resettled in the Eastern region. The environment in their new home was completely different than that of their old home. However, only one third of them were affected by the High Dam, where two thirds of the land still remain unaffected in the old region. Being severely underdeveloped, the Nubian region continued to expel its people to the extent that whole villages are almost empty at present.

In late 2003 news leaked out revealing that high level negotiations with the Egyptian government had been made so as to facilitate the settlement of millions of Egyptian peasants, along with their families, in the triangle of the Nubian basin, Halfa-Dungula-'Uwēnāt. The aim of this move is said to safeguard the Arab identity of Sudan against the growing awareness of Africanism in Sudan generally and among the Nubians in particular. The Sudanese delegation, which was backed by a Presidential mandate, was led by Arabist Nubians, General-Brigadier Abdul Rahim Muhammad Husain (then Minister of Interior, presently Minister of Defense). A cover-up plan named "the Four Freedoms" which theoretically allows the Sudanese and the Egyptians to own agrarian lands and settle in both countries was officially declared. The cover-up plan has come out half cooked as both parties were too eager in their scrambling to create a *de facto* situation before the Nubians became aware of what was going on. There is no agrarian land to be owned by Sudanese investors in Egypt. But there is land for the Egyptians in the Sudan. On 31/03/2005 a mainsheet press release from the State Minister of Agriculture in Khartoum (Dr. al-Sadig Amara, an Arabist Nubian as well) revealed that 6.1 Million feddans in the triangle of Nubian basin had been sold to the Egyptians (investors and peasants) with long term leases, i.e. investment through settlement (*cf. al-Sahafa Newspaper*, No. 3892). There is no mention of the Nubians in any of the deals which seem as though they were drafted overnight.

In official visits to Cairo, the two ministers mentioned above held meetings with Egyptian scholars and intellectuals who were sceptical about the viability of resettling millions of Egyptian peasants in the Sudan. Such a scheme, applied in Iraq a few years ago during the war against Iran, resulted in the physical elimination of the peasants immediately after the war ended. However the two flamboyant ministers chivalrously gave their solemn pledges reminding their audience that they are backed Presidential mandate.

The Minister of Defense went out of his way in challenging his audience to bring forward their solutions about tackling the population explosion in Egypt, if not by migrating to the vast areas of the sparsely populated Northern Sudan. Furthermore, lamenting the fact that the Egyptian migration to the Sudan has significantly diminished in the late decades after independence, he drew the comparison that the migration from West Africa has steadily increased. The State Minister on his behalf lamented the hesitation of some Egyptian intellectuals and officials, urging them to expedite moving to the Nubian basin before [*sic*] other people move there first (for more details, see: <http://www.ahram.org.eg/archive/Inde> ; another source of information is also: <http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/ahram/2001/1/1/CONF20.HTM>).

As the Nubian Memo to Kofi Annan (*cf. Hashim, 2006*) stated, the Egyptians wanted the area of the reservoir completely depopulated of its indigenous people (i.e. all the Nubians affected in both the Sudan and Egypt). Disrupting the Nubian society of Northern Sudan and Southern Egypt has been a target for the governments of both countries as the Nubians constitute the only African entity on the Nile from Kōsti and Sinnār, up the White and Blue Niles respectively, down to the Mediterranean Sea.

The silencing of an Ancient Tongue: Don't speak Nubian

Nubian languages, like all national languages in the Sudan, are on the brink of extinction (*cf.* Hashim & Bell, 2005). The state not only did nothing to help enhance and promote national languages, but also looked at them as a threat to national unity. Of over 100 national languages in the Sudan (*cf.* Hurreiz & Bell, 1975), not a single one of them has been recognized by the state. State-supported Arabic is encroaching at the expense of a dying national language. Successive governments of post-Independent Sudan have never heeded the calls from concerned bodies such as UNESCO (*cf.* UNESCO, 1988; for recent reference, see: <http://www.unesco.org/most/ln2lin.htm#resources>) for using the national language as means of instruction, especially in primary levels.

Nubian languages, especially the ancient form which was used during the Christian kingdoms, have been in use as the official language of the state and in daily use for centuries, from the 6th century to the present (*cf.* Hashim & Bell, 2004). However the toll of the systematic onslaught on the national languages that has been going on for the last six centuries has begun to show.

On the 27th May 2006, Nubians in the Sudan were shocked to discover that the regional Minister of Education in the Northern state had given explicit orders that no Nubian pupil utter a word from the Nubian language, within the precinct of the schools. For decades, right from the beginning of the 20th century, Nubian languages were challenged by the Arabic-oriented school administrations using the infamous Ottoman Turkish Mijidi piaster (*cf.* Hashim, Forthcoming). The obsolete piaster was to be hung from a string, on the neck of the pupil who dared saying a word from the Nubian language inside the school (they were mostly boarding schools). The piaster was to be passed to another pupil only when caught speaking one of the world's ancient languages. Checked twice a day, in the morning and the evening, the holder of the piaster was severely punished; four strong pupils would be summoned to hold the *'culprit's'* [*sic*] hands and feet, while being lashed, ten times. However, this practice stopped as a result of growing protests from the Nubian public two decades ago..

This recent phenomena of official and systematic cultural persecution has caused an outcry by Nubians at home and in the Diaspora, and has gone on without the interference of the international community. The Islamo-Arab government, on federal and regional levels, has not acknowledged increasing protests from Nubians, highlighted by President Omer al-Bashir's arrogance in the early 1990s: "We have assumed power with arms; those who want power, or want to share it, should be men and fight for it". Consequently, the marginalized African people of Sudan in Dar Fur, West Sudan, and the Beja in the East have taken to arms one after the other (with prospect of others in the North following them soon) in order to protect themselves from state-sponsored projects of systematic cultural assimilation, impoverishment and persecution. Before the coup by the Islamic junta on the 30th June 1898, the war zone was confined to the southern region of the South, Nuba Mountains and Ingassana Mountains. However, Nubians in the far North have not joined the rebellion yet. Civil war for the marginalized African people of Sudan was not an alternative but rather a matter of necessity; they were pushed into it by an arrogant regime. Unfortunately this regime now enjoys Anglo-American support whose intervention does little to address the problems within the government and presses the fighting groups to reach with it an agreement that does not solve their problem. Such agreements inject new blood in a regime that has outlived its days.

The ‘culling’ of Sudanese Refugees in Cairo

In 1990, a year after the coup of the Islamic junta, waves of Sudanese refugees swarmed into Egypt and in Cairo in particular. That was expected and most of the Western countries, which were the prime destination for refugees, closed their doors to them. Western countries did this because of the high cost of supporting waves of refugees who, every body knew, would never go back to the Sudan, as they were seeking permanent settlement in the West. On the other hand Egypt offered nothing to them. Furthermore there was no work available for them there, even the lowest paid jobs. However, by 1995, there were about 4 million Sudanese refugees in Egypt. This was inevitable, as Egypt was the only country granting them asylum. But it was only a matter of days before Sudanese refugees discovered that they fled from the prisons in their own regime to prisons in Egypt. The Egyptian government made it clear to the Western embassies in Cairo that no Sudanese refugee should be given a visa from Cairo. There was good reason for this: such an act would increase the flow of refugees into Egypt.

Then why did the Egyptian authorities open the door for them in the first place? And how did those refugees, while receiving nothing from the Egyptian government manage to support themselves? They were mostly families, with women, old folk and children. The answers to these questions will not only reveal one of the worst exploitations of the misfortunes that befall people, but also reveal the Master-Slave mentality that still characterizes Egyptian conduct concerning Sudan, and the whole of black Africa. The forsaken refugees relied ultimately on money transferred to them from their relations, whether from the rich, petroleum Arab countries or from the West. In 1999, in a visit to Cairo, the present writer was shocked to know that it was common knowledge to every Sudanese and Egyptian intellectual alike, that the hard currency earned by in-land revenue from the money transferred to the Sudanese refugees was much more than that earned from the Suez Canal. That was not the whole story. The money, which was usually transferred by fax, i.e. to be cashed immediately when the answer-back is received, was held by the banks for months before releasing it. The answer to this delay was that they did not receive the money. This answer was given to the claimants who had the faxed ‘answer-back’ documentation in their hands, faxed to them by their relatives as a document to prove that the money was there in Cairo, in the safes of the Egyptian banks. Holding the money in that way could have never continued for years if it was not sanctioned by the Egyptian government in its policy to make the best out of the Sudanese calamities. In that visit, and in another earlier in 1994, the present writer left Cairo for Khartoum without cashing money sent to him from Saudi Arabia. My visits were too short for such a difficult mission; in each one, I *only* stayed for one month.

By 1998 the international community and the UN became aware of the Egyptian ghetto set up for Sudanese refugees. The UNHCR began a programme of resettlement for the Sudanese refugees congregated in Cairo. The biggest Diaspora in the history of the Sudan had begun gathering as refugees were dispersed all over the globe, especially in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and South America. By 2003, there were only a few thousands of them left in Cairo, a majority of which had already been registered in the UNHCR Cairo office. Those were mostly from southern Sudan, Dar Fur, Nuba Mountains and many other areas of the Sudan. By 2004, with the development of the peace negotiation that was brokered mainly by the USA, UK and Norway, this pressurized the rebel groups to reach a settlement with the present Islamic regime, interest by the UNHCR in the refugees began decreased. This gave the Cairo office, which was manned by Egyptians, a free hand in dealing with the situation. It resorted to a well designed plan of faked ineptitude, pretending to be local staff who did not

have any power. However, international staff were present and they were all Egyptians. As a result of this hopeless situation, most of the refugees, either headed back to Sudan to try another exit, or out of helplessness, resigned by staying in Cairo believing in the meek promises, made by the Egyptian staff at the UNHCR office that things would eventually be sorted.

In fact those who continued to stay were the poorest as they did not have a financial support base. They ultimately relied on the UNHCR. They were also the ones with genuine cases, mostly originating from the conflict zones of the South, Nuba Mountains, Ingassana Mountains, the Beja in eastern Sudan and Dar Fur in western Sudan. This made them a real burden to the Egyptian society and government who allegedly discovered that the refugees were filthy black Africans infested with Aids and a host of infective disease. With the Naivasha agreement, which was reached between the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the present regime in May 2004, the UNHCR Cairo office bluntly told the refugees that their cases had consequently lost its. It told them to go back to their country as there was no war. The 'Egyptianized' international body pretended not to be aware that the wars were not confined to southern Sudan, which was not safe for civilians. The poor of the poor were left to their own in the streets of Cairo, penniless, where they were looked upon with the disgust and contempt, typical of how an Arab slaver behaves towards a slave who behaves like a free person.

On the 29th of September 2005, a group of homeless refugees decided to stay overnight at UNHCR office grounds. A few days later the number began increasing as there was no where to go to. They eventually decided to protest at the footsteps of the UNHCR offices. This prompted the other refugees, who had shelter, to join the picket. In one week, there were 3000 refugees picketing. A camp committee was then organized. They kept a vigil for more than three months, with well organized feeding, hygiene and sleeping, activities, places assigned to women and children along with the old. Neither alcohol nor drunken people were allowed into the camp.

