Security and Stability

Reflections on the Impact of South Sudan
on Regional Political Dynamics

Victor Angelo and Kate McGuinness

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Executive Summary

This analysis examines the regional political impact of South Sudan's independence on its neighbours. It takes into account the emergence of South Sudan as an independent nation, which has resulted in a new rapport de forces among the neighbouring states. This region of Africa is made up of countries with a history of conflicts and poor governance. State authority is weak – particularly in the border areas between Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda to the east; and Chad, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. Referred to here as an 'ellipse of insecurity', this vast area of instability defines the regional focus of the present analysis.

Our analysis covers the six-month period from July to December 2011. It examines the initial period of statehood for South Sudan and some of the primary challenges facing the world's newest state, following its emergence from decades-long conflict to achieve independence and establish its national identity. It reviews the potential regional consequences of the internal dynamics of South Sudan, as well as its unresolved relationship with Sudan, taking into consideration the complex political and security situation that has emerged in Sudan since July 2011.

In South Sudan, the government is faced with the priority task of building a stable, inclusive, democratic and prosperous state. This is a huge endeavour for a diverse society composed of numerous ethnic groups which for years have been divided through political and social polarization, poverty and economic marginalization, oppression, civil strife and war. In addition to developing a systematic approach to dealing with the root causes of its current violent conflicts, at the operational level the South Sudan must develop adequate structures of governance and the institutional capacities necessary to make them work effectively. These structures and capacities will have to be built up from scratch – a daunting task for an impoverished and fragile state.

More concretely, this analysis looks at three specific challenges that confront the government of South Sudan: resolving domestic conflict, comprehensive reform of the security sector, and creating genuinely representative politics. This overview of South Sudan finishes with a discussion of key issues related to its external relations.

In Sudan, the secession of South Sudan has effectively destabilized the centre of gravity of power in Khartoum, with the regime feeling under threat and seriously weakened. Our discussion assesses the divisions within the National Congress Party, relations between the political leadership and the Sudan Armed Forces and the violent conflicts underway in Sudan, particularly in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur. The ongoing conflicts in Blue Nile and South Kordofan further complicate inter-state relations. Instability in these regions has a profound impact on Sudan's domestic political environment and also on the security and development of South Sudan, in turn affecting regional stability. Our analysis also takes into account possible domino effects of the Arab Spring. The main conclusion here is that the political leadership of Sudan seems to have opted for the familiar path of confrontation, mistrust and political manoeuvring, thus creating ever-greater hostility towards South Sudan, which cannot but further destabilize the domestic situations of both countries and eventually impact on the broader region. This follows a deeply-entrenched historical pattern of brinksmanship, revenge and political intrigue – characteristics that have defined the prevailing political culture in many corners of this unstable region for decades. The leaders in both Khartoum and Juba will have to recognize the importance of cooperation that can lead to workable political and economic solutions – for the sake of their own national, personal political and economic interests, and most importantly for the well-being of their populations. The incentives for peace must outweigh the incentives for violence.

Relations between Khartoum and Juba are heavily influenced by the outstanding issues in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which have created obstacles to progress in both Sudan and South Sudan. Important unresolved CPA issues include fair and equitable oil revenue-sharing between Sudan and South Sudan, joint security protocols, demarcation of the disputed common border, and the status of Abyei. Dealing with the status of Abyei is particularly urgent, as the conflict between the Misseryia and Dinka groups is closely linked to the national-level conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. While we acknowledge the role of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in facilitating resolution of these outstanding issues, these issues have the potential to further destabilize relations between Khartoum and Juba, as well as the broader region. The international community is urged to acknowledge that normalizing north–south relations is the most pressing regional issue, as failure to do so could have serious repercussions for peace and security in the entire region. To this end, the international community should emphasize the high degree of economic, security and social interdependence between both countries, and should also increase their support to the AUHIP.

The ellipse of insecurity consists of the hinterlands of Chad and the Central African Republic, on their eastern frontiers, and the corresponding border regions in Sudan (Darfur), as well as South Sudan (Western Bahr Al-Ghazal, Western Equatoria and Central Equatoria states). It also includes the northeastern territories of the Democratic Republic of Congo. When national and state-level authority is weak, merely symbolic or virtually non-existent, such regions become fertile ground for the emergence of armed groups, local militias, outlaws and criminals. The incapacity of the formal state authorities to exercise law and order, border protection and basic human security in these remote areas has transformed them into one of the most dangerous parts of Africa. In this context, Uganda has become a key player in matters of regional security. The entry point for Uganda's greater involvement in the region has been the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army, a terrorist group with Ugandan roots which operates within the ellipse of insecurity.

