

Darfur Movements: Vision and Blueprints for Action

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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 (Abuelbasher 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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