While hatred and contempt continued building up against the picket of the refugees, the international office in Cairo completely identified with the Egyptian public and senior officials within the UN, ironically headed by a puppet black African. It could be argued that the UN was simply waiting for the refugees to get killed so as to draft a well worded statement expressing shock and concern and then doing its best to contain the situation (*cf.* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4570446.stm>).

Just before midnight on the 30th December 2005, police forces and military troops supported by tanks, began gathering and forming a cordon around the refugee camp. A delegation from the refugee camp tried to contact the police leadership to enquire about the reason for this cordon, to no avail. The troops then fired water canons (in the early hours of a winter dawn). Then the gendarme stormed the camp of more than 12 thousand inhabitants, wielding truncheons and stamping people. The only thing the refugees could do in response was performing prayer (Islamic and Christian as well), with others chanting religious hymns aloud.

The massacre caused an international outcry, with no condemnation of those responsible. It was well covered by international media. Egypt's first move was to down play the whole event by falsifying the number of the dead, which they brought down to 29. However, the true number as revealed by counting the dead in the various morgues in Cairo brought the number to about 280. The Sudanese government shocked the free world when, instead of condemning the killing of its own citizens, condoned what the Egyptian government did. Later Egyptian officials revealed that the Sudanese government was informed about what it was going to do, and they agreed. That was not all. The injured, including those with minor injuries, happened to pass away once admitted to hospitals. Rumours had it that they were literally *put*

down in the theater, under anesthesia, after having removed any internal organ deemed useful for transplant.

However, what was most insulting was the timing. This massacre of Sudanese refugees took place on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Independence Day of Sudan. The Egyptian regime could not be more cynical and more vindictive. The message was clear: independence or no independence, you are still our slaves. While ordinary Sudanese people were fuming with anger and humiliation, the political parties were going out of their way to rationalize what the Egyptians did. The irony was that Egypt was the first state to recognize the Islamic coup d'état of Sudan in June 1989, which plotted to assassinate its President, Hosny Mubarak in Addis Ababa in the mid 1990s. This prompted Egypt to sponsor the political opposition while working tacitly towards taming the wild Islamic regime. Dreading the idea of having a democracy in the Sudan, according to Egypt, a totalitarian regime in the Sudan is convenient for correspondence, despite ideological differences. The regime is keen to appease Egypt. The opposition, confirmed by many Sudanese observers, has been recorded as having remained silent in condemning either the massacre of the refugees, or the Egyptian occupation of Sudanese land, because they have been on the payroll of their self-chosen exile in Egypt.

Well, isn't it slavery all over again?

Conclusion:

This paper concludes by demanding that the systematic and official obliteration of the identity of the Nubians in both Egypt and the Sudan, as represented by the sale of their historical lands on the bank of the Nile, and oppressing their languages should stop immediately. Egyptian and Sudanese Nubians must have the right and priority to go back to their historical villages. The two states in Egypt and the Sudan must do everything possible to protect the Nubians against any encroachment of other ethnic groups into their lands unless it takes place in a natural and peaceful way, and does not make Nubians feel that they are being targeted and endangered. The international community is called upon to offer support and solidarity. This paper draws attention to the fact that selling the Nubian basin in Northern Sudan by this present regime to Egyptians, in order to facilitate the settlement of Arabized, Egyptian peasants will turn that region into a civil war zone. The paper urges the conference to condemn this move in its endeavours, and to enhance peace and reparation.

The paper also demands that this conference includes in its programmes of reparation the Cairo massacre of December 30th 2005. The paper demands that this conference calls for an independent and international investigation into the circumstances that led to the killing of Sudanese refugees. The least that can be done to honour the dead is to know their numbers. Let us not forget that those people were killed while wearing the badge of the UNHCR. Compensations should be paid to those who suffered, whether by losing a member/s of their family/s or by injury and the traumatic experience. Furthermore, their resettlement should be resumed.

The paper urges this esteemed conference to adopt a resolution which effectively includes the points mentioned above. Let us be clear about reparation; there will be no reparation if the grievances have not been addressed.

About the Paper

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In Search of Congo's Coltan

Mvemba Phezo Dizolele

Bukavu is perched high above Lake Kivu, gently encroaching on the placid body of water between Rwanda and Congo. Once known as the pearl of Congo because of its beautiful climate and mountains, the Bukavu I found last summer (2005) barely resembles the famed city I heard about as a child.

In the past ten years, South Kivu province and its capital city of Bukavu have been known for two things; insecurity and coltan. I came for both. In anticipation of the country's first multiparty elections in four decades, I wanted to understand the potential effect of insecurity on the elections and learn first-hand the role minerals such as coltan play in fueling insecurity.

Four times the size of France, and as big as the United States east of the Mississippi river, Congo holds 80 percent of the world's reserves of coltan, a heat-resistant mineral ore widely used in cellular phones, laptop computers and video games. The ore derives its name from a contraction of columbium-tantalite, the scientific nomenclature.

Columbium-tantalite is so vital to the high tech industry that without it, wireless communication as we know it would not exist. Refined coltan yields tantalum, which is used primarily for the production of capacitors, critical for the control of the flow of current in miniature circuit boards. Tantalum is also used in the aviation and atomic energy industries. Even though it has been exploited for years, this mineral did not come to prominence among the uninitiated until the "coltan rush" of the late 1990's. At the beginning of 2000, a pound of unprocessed coltan cost between US\$30 and US\$40 on the international market. By the end of the year, the price had risen tenfold to US\$400.

The advent of a new generation of mobile phones, the upsurge of tech products, and the popularity of video games such as Sony Playstation 2 increased demand for the ore to unprecedented levels and drove prices to new heights. Hoping to make money, thousands of Congolese men rushed to the mines.

Insecurity welcomes me as soon I exit Bukavu's Kavumu airport. On the way to town, we pass a couple of United Nations peacekeepers' camps – South Africans, Pakistanis and others. On the rest of the road, we see the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo*, known among the people as FARDC.

The FARDC does not inspire trust. Far from a typical army, it is a patchwork of various militias that fought each other not so long ago and still treat each other with suspicion. They idle at the market, smoke at the street corner or fight for public transportation with civilians. They are always armed, do not receive regular pay, and beg whenever they get a chance. Above all, they are hungry and mean. The FARDC seems to own the 35 kilometer-road to town. The bad condition of the road mirrors the collapse of Congo's infrastructure and reflects the failure of the State, which is unable to provide the minimum of public

service. It takes over an hour to reach the center of town and I see no sign of coltan's wealth. It is an old beat up city.

By the end of 2001, coltan overproduction and the subsequent decrease in demand drove prices down to their previous level. Adam Smith's invisible hand did its job. A few international traders made a fortune and militia leaders stuffed their war chests and foreign bank accounts. Local miners, however, only had their dreams for trophy. Coltan perks had evaporated long before I arrived in town.

Bukavu mimics Congo's problems. Like the country, South Kivu has unlimited potential, from its physical beauty to hydro-electrical capacity to human and natural resources. Yet, conflict, mismanagement and corruption prevent the region from benefiting from these riches.

"If you want to understand what has gone wrong in Congo," says Thomas Nziratimana of the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) and vice-governor of South Kivu in charge of finance, economy and development, "You start with the way the country has been run so far. Despotic regimes cannot attract investors. They create tensions that do not make anyone feel safe to come and invest."

Congo has had its share of dictatorships, war and civil unrest. From 1965 to 1997, the late Mobutu Sese Seko presided over a kleptocracy - a predatory regime that benefited a few members of the political elite, bankrupted the rich country and left its population in misery.

"In the past we have had a highly centralized system where everything went to Kinshasa, the capital, yet the provinces were very productive. This has continued today," reflects Nziratimana. "Eighty-five percent of the income generated in South Kivu is sent to Kinshasa and nothing remains here, nothing."

The kleptocratic culture did not end with Mobutu's fall. In May 1997, Laurent-Désiré Kabila forced Mobutu into exile and became president. A former pro-Lumumba guerilla fighter who had trained along side Che Guevara in the hills of eastern Congo in the 1960's, Kabila launched his rebellion from South Kivu with the support of neighboring Rwanda and Uganda in 1996. Bukavu served as his rear base and suffered great damage in human and infrastructure terms during the fighting.

In the new Kabila regime power remained in the hands of a few cronies who amassed wealth for themselves à la Mobutu. A new millionaire class emerged overnight as Congo sank deeper into misery. In 1998, after Kabila fell out of grace with his backers in Uganda and Rwanda, these two countries invaded Congo in an attempt to overthrow him. A multinational war followed, with Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia intervening on Kabila's side. Unable to unseat Kabila, Rwanda and Uganda chose to support a second rebellion in eastern Congo.

In 2001, following Laurent-Désiré's assassination, his son Joseph assumed the presidency. The city did not recover from the suffering. Neither did the country. The conflict partitioned the country. Supported by Uganda, Jean-Pierre Bemba's Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo ruled over northern Congo, from east to west. Rwanda-backed RCD militiamen controlled eastern Congo for five years until a series of peace accords brought a transitional government in Kinshasa, which included leaders of various warring factions.

Rwandan occupation years also coincided with the coltan boom years. In fact, while neither Rwanda nor Uganda have gold, diamond or coltan deposits of significance, both countries have become important exporters of these minerals. A 2003 United Nations Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources accused both countries of prolonging the civil war so that they could illegally siphon off Congo's wealth with the help of Western corporations.

This second rebellion, which has claimed over 4.4 million lives, has made Congo's conflict the deadliest in the world since World War II. Mineral exploitation was one of the driving forces behind the war and the proliferation of militias; some of these militiamen still operate in the region and control mining areas.

When I inquire of the people how to get to a coltan mine, I receive different versions of the same response. "It's too dangerous out there," they say. "There is too much insecurity. We advise you, 'don't go to the mines'." For several days, I tried to arrange a trip to the mines and found nobody to take me. My search eventually takes me to the city's Ibanda neighborhood, to the backyard of a two-story house that someone converted into offices. Olive Depot is one of the largest coltan companies in town, but to my surprise, it is unimpressive. Considering the publicity coltan has received recently in Western media, I expected a large processing center – an imposing edifice with complex machines and engineers barking orders to their foremen. Instead, I found the most rudimentary of processing systems, two dozen men working with their hands and playing with dirt like children. No one barked orders. They worked in silence, interrupted only by the sound of their own movements.

My attention turns to several men squatting down and playing with dirt – black dirt – in a medium-sized hangar. "That is coltan," says my guide Alexis Mushaka, a metallurgical engineer. "Are you joking?" I ask. That dirt in front of me could not be the highly-prized coltan, the bloody ore that fueled the conflict and the subject of several UN investigations. "No, I am serious," Mushaka responds as he motions me to follow him to the hangar.

The men give us a quick look and return to their business. They are covered in dust, coltan. A couple of them sift through a large bowl of dirt and blow on the dust, which falls on their faces. It looks terrible. Most of them do not wear any mask. Neither do they wear any uniform. They also do not wear shoes, perhaps by choice. I do not ask. They work in silence and quietly listen to Mushaka explain the process to me.