This report also examines the roles of two key international actors, the United States and China, in relation to their capacities to contribute toward easing tensions between Sudan and South Sudan and to promote peace in the region. US mediation was critical for the signing of the CPA. During the period between the signing of the CPA and the referendum on independence in 2011, the USA played a major role in advising the leaders from both the north and the south to adhere to the agreement and keep the peace. In many ways, the relative success of the transition phase is very much linked to this strong, proactive US involvement with key actors in Sudan. Peace and security in the region now require a renewed US engagement, particularly in establishing stronger dialogue with Khartoum. Although the USA has acknowledged the African Union as the lead actor in negotiations over outstanding CPA issues, Washington still has an important role to play, in relation to more actively supporting AUHIP initiatives and in terms of offering incentives that can encourage both sides to come to agreement.

Sudan and South Sudan are serious testing grounds for China as an international actor, especially with respect to issues of governance for creating the foundations for regional stability, security and development. Although China has been making overtures to South Sudan, it must also maintain good relations with Sudan. This may position China as a key influential partner in the region, able to exert constructive influence on other key regional actors, Sudan in particular. China's economic diplomacy can be used as political leverage to promote cooperation between these two states by working to bridge the interests of Khartoum and Juba. To reinforce the constructive role China could play in the region, other members of the international community, es-

pecially the USA and other key donors to South Sudan, should look for ways of working more closely with Beijing. Experience has shown that when western countries consciously seek to involve China in their Africa policies, as was the case in Chad in 2008–2010, the Chinese response can be positive. Enhanced cooperation between the USA and China in the region would have a lasting impact on stabilization.

This analysis concludes with specific policy recommendations to regional and international actors, designed to enhance preventive diplomacy.

Acronyms

AU	African Union
AUHIP	African Union High-level Implementation Panel
CAR	Central African Republic
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPJP	*Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix*
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
FARDC	*Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo/*DRC Armed Forces
ICC	International Criminal Court
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
LJM	Liberation and Justice Movement
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MINURCAT	*Mission des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine et au Tchad*
NCP	National Congress Party
NISS	National Intelligence and Security Services
NUP	National Umma Party
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SPLM-N	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North
UPDF	Ugandan People's Defence Force

Introduction[1]

The January 2011 referendum in South Sudan was a watershed event in the long, violent and tension-filled historical process that led to the separation of Sudan into two distinct states. The southern population voted overwhelmingly for an independent South Sudan, and the newly emerging country is now joining the international community. This will continue to have wide-ranging and multi-dimensional political, economic and social consequences – for Sudan and South Sudan, for relations between these two states and for the broader region.

The world's newest nation state, South Sudan, is struggling to establish itself as a sovereign nation in a region of Africa defined by extraordinary fragility. As indicated by the Failed States Index 2011,[2] four of the world's most fragile (if not failed) states lie in this part of the world: Somalia tops the list, closely followed by Chad, then Sudan as number three and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as number four.[3] The nearby Central African Republic (CAR) ranks in eighth place, with Kenya at 16, Ethiopia 20, and Uganda 21. Except for Chad and Somalia, all these states share a common border with South Sudan, which is widely regarded as extremely fragile itself. Thus the early days of South Sudanese independence add an additional layer of instability and complexity to this already volatile region. Both risks and responsibilities accompany this new-found freedom. The most pressing of these will be examined here.

Complex and Shifting Dynamics of Conflict

In addition to the specific internal challenges and the shared problems related to full implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), stability in Sudan and South Sudan, as well as in the broader region, is threatened by complex and shifting conflict dynamics. Although many of these conflicts occur in the disputed border areas and therefore must be seen in relation to the broader north–south conflict, there are also local or community-level conflicts with their own internal dynamics defined by, *inter alia*, access to basic resources – land, pastures and water. In addition to being interrelated to state

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[1] The authors are deeply grateful to Ingrid Marie Breidlid, Advisor at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), for substantive feedback and advice throughout the production of this report, including detailed review of and comments on the final draft.

[2] Failed States Index 2011, *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2011. Subsequent references in the text to this Index are drawn from this source.

[3] In 2010 the DRC was ranked 5, which demonstrates the increasing instability of the country.

and/or national level conflicts, local-level conflicts can spill across into neighbouring states and acquire regionalized dimensions. Grievances and disputes at the local level have been effectively manipulated by state and national interests throughout the region. Such conflicts can rapidly escalate to become entangled at the national level. When important mineral resources are at stake, such as oil, gold, diamonds, uranium and other strategic resources, third-party involvement and other outside interests further impact on already complex conflict dynamics. In turn, these dynamics have a profound effect on the challenging tasks of state- and nation-building.

Central governments and rebel militia groups alike have been known to exploit one another in pursuit of their own interests in this region. This is a sophisticated, dynamic form of power politics played out across the shifting and multiple landscapes of tribal and ethnic territories, local communities, state authorities and/or national governments, which sometimes do and at other times do not intersect. In other words, powerful actors – whether tribal leaders, militia commanders, local, state or national level politicians – cleverly and expediently seek their own self-interested advantage in order to hold on to and consolidate power, however they may perceive this. Often, revenge, mistrust and historical animosities are driving forces for these complicated and multi-layered conflicts.