"First, the négociant brings the coltan from the mine," he says and points to a white sack of dark brown dirt on the floor. "He sells it here and then these fellows start the separation process." The process means the men in the hangar have to separate all impurities from the product itself. "Deep in that dirt is coltan or its sister products of cassiterite and wolframite," Mushaka continues, "and they will have to find it." The end product looks like crushed gravel. He beckons me to the other side of the hangar where a man dressed in a tank top and shorts sits on the floor, working with two small piles of black dirt. "Look, he is holding a magnet in his hand," Mushaka says. "He is separating iron from the rest. The bag of cassiterite comes with all kinds of other minerals. They need to get all of them out."

When I ask the men what type of work contract they have, I learn that most of them have no contract. Every morning a large group of laborers lines up outside the compound's gate and ask for work. Few are chosen and the rest are sent home. They make less than US\$1 a day. "If we did not have this job, we will have no work," says one of them when I ask why they accept to work in these conditions.

The négociant's situation is not much different. As the middleman, he is very much at the mercy of the depot. "They wait until their merchandise is processed before they are paid," Mushaka explains when I ask how a négociant sells his load. "The tonnage they bring does not equate their pay. It shrinks quite a bit after the impurities are sorted out."

The négociant who arrives while I visit the depot says most of the time he is in the red. When asked why he still deals coltan considering his losses, his response reflects what the average Congolese worker in any profession says. "If I did not do this, then what else?" he retorts. He makes US\$1.59 per pound.

On the international market, coltan costs between US\$8 and US\$18 per pound. If anyone still makes any money with coltan, it's the processing depot and the other dealers on the international market. The final product is exported via Kigali in Rwanda to the ports of Mombassa and Dar-es-Salaam where it is shipped overseas.

The coltan business underscores the failure of the State. Beyond a new mining code adopted by the transitional government, which imposes a high tax rate on businesses and investors, the government has not undertaken any serious initiative to formalize the coltan industry, as is the case with other resources such as copper, cobalt and zinc.

"There is an issue with taxes these days," says Nzojusa Belembo, director at Olive. "During the RCD rebellion, there was an exportation monopoly through a local company called SOMINGL. Companies paid a fixed tax, regardless of the product price fluctuation. Everyone benefited." After a pause, Belembo continues. "It is simple. We have porous borders," he says. "You can cross the river to Rwanda with coltan in your pocket. They offer better prices there. Our legislation encourages fraud."

The visit at the Olive Depot did not prepare me for what I saw at the mines. Dug on the steep flank of a high mountain, Mushangi mines are located about 90 kilometers west of Bukavu. Driving as fast as we could on an arduous road, the trip took two hours. The mines are 15 kilometers from the Nzibira area where several militias have operated, including the Interahamwe and the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda. The FARDC also has a post in the vicinity, which is not encouraging either. Insecurity required that we brought armed guards with us.

At Mushangi, a treacherous path leads to the mines where we find only a handful of adults. The mines are exploited by children of all ages, working in precarious conditions. From sunrise to sunset, they toil in open pits with the most primitive tools and no protection from falling rocks and mudslides. They crawl through dark tunnels with no structural support.

In my travel across Congo, I have seen a great deal of suffering. Watching children crawl through those pits and tunnels tested my resolve. Ten-year old Bashizi tells me, "I do this hard work because my father is too old to support me." He has been doing it for several months. "That is the only thing there is to do around here," he says. The children swarm around us, seeking attention and asking to be photographed. I snap several pictures as I speak with them and hear their stories. Through my lens, I see lost childhoods and broken dreams. Images from my own youth in a different Congo flash before my eyes when I push the button.

We ask 16-year old Baruti and his friends whether they understand where their coltan goes from Mushangi. "It goes to Bukavu," they say. "Do you know coltan is highly prized in America and Europe? It is needed for computers, mobile phones and video games," I follow. "No," Baruti replies. Their world revolves around the open-pits where they spend seven days a week and make less than 20 cents a day.

One last question before we leave for Bukavu. It is three in the afternoon, and that is late to be out here. "Do you understand that the exploitation of coltan fuels the conflict in Congo?" I inquire. Baruti looks at me straight in the eye and answers, "If we knew that, we would no longer work here."

Darfur: A Wake Up Call for Africa

Harakati Shaka Lumumba

Introduction

In September 2004, in an interview with an Arab media house, Professor Ali Mazrui made the following statement:

I do believe that the African People and the Arab People are, at the moment, two people in the process of becoming one. So the process has been underway for centuries and they will, one day, be virtually indistinguishable, but at the moment it is a continuum, rather than a dichotomy.

For those of us who have been closely following the Arab world's fascist plan for the African continent, this was quite a revealing statement.

The plan is fascist because it ultimately foresees the genealogical transformation of Africans into Arabs! To quote Mazrui again, in the interview mentioned above;

...that Egypt has had four Presidents since the Revolution of 1952 and two of them would have been regarded as Black in the United States: Mohammed Naguib and Anwar Sadat would have been regarded as black in the United States because both of them had Black ancestors and, in the case of Sadat, had a Black parent. They would have become Black under this system in the US, but under the genealogical system of the Arab World became subject to upward genealogical mobility. They were co-opted upward.

This theme of genealogical superiority of Arabs vis-à-vis Africans, for Mazrui, did not start with the September 2004 interview. In an even earlier interview, in his defence of the Arab-led slavery of Africans, Mazrui had this to say:

“Many children of slave mothers become Arabs, they move upwards, you see. So the entire system is different from here. There is biological cooptation into the ruling race...where so many of the people descended from slaves become part of the master race.”

Responding to the above statement, Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah, the Director of the Centre for the Advanced Studies of African Society, asked Mazrui:

Who decided that Africans wanted "biological cooptation into the ruling race" or African "slaves become part of the master race"? In whose interest was all this social engineering conducted? Your language chafes and rubs rather badly, with uncomfortable and ghoulish reminders of some ideologues of the 20th century many will prefer to forget. I am well aware of the fact that "many children of slave mothers become Arabs"... Indeed, we know only too well from the example of the Sudan and parts of the Afro-Arab borderlands that oftentimes, the "coopted" Arabs are more vicious towards Africans than those who coopted them. Is the Arabization of Africans a "move upwards"?

As Gerard Prunier has pointed out in his book *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*, the “Arabs” in the Sudan are unsure about the purity of their Arab credentials, which tends to make them all the more touchy about these being respected.

It is in light of this “social engineering” advocated by the likes of Mazrui that we need to look at what is going on in Darfur.

Sudan – An African Country

While only 39% of Sudan’s population considers itself as “Arab”, the ruling elite in Khartoum have presented Sudan as an “Arab” country and most international bodies and scholars have believed the lie!

Taking into account that Arabism in Sudan is a socio-cultural construct, only a minority of those considering themselves as “Arab” are indeed true Arabs. A story is told in Darfur about an “Arab” who went to seek medical attention in a health facility run by a Saudi Arabian charity. When asked by the Saudi doctor what his tribe was, he confidently replied “Arab”. He was totally caught off-guard by the response of the doctor: “If you are Arab, then what am I?”

There is no limit to the extent to which “Arab” Sudanese will go to becoming “congruent” with the racial identity that they have adopted. In his quite revealing article *The Crisis of Identity in Northern Sudan: A Dilemma of a Black People with a White Culture*, Al Baqir al-Afif Mukhtar says:

... An individual lacking in the standard features normally seeks to compensate or complement them. And because marriage offers these individuals an opportunity to compensate and complement, the average Northerner aspires and seeks, as far as possible, to marry a partner who is closer to the standard features and colour (what Mazrui would refer to as “marrying up”). Such a union gives the individual an immediate compensation for his or her

darkness and offers an opportunity of recovery from it in his or her offspring...

The average Northerner views dark colour as a problem that should be dealt with. Whereas females deal with it directly through local or imported colour lighteners, males usually resort to indirect methods, i.e. a conjugal union with a light-coloured partner.

The reality of the matter is that Sudan is a minority-ruled country, much like South Africa during the apartheid era. Understanding this fact will be the beginning of finding a lasting solution, not only to the current conflict in Darfur but to the problems bedevilling the whole of the Sudan.

Race as the Main Factor in the Current Darfur Conflict

All writings on the current conflict in Darfur have avoided the race factor as one avoids a plague. Yet, it is only in the acknowledgement of race as the main factor in the conflict that we can embark on finding a lasting solution. A number of scholars and experts on Darfur have started calling attention to the race factor.

In an article appropriately titled *Darfur People: Too Black for the Arab-Islamic Project of Sudan*, Dr Abdullahi Osman el-Tom, an eminent son of Darfur, points out that since independence in 1956, Sudan has been packaged to both insiders and outsiders as an outright Arab-Islamic country, that the ruling class in the Sudan have pursued this project with impeccable rigour, impertinent and oblivious to its consequences, and that this Arab-Islamic project has proceeded unhindered and survived irrespective of the democratic, socialist, military or religious credentials of the government of the day. The chosen Arab-Islamic identity is not only a symbolic tag but rather that it is a discourse through which the entire Sudan can be managed and ordered into specific social relations.

Al Baqir, in the article cited earlier, has pointed out how the North, feeling that it is Arab and Muslim, has always sought to define the whole country in these terms and resists any attempts by the non-Arab segment of the country to identify Sudan with black Africa.

Dr Moses Ebe Ochonu, an African scholar based in the United States, characterized Professor Iliya Harik's (an Arab scholar also based in the US) rendering of the crisis in Darfur as,

an intolerable simplification and trivialization of a racist genocide being systematically carried out by the Arabized government in Khartoum but also an inexplicable attempt to dilute the fact that race, even if it is mediated by culture, is at the heart of the crisis in Darfur.What I do know is that in both its practical expression and its tragic consequences, the attitude of the Arabized Northern Sudanese people and their government towards Darfur is racist, and that the racist script unfolding in that part of Africa is sustained by an undying adherence to historical claims of Arab superiority over black Africans.

Mr Adeen AbdelRahman Yousif, a young African nationalist from Darfur, in a speech honoring Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, the Chairman of Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO) and recipient of the 2005 Human Rights First Award, had this to say of the role of race in the Darfur conflict:

...we have to be ready to bring all stakeholders to and to put all issues on the table, even those considered taboo. As our brother and eminent son of Sudan Francis Mading Deng once said, 'What divides us is what we don't talk about'... . . . We have to raise and discuss issues concerning what Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah calls tensions in the Afro-Arab Borderlands, the problem of Darfur being an extreme manifestation of these tensions. . . . We have to confront the crucial issue of Arab Racism.

Gerard Prunier, in his book *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide* had this to say on the race factor in the Darfur conflict:

So what was the real logic of the war...? The answer was blunt and was related to a word which Nazism, the demise of colonialism and the development of scientific anthropology have marginalized into intellectual exile and political opprobrium: the word "race". . . . in the 1980s Colonel Gaddafi and Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi gave an answer: Darfur was poor and backward because it was insufficiently Arabized. It had missed out in the great adhesion to the Muslim umma because its Islam was primitive and insufficiently Arabic. . . . The situation was pregnant with the potential for enormous destruction because it fitted only too well within the broader context of racial prejudice in the Sudan.

While the international community has tried to avoid the race factor, both the perpetrators and victims of the conflict in Darfur have always recognized the central role of race in this conflict. In reports detailing the activities of the dreaded Janjaweed, the attackers portray themselves as "Arabs" and the civilians that they are attacking are called "Blacks" or "slaves". From the perception of the victims, mainly Fur, Masaleit, and Zaghawa, the genocide and related atrocities "are attempts to drive all "Africans" away from Darfur".

From the foregoing evidence, the argument that race is at the heart of the Darfur crisis is sustained.

The Arab World's Designs on the African Continent

What is happening in Darfur is part of a wider scheme that some in the Arab world have hatched to turn the African continent into an Arab one. Ali Mazrui has even coined a name for an Arabized Africa – *Afrabia*.

While this scheme has been in the making since the coming into contact of the Arabs with the African continent in the 7th century, the scheme went into high gear following the Islam in Africa Conference organized by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and held in Abuja, Nigeria from 24 to 28 November 1989. In his foreword to the published proceedings of this conference, Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir, President of the Sudan stated:

Africa and Islam embraced each other ever since the inception of the latter in the Seventh century AD, when Muslims, persecuted in Mecca, arrived as refugees in Ethiopia. They were subsequently welcomed as saviours and liberators from Byzantine persecution and oppression in Egypt...

...Not surprisingly, imperialists and other enemies of Africa and African independence have redoubled their efforts to split the ranks of the Africans. With that end in view, and in order to blunt the revolutionary and liberating impact of Islam on African societies, imperialist quarters have consistently tried to falsify and distort the image of Islam and to identify it in the minds of the unwary and the innocent with such things as slavery, terrorism and backwardness. This is a challenge which all Africans, and African Muslims in particular, have to meet. But it is a challenge which Islam, with its liberating values and its genius for linking ideals with realities and thus transforming men and situations, is more than adequately equipped to meet.

The argument is that, Islam is capable of liberating Africa from the transplanted cultural forms and values imposed on it by the colonial powers and building on the continent's home-grown originality so that it will make an original contribution to humanity.

At the conference, it was decided that the participants strive to turn Africa into the first wholly-Islamic continent. Several papers were presented at this conference looking into the ways and means of achieving this objective.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with such an objective if pursued in a legitimate and fair manner, it becomes dangerous, if behind it, there lays a hidden agenda that may not even be known to some of the proponents of the objective. Secondly, if the methods used in the attempt to achieve such an objective do not meet the standards of decency and fair play, then the proponents of such an objective have to be opposed by all means.

It is my informed opinion that behind the objective to Islamize Africa lays a more sinister agenda – the Arabization of Africa. It is sad to note that African leaders as well as scholars are playing right into the hands of the fascist Arab proponent of this sinister agenda – Muammar Gaddafi of the Libyan Arab Jamahariyah, now turned African champion! Islam is the main tool being employed in the furtherance of this sinister agenda. Two other tools are used to assist in the advancement of Islam – economics and politics.

The agenda advances in four stages. Firstly, Islam is introduced as a religion in the targeted area or country. Secondly but concurrently, Arabic is introduced as a language, purportedly to enable converts to read the Koran but with the hidden purpose of destroying the indigenous languages of the targeted people. Thirdly, Arab culture is introduced to obliterate indigenous cultures of the targeted people. Lastly, biology is employed with the purpose of changing the very biological make up of the population by the lightening of the black skin through continuous procreation with lighter skinned Arabs.

It is in the above light that we need to understand the many rapes that have accompanied the atrocities that have been committed, and continue to be committed in Darfur. The perpetrators believe that they are doing the women they rape a favour. I am afraid to say that Darfur is now considered to have reached stage four - hence these atrocities.

Let us now look at how this agenda has played itself out in Darfur. The following narratives seek to shed light on the fact that the advancement of the Arabization agenda starts off peacefully but turns violent if the peaceful overtures fail.

Darfur and the Bataheen

In 1994, a group of about 25 people from the Bataheen tribe (the tribe of Professor Al Zubeir Bashir Taha – the Sudanese Minister for Interior) went from Bahri in Khartoum North to Jebel Marrah, Darfur. In Guldo, they sought an audience with Mr. Osama Mahir who was the Officer in Charge of the Administrative Unit. Mr Mahir is from the same Bataheen tribe. He organized for the visitors to be provided with accommodation. While in their guesthouses, the group started to speak informally with the residents who came to greet them.

Eventually, an official meeting was called by Mr. Mahir and the Native Administration to which all citizens of Guldo were invited. At the meeting, the visitors explained that the main purpose of their visit to Jebel Marrah was to create a concrete relationship between the Fur and Bataheen tribes, and that for this to happen, there was a need for intermarriage between the two tribes. They proposed that a group of men and women from the Fur tribe should take wives and husbands from the Bataheen tribe and vice versa. When questioned why such a relationship was necessary, two reasons were advanced, one religious and the other economic.

On religious grounds, one of the visitors replied that the Fur were the largest and most peaceful tribe in Darfur and were very good Muslims, this made them brothers and sisters to fellow Muslims. He further stated that the Fur held the Koran in their hearts but could interpret it. Therefore, there was a need for the Fur to be taught how to read the Koran, and this could be done by the Bataheen.

Economically, they said that since the Fur produced large amounts of fruits, there was a need for the processing and marketing these fruits, and that the Bataheen were in a position to bring fruit processing equipment to Jebel Marrah, and to market the produce in Khartoum.

In order to advance this cause, a group from the Fur tribe was invited to make a reciprocal visit to the Bataheen tribe in Bahri, Khartoum North.

In response, Omda Saleh Yousif Abdallah, the assistant to the Shartay of Luing, who was the head Shartay for the area, stated that the proposal presented to the Fur tribe was not an easy one and that there was need for further consultations amongst the other members of the tribe who were not represented at the meeting. He made a request for more time before a reply could be given to the visitors. At the time, under the Native Administration, Jebel Marrah was divided into four units namely – Luing (under Shartay Jalal Abuelbashir Yousif), Merri (under Shartay Hassan Abakar), Kebe (under Shartay Tigani Saefeldin Babikr), and Turra (under Shartay Abdmoulah Mohamed Salama). The visitors returned to Bahri to await a reply from Darfur.

After the departure of the Bataheen visitors, Shartay Jalal Abuelbashir Yousif called for a meeting of the Fur tribe in Kurang'a. Representatives from the four units under the Native Administration attended the meeting, and resolved to reject the Bataheen proposal totally. This decision was conveyed to the Bataheen tribe.

Darfur and the Jawama

In 1998, Mr Alamin Mahmoud Mohammed, a member of the National Islamic Front, attempted to inject “Arabs” from Kordofan into Darfur. He himself is a Fur from Daya village, Rokero, Jebel Marrah. He previously served as the Commissioner of Sharg-a-nil Locality in Bahri, Khartoum North. He was then transferred to Um Ruwaba in North Kordofan as Commissioner.

While in Um Ruwaba, a group from the Jawama tribe came to him and told him that they were originally from Jebel Marrah and were Fur, by tribe and that their original home was in Turra but circumstances had forced them to relocate to Kordofan. After discussions with the group, Mr Alamin Mahmoud Mohammed believed them and being the Commissioner, he organized a trip for them to Darfur. Since these people did not know anybody in Turra, Mr Alamin Mahmoud Mohammed volunteered to escort them, lest they be lynched as impostors.

However in his efforts, Mr Alamin Mahmoud Mohammed broke protocol. The issue he was dealing with fell under the responsibility of the Native Administration. It was required by procedure for him to contact the Makdum, Adam Abdrahman Rigal in Nyala. This he did not do and neither did he inform Shartay Abdmoulah Mohamed Salama in Turra. Instead, he put the Jawama delegation in three cars and headed for Turra.

In Turra, because he was a highly respected citizen, he called for and held several meetings with the people to introduce the Jawama delegation. The delegation repeated the tale they had told Alamin. However, the people of Turra rejected this story. Women composed a song to castigate Alamin saying, “Alamin Dar Saba yang’a nama Kurong’a si bela” which loosely translates as Alamin went eastwards and brought us people looking like red monkeys so how can he live with us?

With this kind of opposition, Alamin left with the delegation and headed for Zalingei. In Zalingei, there are people who migrated from Turra and settled in an area of the town which they named Turra after their home area in Jebel Marrah. These are the people to whom Alamin took the Jawama delegation. Again, he organized meetings with the people in Zalingei and again the delegation was rejected by the people with the exception of Muhammad Ahmad el Nur, the father of Abdelwahid Muhammad Ahmad el Nur, the leader of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army.

The elder el Nur, who is related to Alamin on his mother’s side, stated that historically they were Arab who originated from Tunisia during the days of the Darfur Sultanate. He narrated the story of Ahmad Magur and Suleiman Solong and how the two disagreed leading to Suleiman cutting Ahmad on the leg with a sword and this caused him to limp, hence the nickname Magur. The disagreement led to a split between the two and Ahmad Magur and his group returned to Tunisia with the Fur language which they still speak to this day. He also said that there are other Fur people who migrated elsewhere and lost their language. This he said in order to convince the people that the Jawama tribe was originally Fur. This did not convince the Turra people in Zalingei. They rejected Alamin and his delegation, who in turn returned to Um Ruwaba.

Because Alamin had failed to convince the Fur people that the Jawama tribe was related to them, when the delegation returned to Um Ruwaba, they started causing problems for him. They accused him of stealing iron sheets meant for a mosque and money which he had used to set up a flour mill in Turra. On another occasion, they held a public demonstration against him chanting that they did not want to be governed by an “al gurab al aswad” which means black crow. As a result, the government decided to transfer him from Um Ruwaba to Kurmuk in Blue Nile. Shortly after his arrival in Kurmuk, he was

relieved of his duties as Commissioner which was seen as a punishment for his failure to have the Jawama tribe recognized as part of the Fur tribe, and for them to resettle in Turra.

Darfur and Economic Enticement

Having failed in their attempt to introduce Arabs into Darfur, it was decided to try the economic tool. In late 1998, a tourism project was mooted. Mr Sanoosi Bashar, the then Minister for Finance in West Darfur, whose portfolio was responsible for tourism, approached Mr Najib Abdelrahman Yousif, an old classmate at university and a colleague in the National Congress Party, who was at the time in Dankuj on his farm. He introduced the tourism project to him and promised that since the government of West Darfur did not have a ministry of tourism at the time, if the project was successful, the ministry would be created and that he would be appointed as Minister for Tourism.

According to the project, several tourist hotels were to be built in Golol, Baldong, Udio, Kutrum, Dursa, and Manabu. Tourist villages were to be established in Martajello, Nertiti, Nyilma, and Kibili. It was stated that in the exact locations where these constructions would take place, the owners would be compensated for their land and trees separately. When construction started, local means of transport would be used to ferry construction material in order to enable the local people to benefit from the project.

Because the project proponents had seen a lot of wheat in Jebel Marrah, they said that a wheat milling factory would be established in Kibili to mill the wheat and thus bring economic benefits to the people. They held discussions with the people, including a Mr. Alsab, a leading wheat farmer in Kibili who even offered a part of his farm for the construction of the factory.

Investigations of the proposed projects by some sons of the Fur community in Jebel Marrah, especially Adeeb Abdelrahman Yousif, the younger brother of Najib Abdelrahman Yousif, and Abubakar Saefeldin, revealed that the projects were related to a Palestinian businessman who ran a restaurant called Haifa along the airport road in Khartoum and another one called Azuwada in Bahri, Khartoum North. Abubakar was based in Nertiti while Adeeb was moving around collecting information in Khartoum and other places. With the collected information, they started dissuading the people from the project which they felt had ulterior motives. Some citizens agreed with them while others, because of the promised benefits, disagreed with them. Gradually, most of them were convinced. This was mainly because Adeeb, as a brother to Najib, was expected to support the project. But since he was one of those opposing it, they felt that there was a reason for concern. When the project sponsors found out about the opposition to the project, they called for public meetings to convince the people about the project. However, most people stayed away from such meetings.

When the Federal Minister for Tourism and Natural Resources decided to inspect the progress of the project, having approved it as a private sector investment initiative, he found that the project had not taken off and that most of the local people were against it. As a result, the project was quietly abandoned in the year 2000.

Darfur and Musa Hilal

In 1999, Musa Hilal (the notorious leader of the *Janjaweed* in the current conflict) started the killings, looting and burning of villages in Shoba, North Darfur, an area bordering Jebel Marrah. He then extended his activities to Kutula and Sonasona in Jebel Marrah. Concerned citizens reported these incidents to the government. The government responded by sending soldiers to Kutula and Sonasona to deal with the problem. Musa Hilal's fighters ambushed the government army contingent, killing 19 of them including a

Southern Sudanese Major in the government army. The fate of this Major is quite telling. Even though he was already dead, Musa Hilal's fighters cut him up into pieces, desecrating his body. Was it because he was an African from the South? This brings back the memories of the El Daein Massacre that took place in 1987 and was investigated by Mr Suleiman Baldo, currently with the International Crisis Group. This massacre of over 1,000 innocent Southern IDPs, who had taken refuge in Darfur, is a glaring illustration of the Arab's devaluation of African life.

While the government's intervention had cooled the situation in Kutula and Sonasona, Musa Hilal and his fighters moved to other areas like Sagadir and Saganaga, again in Jebel Marrah. Because of the havoc that Musa Hilal and his fighters were causing in Darfur, the *Wali* (governor) of North Darfur Mr Ibrahim Suleiman in whose State Kebkabiya, the home of Musa Hilal lay, called him to El Fashir, the capital of North Darfur. Musa Hilal refused to go to the *Wali* saying that the *Wali* was a soldier and he himself was also a soldier. When the *Wali* heard this, he dispatched a contingent of about 20 troops to arrest him. He was arrested and his hair shaved off for insubordination. They then took him to El Fashir and presented him before the *Wali*. After due process, he was dispatched all the way to Port Sudan to be imprisoned. In circumstances that at the time were not clear to most people, Ali Osman Taha, the then First Vice President of Sudan, had Musa Hilal released from prison in Port Sudan and brought to a hotel in Medani where the two held a meeting. With the current conflict in Darfur and with Musa Hilal as the undisputed leader of the *Janjaweed*, we do not have to guess the reason why Ali Osman Taha had this convicted criminal released from prison.

Musa Hilal and the Current Conflict in Darfur

The *Janjaweed* infamy, regarding the current conflict in Darfur provides us with a link to that meeting in Medani between Ali Osman Taha – then First Vice President of the Sudan and a convicted criminal – Musa Hilal.

In response to the armed insurrection that started in February 2003, the government of Sudan decided to use Arab militias – a strategy perfected by Sadiq al Mahdi in his own genocidal war against the people of South Sudan – as the boots on the ground. Musa Hilal already had experience in this strategy from his activities detailed earlier. He was thus the perfect choice. Using his former fighters as the nucleus of a larger militia to deal with the latest insurrection, he would be facilitated to recruit and equip new members into his militia and place it at the disposal of the government of Sudan.

Since the beginning of this rebel insurgency the government of Sudan has pursued a military strategy that has violated fundamental principles of international humanitarian and human rights law. It has failed to distinguish between military targets and civilians or comply with the principle of proportionality in the use of force. Its strategy deliberately targets the civilian population through a combination of indiscriminate and deliberate aerial bombardment, a “scorched earth” campaign, and denial of access to humanitarian assistance. This has resulted in millions of people being displaced from their homes into camps within Darfur and hundreds of thousands fleeing across the border to refugee camps in Chad.

Darfur – Islam's Killing Fields

This was the title of an online symposium on Darfur in FrontPageMagazine.com on September 10, 2004. The question under discussion was: Why is it that - yet again - *another* Arab League member is massacring its minority populations? Why is the Western media reluctant to identify the religion and ethnicity of the mass murderers and rapists?

As pointed out earlier, it is important to correct the wrong perception that Sudan is an Arab country and that Africans are a minority, implied in the question under discussion on the online forum.

The gist of the question was that; if Darfur is almost 100% Muslim and the government in Khartoum is an Islamist one, how come Muslims are killing Muslims?

To get an answer to this question, we have to take into account one basic truth that is mostly ignored: Arabs did not bring Islam to Darfur. Instead, the religion came from West Africa, brought by African Muslim pilgrims on their way to Mecca.

The following are transcripts of communications between Sudanese Air Force pilots and Sudanese Army ground commanders in the on-going conflict in Darfur:

“Any village you pass through you must burn. That way, when the villagers come back, they will have a surprise waiting for them”

An Antonov pilot ordering a ground commander of a government army battalion in Darfur.

“There is nothing under me except grass cottages, Sir.”

An Antonov pilot over Darfur reports to his Khartoum commander

“I order you to bomb them and expel their religion (tally deenhum; render them unbelievers)”

The commander orders back.

From the foregoing, it is very clear that the Darfur genocide is racially motivated and needs to be understood in that light, if a lasting solution is to be found. It is my hope that this article will prick the consciences of Africans and get them out of their slumber to do something about this 21st Century genocide.

Darfur Movements: Vision and Blueprints for Action

Abdullahi Osman El-Tom

The Darfur region covers an area of 508,000 square kilometres, a size equivalent to that of France. The region is home to almost seven million people, divided into over 100 ethnic groups. The war in Darfur, so far, has left 200,000- 450,000 dead and over 2.5 million displaced.

The war in Darfur involves two insurgent movements: The Sudanese Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), and the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM). Later, the SLM split into two factions. One of which signed a peace agreement with the government in Khartoum. In September 2006, the National Redemption Front was formed out of JEM and some Leaders of the SLM, and the Sudan Federal Democratic Party.

In February 2003, armed insurgency erupted in the western region of Darfur. With the world still mesmerized by the progress being made at the time, in the old and prostrated conflict of southern Sudan, Khartoum seized the opportunity to quickly quell the uprising, and did so at any cost. In his visit to El Fashir soon after its brief occupation by the rebels, President El Bashir launched into one of his characteristic frenzied speeches: "I want back no war prisoners and no injured captives", he roared. Incriminating as it was, the statement offered blanket impunity for Sudan's army and its associates. The use of Arab Militia, already perfected in the south and central Sudan was to be repeated in Darfur. In Khartoum's eyes, a proxy army of Arab Militia would be cheap and effective. At the same time, it would provide legal cover against international outrage with the militias bearing responsibility for ensuing atrocities, just in case.

In its strategies, the Khartoum government committed two cardinal mistakes. The first pertains to the use of a proxy army of Arab militias, and the second concerns international attention in Darfur.

The proxy militia army proved to be lethal against innocent civilians but hopelessly ineffective in fighting the rebel Movements. But the fatal miscalculation was yet to come. The assumption that western and allegedly Christian sympathy could not be transferred to Darfur with its 100% Muslim population was a callous mistake. Khartoum was shocked by the speed at which the Darfur conflict was elevated to international stage. Within few weeks of the insurrection, Darfur assumed a regular space in international media. The word "*Janjaweed*" meaning a hooligan brandishing a GM 3 machine gun on a horse became a familiar term across the world.

Darfur Grievances:

In simple terms, it is the continuous marginalization of Darfur that is behind the current conflict in the region. Over the years, Darfur people protested their marginalization through peaceful and non-peaceful means to no avail. Since Independence (1956), at least 8 Darfur movements appeared, using different methods to bring Darfur's plight to Khartoum (Abuelbasha 2006). In February 2003, some Darfurians took arms against the government. The outcome is a tragedy far beyond what the insurgents and the government could imagine.

Many authors have articulated details of the dynamics that led to marginalization of Darfur (El-Tom 2006b, 2006c, Ibrahim 2004/2006, Prunier 2005, Hashim 2004, Flint and de Waal 2006). In 1999, the grievances of Darfur were exposed in a rather unconventional way. They were articulated in a clandestine publication under the title: *The Black Book: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in the Sudan*. According to this publication, Sudan has been controlled by a small minority since its independence and that this minority monopolized wealth and power to the detriment of the rest of country. Further on, the publication presented statistics showing that this hegemonic minority has been acting on behalf of the northern region that constitutes only 5% of Sudan's population. The result of this monopoly of power and wealth reflected itself negatively in human development of all regions including Darfur (The Black Book 2004, see Table below).

TABLE: Human Development (adapted from Ibrahim 2004)

Item/ Region	Northern Region	Southern Region	Darfur Region
% of Sudan's Population	5%	16%	20%
Primary School Enrolment	88%	21%	31%
Hospitals per 100,000	3.9	1	0.4
Hospital beds per 100,000	151	68	24.7
Doctors per 100,000	13.4	2.8	1.5

While some details contained in the Black Book can be criticized, the general thrust of the thesis remains difficult to challenge. Indeed, the main findings of the Black Book have been affirmed by many writers (Ibrahim 2006, Cobhom 2005, El-Tom 2003). Attempts of the government to produce a counter publication, code-named the White Book of Sudan did not materialize.

The Black Book avoids the dualistic approach that characterized the Sudanese north-south conflict. In that conflict, the problem was portrayed as between a hegemonic north and a marginalized south. This vision underlies the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which brought peace to the southern region of the Sudan.

In sharp contrast to that, the Darfur Movements see the Darfur problem as clearly embedded in the relationship between a centre dominated by the northern region and all other marginalized peripheries.

Solutions to Darfur's problem therefore can best be addressed by ending marginalization, and by moving towards an inclusive system whereby all regions share power and wealth on an equal bases. It is to be noted that this vision had to be watered down in the Abuja Peace Talks (2004-2006), on the pretext that Darfurians had no mandate to talk about other regions, and that the venue was legally restricted to Darfur.

What the Movements Want:

For the sake of brevity, let me focus on the latter part of the Abuja Peace Talks. That means I will be skipping several deals including the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement (April 2004), the Humanitarian Protocol (November 2004) and the Declaration of Principles (May 2005)). During this latter part of the Talks, the focus was on three distinct strands: The Power-sharing Commission, the Wealth-sharing Commission and the Security Commission. Among these three Commissions, it was the Power-sharing that was most revealing and equally obstinate.

A joint SLM-JEM document dated October 14th 05, reveals the vision of the Movements regarding Sudan's protracted problem, or Darfur crisis as the Forum finally allowed:

Levels of Governance:

Sudan is to pursue a federal system of governance with the following levels:

- Federal governance
- Regional governance
- State governance
- Local governance within states

This vision assumes division of Sudan into six regions, each having its own government, complete with a legislative authority. Each region is to house a government with a legislative body. Heads of regions and states shall be freely elected. Regions shall all revert to 1956 borders, function as second level of governance below Federal governance and retain current state subdivisions.

The above structure disguises a challenge to Khartoum's government in several ways. To begin with, it introduces Regional Governance as a third layer of power. At present, only the southern region enjoys such a status. But more ominous in Khartoum's vision is the devolution aspect of the proposal, and which effectively undermines Khartoum's authority and the current hegemony of the northern region. Moreover, emphasis on election constitutes a further threat to the current political structure in the Sudan.

Federal Governance:

Legislative Bodies:

Two legislative bodies are to be instituted here:

1. The National Federal Council whose members are freely elected.
2. The Council of Regions consisting of two representatives from each region. Regional representatives to the Council are to be elected by the Regional Legislative Councils.

Federal Governance:

National Executive Authority

- The presidency shall be headed by the President of the Republic, who shall be directly elected through free universal suffrage.

- The President shall appoint a Council of Ministers in consultation with the Presidential Council.
- As for the interim Period, the position of the president of the Sudan shall rotate and be reviewed following six terms covering all regions. Regions that do not hold the Presidency in term shall occupy positions of Vice Presidency (5 of them altogether).
- In each presidential term, positions of the (a) President of the Sudan, (b) Prime Minister (c) Head of Council of Regions (Senate) (d) Head of Parliament, (e) Head of Judiciary and (f) Head of Supreme Court shall be drawn from different Regions.

Regional Governance:

- Sudan shall consist of six Regions with Khartoum accorded either a status of Federal Capital, or treated as a separate Region.

Regions, later amended to read 'Darfur region', are:

- Revert to 1956 borders
- Function as second level of governance
- Maintain a Council of Ministers and an elected Legislative body
- Enjoy veto over a) amendments of national borders and (b) culture and heritage
- Have an elected governor in the post Interim Period
- Have (a) a Supreme Court, (b) Appeal Court, (c) General Courts and (d) Civil Courts.

Residual Issues:

- Regions have to be represented in Federal Civil Service positions, in accordance with their population weight.
- Recruitment for National Universities, the National Military College and the National Police College is to be allocated in accordance with the population weight in all Regions.
- Other criteria agreed upon shall also be implemented, whenever necessary, in representation referred to in this section. These criteria include affirmative action, impact of war and distance from the capital.

As referred to earlier, little progress was made in the Talks with regard to this Commission on Power Sharing.

Wealth Sharing Commission:

An important aim of Darfur Movements is to achieve "equitable sharing of the national wealth". While the Wealth-Sharing Commission can be said to have fared better than other Commissions, major points of disagreement were:

- Cost of repatriation, of the IDPs
- Compensation
- Division of revenue between central government and Darfur
- Reconstruction fund
- Implementation mechanisms and guarantees.

Security Arrangement Commission:

In this section, the Movements' aims can be summarized as follows:

- Restructuring of the Sudanese security system which covers the national army, police and the national intelligence.
- Restoring security in Darfur and control over the Janjaweed
- Catering for armies of the Movements through retention, redeployment and disbandment

This Commission was backed up by numerous other security-related Agreements and Protocols. Nonetheless, discussion was marked by several differences, most important of which were:

- Definition and disarmament of the Janjaweed
- Status, retention and maintenance costs of the armies of the Movements.
- Poor representation in security decision-making
- Implementation modalities and guarantees

Launching the DPA:

In February 2006, citing lack of progress, the African Union (AU) decided to suspend all plenary meetings for Power-Sharing and Wealth-Sharing. That was nearly three months (February) prior to presentation of the DPA document to the parties. As it transpired later, the AU and the international community had decided to go it alone and compel the parties to accede and sign a document in which they had little input. Jack Straw of the UK expressed this intention in a forceful way; so forceful that you would be forgiven for thinking that the old British Empire was still reigning:

The international community has poured lots of money, time and effort into the peace talks. (But) our patience is not unlimited. If the parties do not reach an agreement here soon, we, with the AU, will need to start looking at the alternatives (Nathan 2006:4)

In April 2006, demonstrations broke out in the USA in support of Darfur. The US government was put under immense pressure to act and bring peace to Darfur. With President Bush under pressure from all fronts, the government panicked. George Bush then sent his Envoy, Robert Zoelick, to Abuja. On his way to Abuja, he was joined by the UK Envoy, Mr Hilary Benn.

But it was Zoelick who showed, in no uncertain terms, that he meant business and that he was getting it at all costs. His arrival at the Talks hotel in a convoy of seven cars amid a large presence of security personnel was a stark reminder that the emperor was soon to appear. The parties were put under intense pressure, using unprecedented methods borrowed from intelligence interrogation rooms including exhaustion, starvation and lack of sleep. A document referred to as the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was rushed and stakeholders were summoned to sign it. Commenting on this process elsewhere, I described the DPA as a result of intimidation, bullying and diplomatic terrorism. In one of his threatening moods, Zoelick told Minnawi of the SLA/M that "he could be a good friend, but could equally be a nasty enemy." Minnawi could not withstand the pressure and eventually caved in and signed the DPA. Ironically, Minnawi and his branch of SLM were party to a document prepared jointly with JEM in which the two Movements outlined reasons behind their rejection of the DPA. The AU refused to receive the document, insisting that "not a comma was to be added to the DPA" or "that the only important page was the last where signatures were to be inscribed".

In some ways, the term DPA is a misnomer. The DPA does not constitute an agreement. The document lacked both input and consensus of the parties concerned. As it later transpired, the DPA was prepared by the AU and its international experts about six weeks before and was locked away waiting for arrival of the delegates such as Mr. Zoelick. In our campaign visit to the US, days after the DPA, we were told that the DPA document was circulated to friends in the US long before it was shown to the parties in Abuja. Surprisingly, some US contacts were not impressed by the document and advised against it.

It did not take long for the DPA to collapse. Its stakeholders gave it a hostile reception almost everywhere. Instead of bringing peace to Darfur, it brought more violence. Even Mr Pronk, the UN Envoy to Sudan and an important player in the DPA fiasco had to concede and exonerate the non-signatories. In his own words, the DPA is “in a coma, paralyzed, does not resonate with Darfur people and requires major rewriting”. Non-signatories had reiterated this in Abuja, but no one was prepared to listen. But the wide rejection of the DPA was not confined to the Movements. A DRDC document reads:

At home, the document was met with discontentment from the major stakeholders in Darfur particularly the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and war affected community. Civil society groups from Darfur including women groups, students, lawyers, intellectuals as well as some major national political parties have rejected the DPA (DRDC 2006:2, for further critique of the DPA see Abuelbasha 2006 and Sulaiman 2007).

Sam Ibuk, the chief of the AU mediating team, patronizingly came up with the dubious revelation that suspicions about the agreement were based on the inability of the “rebels” to understand the complex DPA document. The issue thus ignored the farcical nature of the document, and indulged simple-minded stakeholders (Lathan 2006: 5, 15). Others dashed in for help. De Waal, a prolific writer on Darfur matters and an AU advisor obliged. He compiled a series of ten articles under the title: Explaining the Darfur Agreement” which according to him were aimed at “the Sudanese people in general and the people of Darfur especially.” The articles were subsequently published in the Justice Africa website and many other portals. Ironically speaking, Darfur people including the IDPs who rejected the DPA were hence invited to google away and view the DPA explained in simple and plain English (see de Waal 2006).

If it is ever possible to single out the most undermining aspect of the DPA in the eyes of the Movements, it is the fact that the deal allowed Khartoum to retain absolute power at all levels of the political structure. Thus, in the DPA, Khartoum was to hold the majority, right from the centre to local governance. Abuelbasha estimates that in the DPA, the government “got 81% of the constitutional executive posts and 71% of the legislative seats in Darfur” (Abuelbasha 2006:6).

Which Way Out:

Since the launch of the DPA, all parties had ample time to reflect on the situation in Darfur. The urgency of the tragedy frames all, under moral obligation, to act and to do so quickly. The dynamics of the crisis have also shifted with the formation of the National Redemption Front (NRF), Resolution 1706, ICC indictments and the UN Human Rights Report.

For the coming period, parties in conflict can build on certain positive elements:

- Renewed consensus that the Darfur problem is political, and so is its solution

- All major issues have been debated to varying degrees in Abuja, and do not have to be revisited at length in subsequent talks
- War fatigue and continuation of suffering in the country have exacerbated the urgency of finding solutions to the problem. While it is risky to declare that the time is “ripe for a solution”, there are indicators that point to this and can be seized upon.
- Conviction that the CPA cannot fully progress without peace in Darfur and that continuation of Darfur war retards development of the whole country.
- The DPA experience serves as proof that sustainable and comprehensive peace, and an all-inclusive deal is essential.

As far as the NRF is concerned, and according to numerous NRF statements, a framework agreement can be reached within days if not hours if attention is paid to the following points, as articulated in an NRF document (see Table 2):

1. *The IDPs constitute the most powerless victims of Darfur crisis. As humanity of any society depends on how it treats its weakest, we must strive not to sacrifice them in the process. Having lost their homes and properties, the IDPs cannot go home penniless. The US\$1000 proposed per each family – not individual-, once and for all is barely a minimum amount that can enable them to kick-start their lives. Such an amount is surely less than the weakly cost of IPDs in their present camps. It is also within the means of the country given that senior government negotiators were paid US\$500 per diem for the entire period of Abuja Peace Talks.*
2. *Compensation for those who have lost their basic means of survival is a sticky issue across Darfur. In Darfurian culture, and a well recognized conflict-resolution tradition, compensation, fully or partial, is indivisible of any reconciliation and a precondition for peaceful coexistence. Seed Compensation Fund of \$30 million was conceded in the DPA. While that establishes the principle, the amount given is, plainly speaking, a joke. Due to importance of this for the future of peace in Darfur, we suggest giving it its due weight.*
3. *The Darfur crisis started in the first place due to lack of control of Darfur people over their destiny. Had the Darfurians been managing their own affairs, what the US correctly termed genocide would not have happened. Hence, it is legitimate for Darfur to be a self-governing region within the framework of a united Sudan. The NRF has no qualms about sharing power in Darfur with El Bashir's party as long as its nominees hold some form of a majority in the region. Otherwise, one risks preserving the current status quo. As for other sectors in Darfur who are not affiliates of the NRF or the ruling party, they can easily be accommodated in the new structure. Using democratic channels, Darfur status as a region can be reassessed in the future, preferably within a restructuring of the entire country.*
4. *Reconstruction of Darfur is of a paramount importance for sustainable peace agreement in Darfur. As all experts concur, deprivation and lack of development in Darfur have been the prime reason behind the insurgency. Moreover, development remains the most fundamental function of any decent government. The DPA must be amended to secure meaningful developmental budget for the region and in a way that delivers broad consensus on the agreement. Two factors help here. Firstly, one assumes that development is an ongoing process that no government will halt within three years as the DPA might imply. Secondly, further funds*

will be released by increase in petrol remunerations, reduction of defence/security expenditure, peace dividends and governance improvement.

5. *The current Constitution of the country guarantees equal opportunity for all Sudanese to fully participate in the running of their country. Let us be true to that spirit and translate it into Darfur agreement. We want Darfurians to be represented in the national government structure (the Presidency, the Parliament, the Council of Ministers, and the Judiciary) in a way that tallies with their weight in Sudan's population and as determined by government statistics. Darfurians equally call for a fair representation, at the middle and upper levels of federal civil service of the Sudan including defence and security apparatus. It is imperative that this process may take more than one year to effect but a workable time plan can be negotiated.*
6. *Given the depth of the crisis, the rift between the NRF and the government is uncomfortably huge. Sharing post-agreement power with El Bashir will be marred with lack of trust, at least for some time. That calls for some form of a trustworthy guarantee mechanism that is lacking in the DPA. Reliance on the good will of the government does not make a sustainable peace agreement. A workable guarantee allows space for building trust among partners and is no less important for generating a broad consensus on the peace deal. Such a guarantee can be formed of a combination of an international component backed by retention of NRF forces during the interim period. Legal guarantee may comprise provisions in the National Constitution entrenched against unfair intrusion by requirement of two-thirds or three quarters majority amendment.*
7. *The National Security Act which gives the security forces unlimited powers to detain and torture opponents of the regime is a real obstacle to the implementation of any peace agreement reached in the Sudan including the CPA (North-South Agreement). Abolition of this Act is a precondition for any sustainable peace in the Sudan (El-Tom 2006a).*

Gap between DPA and Non-Signatories and Manoeuvre Areas

Item	Offered in Proposed DPA	Just/ Ideal offer	Possible Deal
Compensation per IDP family	None	\$1000	\$1000, Per IDP family
Compensation seed money	\$30m	\$300m	\$300m
Reconstruction Of Darfur	\$300m (2006), \$200m for 2007 and 2008	\$300m (2006) + 6.5% for 10 years	\$300m + fixed %/ amount for 10 years
Region with Government	Darfur Transitional Authority	Full Regional Government. No referendum	Full government with referendum later
Former Combatants	4,000 National Army, 3000 civic training and 1000 for police	Keep army paid for by central government, Interim period	50% into National Army, 37.5% civic training and 12.5% for police and security

			service
Representation in Darfur	Absolute majority for GoS	Absolute majority for Movements (MVTS) & allies	Majority for MVTS & allies
National Parliament	12 Seats for MVTS (previous offer 30)	80% for MVTS	Majority for MVTS & allies
National Cabinet	1 Minister and 2 State Ministers for MVTS	4 Ministers and 6 State Ministers for MVTS (for a total of 20% for all Darfur)	3 Ministers and 4 State Ministers

Source: Bureau for Training and Strategic Planning, JEM (23/05/006)

Confounding Developments:

Since the launch of the DPA (May 2006), several events have taken place. These events have had a varying impact on the coming peace process. High among these events is the issuing of UN Resolution 1706, ICC Reports, and to a lesser degree the UN Human Rights Reports.

UN-SC Resolution 1706.

The call for UN military intervention in Darfur has always been high in the agenda of the Darfur Movements and their supporters in the Region. Naturally, the government of Sudan is antagonistic toward international intervention and is bound to see the Resolution as unhelpful in the Darfur peace process. Surprisingly, the Darfur Movement welcomed the Resolution with little effort to question its reasons. JEM is an exception in this regard. In fact, JEM articulated its reservations in a letter addressed to the UN. JEM's stance gained approval from an unlikely source: the government of Sudan. Since the issuing of the Resolution, JEM declared that its opposition to the Resolution is not absolute but views certain aspects of it with reservations. Due to the importance of this issue, it would be helpful to reproduce JEM's points in detail:

1. *Resolution 1706 contains commendable aspects represented in the provisions for protection of Darfur unarmed civilians, preservation of human rights and safe return of IDPs to their original villages*
2. *The Resolution suffers fundamental deficiencies that make its full implementation, if ever possible, catastrophic. The deficiencies are as follows:*
 - a. *The Resolution is based on presumed necessity of implementation of the DPA (Darfur Peace Agreement); the same DPA that has been rejected by Darfur people including the IDPs, Refugees, intellectuals, youth and student organisations, political and social forces and Darfur armed Movements. The DPA is also rejected by national opposition forces/parties to the exclusion of the ruling junta. The international organizations themselves also affirmed the futility of the DPA. For example, Mr. Pronk, the UN Special Envoy to Sudan described it as paralyzed, does not resonate with Darfur people and requires major rewriting. The UN Head of Humanitarian Operations correctly indicated that the DPA, has led to escalation of violence instead of reduction of tension in Darfur. If*

- that is the verdict of all concerned parties on the DPA, it is difficult to see how the United Nations would build its Resolution on it.*
- b. The Resolution ignores the legitimate political, economic and cultural rights that have led to raising arms in the first place. Instead, it limits itself to dealing with the security consequences of Darfur uprising. In so doing, the Resolution opts for a symptomatic approach that leaves the problem intact.*
 - c. The UN, the AU, the EU and other regional and international bodies, have all recognised JEM and the SLM faction that did not sign the DPA and have dealt with them accordingly through resolutions, protocols and decisions regarding Darfur. Resolution 1706 totally ignores these Darfur Movements, save for urging them to sign the DPA without delay. The Resolution then proceeds to threaten them together with all Darfur and Sudanese opponents of the DPA with severe sanctions, for the simple reasons that they have objected to the DPA.*
 - d. The Resolution mandates the UN force in Darfur to use all necessary measures to seize and collect arms and related equipment from all armed groups in Darfur, but without defining the nature of these armed groups. The UN force in Darfur is thus granted an absolute mandate to use all necessary force against all those who obstruct the DPA without discriminating between legitimate and recognised Darfur resistance Movements and armed militias (Janjaweed) and impervious to the fact that the armed militias have been targeted by various Resolutions from the same Security Council as well as the AU.*
 - e. As the Resolution does not specify intended locations of bases of the UN force in Darfur, the UN force is left with absolute right of presence throughout Darfur and by implication the powers to remove others from their areas. Moreover, the Resolution mandates the UN force to locate itself in any part of the Sudan and without any time limit pertaining to how long it can remain in the country. This out steps stated objectives of the Resolution; namely protection of Darfur people and implementation of the DPA (see Jalal Aldeen 2006).*

JEM is certainly justified in its worry about pegging the Resolution to the implementation of the DPA which it summarily rejected. The Resolution also highlights the lack of coordination within the bodies of the UN itself. Otherwise, how can we reconcile Pronk's description of the DPA as not resonating with the people of Darfur and at the same time urge its implementation, through the use of force if necessary? In Paragraph 12, the Resolution states, in clear terms, that its mandate is to use "necessary force" to implement and/or prevent disruption of the DPA. What is pertinent here is the impact of the Resolution on the Darfur peace process. Reaching a quick solution and hence making the Resolution either redundant, relegated to peace keeping work, or less worrying for the government can provide a common ground for subsequent negotiations.

ICC Charges:

In March 2007, the ICC released a report that effectively charged two Sudanese government-related nationals, a State Minister and a Janjaweed leader for numerous crimes worthy of prosecuting them in the ICC court. The move is historic and has wide international ramifications, as well as grave implications for the Khartoum government. As far as the Darfur peace process is concerned, this is an issue with little prospect for change. For the Movements including the Signatory SLM, the ICC must proceed with its

charges and speed up the naming of other suspects as well, including El Bashir if necessary. It is here that the Darfur peace process may depart from the CPA legacy. For understandable reasons, overseers of the CPA adopted a strategy of “forgive and move on” in their approach to the north-south conflict. As a corollary to that, over two million people who were massacred between 1983 and 2006 were simply written off for the sake of a peace agreement. Most of those casualties were non-combatants, and many of them were victims of ethnic cleansing, war crimes and perhaps genocide. So colossal was the carnage that it has effectively put El Bashir way ahead of ex-dictator Idi Amin who massacred around 300,000 people. Time will tell how this issue develops and the author cannot risk any suggestions in this regard.

Concluding Remarks:

There is currently a general consensus that parties in conflict must be brought together for a renewed negotiated settlement. Maximum effort must be made to ensure rapid success of the coming Round of Peace Talks. Without any claim to being exhaustive, here are some suggestions for the mediators:

- Mediators must realize that any agreement reached must be convincingly ratified by the parties. In order to guarantee lasting peace, the question of ownership must be fully considered and temptations of forcing parties to sign must be avoided.
- Mediators must allow sufficient time for parties to study the draft of any documented agreement, and make proper consultation prior to a final commitment regarding the deal. Deadline diplomacy has proven to be inefficient and must not be repeated.
- The mediators must show commitment to their duty and must be allowed to proceed without interference from outside bodies.
- The Movements must be encouraged to negotiate as a united front. Efforts to play the Movements against each other either by the mediators, the government of Sudan or the outside world must be reduced as far as possible
- Mediators must avoid seeing a peace agreement as a function of military power. Rather, they should base the deal on justice and fairness. Otherwise, a situation that encourages violence will be created and reached agreement will be no more than a temporal tactical exercise.
- Parties to the conflict must be persuaded to exercise periodic ceasefires, a week or ten days at a time, and not to use these peaceful breaks for area expansion.
- As most of the main issues have been thoroughly debated, the number of negotiators must be kept sufficiently small, and are to be provided with an environment that is conducive for fruitful engagement. Facilities must be adequate, thus saving time wasted in search of photocopying, phone contacts and translation.
- Expert advice must be made available with adequate time-flexibility for expert consultation
- Efforts must be made to prevent the talks from falling foul to Naivasha “fanatics”, a term the Movements reserve for those whose horizon does not extend beyond the CPA.

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EU Blames World Bank for Delaying South Sudan Reconstruction

In a revealing article which appeared in the Sudan Tribune of Friday, 19 January 2007, we read the following:

Jan 18, 2007 (KHARTOUM) — The representative of the European Union in Sudan has blamed the World Bank for delaying use of the Multi-Donor Trust Funds for reconstruction in southern Sudan.

In an interview with Sudan Radio Service in Khartoum, EU Special Representative to Sudan Pekka Haavisto said European states have fulfilled their Oslo pledges, but the money has not been released because of World Bank bureaucracy.

"It is unfortunate that the implementation of the those promises that were made in Oslo have been quite slow, from the European Union/European Commission I still have good news to say because we have donated to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) all that we promised to fund, but we are little bit unpleased of the process on the World Bank's side who is administrating the MDTFs. Some of the administration, some of the approvals of the project have been too slow, and we have been actually criticizing and communicating this to the World Bank and hope that things are moving more rapidly." The EU official told the radio.

Following the signing of the CPA in 2005, two Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs) were set up, one to finance rehabilitation of war-affected areas in the North, and one for reconstruction and development in Southern Sudan.

The MDTF for Northern Sudan has received pledges totaling 195.1 million dollars, of which 113.7 million dollars has been paid, while MDTF for South Sudan has received pledges of 342.6 million dollars, of which 214.8 million dollars has been paid in as of December 31, 2006.

Haavisto hopes that the World Bank will release the funds soon to enhance development in southern Sudan. The EU official also urged Sudan's northern opposition political parties to work with the Government of National Unity to promote peace and harmony throughout Sudan, especially in Darfur.

The World Bank reopened its Sudan office in 2005 after twelve years of absence because of Sudan's default on its debt repayment. The World Bank has staffed two offices in Khartoum and Juba in order to meet the growing demand for assistance in implementing the two MDTFs.

Important Statement on the Sudan

(Before the before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations House International Relations Committee on October 20, 2006.)

Roger P. Winter

Sudan's National Congress Party is controlled by an intellectually-capable, radically-committed, conspiratorial and compassionless nucleus of individuals, long referred to as the National Islamic Front (NIF). In the seventeen years since they came to power by coup to abort an incipient peace process, they have consistently defied the international community and won. As individuals, the NIF has never paid a price for their crimes. Almost all of them are still in important positions. The NIF core is a competent cadre of men who have an agenda, the pursuit of which has killed millions of Sudanese and uprooted and destroyed the lives of millions more. While their agenda is radically ideological, it is equally about personal power and enrichment. They are not at all suicidal, but they respond only to credible threats against their power and prosperity. The international community with its limitless posturing and (too often) empty words has, to date, never constituted a credible threat. During its seventeen-year reign, the NIF engaged seriously with critics only once, that being when confronted by a strong Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A) and an energetic international coalition led by the United States. The result was the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), an incredible, detailed document that ended a twenty-two year war between the NIF government and the people of southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Abyei. Despite Khartoum's deliberately slow and selective implementation, in my view, the CPA is now at very serious risk of survival.

Power and wealth in Sudan have historically been concentrated in "the center", in fact in just a few tribes. All the peripheral populations-North, South, East and West-have, as a result, been marginalized, largely destitute, powerless and lacking development, regardless of their religious, cultural or ethnic background. The U.S. initiative beginning in 2001 made rather incredible progress in ending hostilities between the SPLM and the NIF government and opening up humanitarian access to war-affected people, raising the hopes and expectations of a better life for almost all Sudanese. That the peace process took four

years is not surprising, given the egregious history to be overcome and the quality of the final text. The CPA was signed in January 2005. In April an SPLM delegation went to Khartoum to begin implementation arrangements. On landing at Khartoum's airport they were engulfed by joyous throngs of Sudanese of all backgrounds-Muslims, Christians, Africans, Arabs and others- hoisting the delegation onto their shoulders and dancing in the streets. They understood the implications of the CPA to be for all Sudanese. On July 8 when Dr. John de Mabior, chairman of the SPLM and Commander-in-Chief of the SPLA arrived in Khartoum to sign the Interim Constitution that was to implement the CPA, huge crowds of Northerners and Southerners estimated by some at 6-8 million came out to meet him. His popularity was such that, in a free election, it is likely that he could be elected President of Sudan by all the people. A New Sudan was being born.

But Darfur was in flames. In February 2003, perhaps seeing the progress of CPA negotiations and concerned about being left out of the benefits of the CPA, "rebels" from Darfur's marginalized populations who were considered "African" as distinct from "Arab" initiated hostilities against the NIF government. The NIF responded precisely as it had in the war against the SPLA. This involved destruction of civilian populations, denial of humanitarian assistance to war-affected civilians, utilization of surrogate Arab militias in coordination with formal government military forces and pretence of themselves being the aggrieved party, being the "sovereign" government. The violence exhibited a character far beyond that which could fairly be described as "military." Ethnic cleansing was clear. Genocide was its truer name.

The CPA includes a provision that the South and potentially Abyei can legally secede from the Sudan state if a referendum in those areas, scheduled for 2011, so decides. (The people of Southern Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains, to their great dismay, have no similar option and fear being overwhelmed by Khartoum eventually). The NIF committed itself to make unity attractive but the war in Darfur has demonstrated to the SPLM that unity in a state dominated by the NIF would be anything but attractive. Many core NIF adherents were appalled by this provision, not just at the potential dismemberment of the Sudanese state but also because a large percentage of Sudan's known oil reserves, now increasingly coming on line, are located in the South. If the South legally seceded, that oil would then belong to it as a new separate country. Those NIF personnel also saw other CPA interim provisions as contemptible: that Dr. Garang would become Sudan's First Vice-President that the South would have its own government, that the SPLA would continue to exist as a component of "the national army", but separate from the Government's army, and that national elections would be held.

So, why did the NIF government sign the CPA? With its very limited allegiance from the Sudanese public and increasing military threats from Sudan's other disaffected marginalized populations, with the international war on terror potentially having implications for Sudan itself, being on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism and also being the political birthing place for Osama bin Laden, not to mention the NIF's own brand of radical politics, the NIF needed to buy time. It also hadn't, despite a twenty two year war, been able to defeat the SPLA. It was in their interests, at least "for now", to sign. At least signing guaranteed it six and one-half years of protected existence. Who could know what opportunities for a course-correction might materialize within that time-span?

On July 30, 2005 Dr. John de Mabior, the embodiment of the possibility of a united New Sudan, was killed in a helicopter crash. The opportunity had arrived. That very day, I believe, the NIF recalculated its future course of action.

To seize the opportunity, the NIF needed to eliminate the Darfur opposition (civilian and military), destabilize the SPLM, corrupt or abort any potential for a viable referendum, maintain possession of the oil

fields of Abyei, and ensure the degradation of the SPLA. The NIF has seen progress on all of these in the last fourteen months.

We are currently witnessing the NIF's attempt to achieve the elimination of its Darfur opposition. Khartoum is attempting to change the realities on the ground in Darfur before the international community gets serious, if that is possible. They believe they have "read" us, the international community, all accurately, the U.S. included. They believe there will be a continued slow response on our part to Darfur's genocide and acceptable limits to whatever actions are ultimately taken. After all, that's been pretty much the case throughout their tenure. Thus, the liquidation of the Darfur opposition is now in motion.

The NIF has successfully marginalized the SPLM within the "Government of National Unity" created by the CPA. The SPLM is largely powerless to affect significant national policy. The NIF has "bought" several SPLM officials and also inserted into the SPLM apparatus other key individuals whose loyalty is to Khartoum. Several veteran SPLM leaders, brilliant, capable men who were critical in achieving the CPA, have now left the country in despair. The process for undermining the referendum is now underway. The first elections, preliminary to any referendum, are scheduled for 2008. To prepare for them, basic elements, laws and structures must be put in place, especially in a context where there is no history of elections. For example, there has been no proper census in Sudan since 1983. Thus, the architecture for elections is being put in place in a context largely controlled by Khartoum loyalists. And, too, the international community is being of only limited assistance to the SPLM in its conversion from a rebel movement into a nationally-competitive political party, a serious shortcoming.

The future of Abyei, a place little understood by outsiders, is a critical issue as it is the repository of a significant amount of Sudan's oil; most of Abyei is an oil field. Currently that oil is being extracted under Government contracts with oil companies from China, with its UN Security Council veto power, Malaysia, India and Sudan itself. Its products are fueling the NIF's war in Darfur. The CPA provided for an Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) to determine Abyei's actual borders, so that oil revenues can be properly allocated. The ABC determined the boundaries but President Beshir has rejected it and also the appointment of an interim local government as provided in the CPA. To buy time as the clock ticks, he refuses to proceed. The highly volatile Abyei area, thus, remains largely in the hands of the Sudanese Army.

The Sudan Peoples Liberation Army is, in many ways, the reason the CPA exists. This rebel army, with very limited resources, could not be defeated by the Sudan army. But that was then; this is now. The balance may be changing. The riches of Khartoum are being used to modernize and equip the Sudan Army. The SPLA is largely as it was several years ago, perhaps even less so. In significant part, this is due to us. Endless debating regarding what the U.S. is authorized to do to help in the transformation of the SPLA into a modern military force is very dangerous. It could cost South Sudan and potentially all of Sudan tragically in the future. Transformation of the SPLA is the surest guarantee that the CPA will survive. It is my view the war in Darfur and the survival of the CPA are inextricably entwined, and the NIF sees it. If, through weak international responses to genocide, the NIF succeeds in eliminating its Darfur opposition, and that reality is combined with the reality of the loss of Dr. Garang, the only southern leader who had the stature to compete successfully with Khartoum, the stage is set for the NIF to entirely undermine the CPA. The SPLM can again compete, and its current leadership is trying to so position it, but its recovery from the loss of Dr. Garang and from the destabilization efforts of the NIF will take time. And the clock is ticking. Based on this analysis, I encourage the following urgent steps:

1. Deploy non-consensually the now-stymied UN protection force. In fact, some of the UN force already in the South, in such places as Wau virtually next door to Darfur, could be moved there quickly. In the meantime, declare and enforce a no-fly zone for Sudan military aircraft throughout Darfur. U.S. resources exist in Djibouti that could be used for enforcement purposes.
2. Provide substantial assistance to the SPLM to empower its participation in governance at all levels, to be seriously competitive as a national political party and to effectively govern the South. The Government of South Sudan also needs assistance in anti-corruption efforts, such as setting up an office of Inspector General of Government. Some of these issues were discussed by Salva Kiir, President of South Sudan, when he met with President Bush in July.
3. Focus now urgently on the upcoming interim elections and ultimately the referendum. Time is flying by, given what needs to be accomplished. Monitor preparations in detail and equip the SPLM to be able to fully participate in preparations.
4. Take Abyei seriously. If war breaks out again between the NIF and the SPLM, it will in my estimation likely begin in Abyei. Expose President Beshir's perfidy in delaying. Raise the issue at the UN Security Council and other appropriate forums.
5. Seriously assist the SPLA in its conversion from a rebel force to a modern military, The delays already caused by U.S. persistent bureaucratism have the potential for actually encouraging war and the ultimate loss of life and of the CPA.
6. Finally, given the "no negative consequences" pattern experienced by the NIF for crimes committed, accountability for past, current and future crimes is a critical issue. Unfortunately for Sudanese, the International Criminal Court seems to have disappeared. An internationally agreed-on system of accountability is desperately needed for Sudan's atrocities. The U.S. should actively take leadership in addressing this crying need.

Believe me, we are in really dangerous times regarding Sudan. It could happen that the CPA is stamped "CANCELLED", along with an incredible additional number of Sudanese lives. And if that happened, it would blot out one of the finest U.S. initiatives of the last decade.

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