From a geopolitical perspective, the splitting of Sudan into two states may be regarded with apprehension by political leaders in the region whose countries share similar ethnic, cultural, economic and political divides. For such observers, the primary point is that the fracture of Sudan could serve as a model for similar conflicts elsewhere in the region. If the southern populations could separate from Sudan and become independent, why can't other peoples do the same, in contexts that can be considered as comparable to the Sudanese? If the fundamental principle of the African Union as absolute respect for the borders inherited from colonial times could be ignored in the case of Sudan, and populations can be permitted to separate along ethno-cultural lines, could not Chad or Nigeria or Cote d'Ivoire, for instance, follow the same path as a way of addressing the profound inequalities, discrimination and marginalization that define their own domestic situations?

Closer observation of developments in the region, however, indicates that a break-up à la mode of Sudan is not the key political dimension that could influence national or regional politics in the region. Nor should an Arab versus Christian/Bantu divide be considered as a relevant analytic paradigm. The Sudanese process that led to the creation of a new country is unique, a political-military process that began im-

mediately following decolonization in 1956. Evidence on the ground does not support the view that Sudanese independence processes are likely to encourage any serious new attempts to replicate the same elsewhere in the region – not even in the case of Chad, which has the closest situation to the cultural mix that prevailed in Sudan before July 2011.

What is of great significance is that the regional balance of power has been impacted by the formation of a new state. It is therefore important to analyse the strategic ramifications of the establishment of South Sudan in this complex region, examining how much this affects the politics of its neighbours in their relations with one another, the alliances, alignments, destabilizing actions and conflict of interests among them, as well as the strategic interests of global powers from outside the region, in particular China and the USA. Alongside this focus on state relations, it is equally important to examine how and to what extent internal political and security dynamics, including local-level conflicts with significant potential to spillover into neighbouring states, impact on state relations, as well as on the overall stability and security in the region.

Methodology

The primary methodology informing this analysis is qualitative and derives from an experience-based approach. This includes political insight that draws on the main author's extensive knowledge, long-term observation and hands-on experience of the region. This is supported by key-informant interviews with primary and related stakeholders, based on the author's network of relevant contacts in the region. A desk study with systematic review of open sources has also been undertaken, examining media coverage, briefing papers and reports from international organizations, official documents and government statements. The methodology has been further refined by a conflict analysis model oriented to gaining a deeper understanding of the dynamics of fragile states. This analysis also seeks to contribute to a more operational understanding of this concept.

Here, a 'fragile state' is taken to be one that is extremely vulnerable to internal and external shocks, especially to conflict within and beyond its borders. The capacity of a fragile state to deliver basic services like security and territorial control, and to ensure the economic, political, social, cultural and physical well-being of its citizens, is seriously compromised. The primary institutions of a fragile state suffer from a range of dysfunctions that create persistent crises. Thus, a fragile state is defined by significant inequalities, patterns of marginalization and exclusion, lack of minimum human security and the inability to pro-

vide basic protection for human and political rights. The overall effect of such wide-ranging deficits and the ensuing profound problems is to undermine and de-legitimate state authority across multiple levels.

> Current conventional wisdom about fragile and/or failed states holds that they pose a serious threat to international security. However: The brutal truth is that the vast majority of weak, failing, and failed states pose risks primarily to their own inhabitants. When governments cannot discharge basic functions, their citizens pay the heaviest price. Countries in the top ranks of the FSI [Failed States Index] face a much higher risk of internal conflict, civil violence, and humanitarian catastrophe (both natural and man-made). They are settings for the worst human rights abuses, the overwhelming source of the world's refugees, and the places where most UN peacekeepers must go... Beyond those living in such countries, the heaviest brunt of state failure is borne by neighbouring states; violent conflict, refugee flows, arms trafficking, and disease are rarely contained within national borders.[4]

In short, pervasive human and state insecurity are primary consequences of state fragility and failure, the heaviest burdens of which are borne by the citizens of these states. Each and every one of the countries in this region reflects these harsh realities. In some of them (Sudan, South Sudan, DRC and CAR) there is ongoing insurgency and armed conflict; others are recovering from long-term violent conflicts. This is a region where arms and small weapons abound, flowing freely, out of control. This is a region where there is little government authority over large swathes of peripheral parts of national territory. This is a region where states are unable or unwilling to provide for the basic, fundamental needs and rights of their citizens.

Outline of Analysis

This analysis examines the political consequences of the birth of South Sudan for the stability (or instability), peace and security of the region.[5] Its scope is limited to the geopolitical area in which South Sudan and Sudan are located, including their immediate neighbours: CAR, DRC, Uganda and Chad. Passing reference is also made to broader regional actors like Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Egypt and Libya. The analysis falls into three corresponding parts. Part I examines key internal dynamics in South Sudan and Sudan, as well as north–south relations as these are shaped by unresolved CPA issues. Part II extends this analysis to examine the broader regional context to which South Sudan and Sudan belong, with attention to demarcating the ellipse of insecurity that spans the entire region. Part III considers the role of two key international actors, the USA and China, including how their policies in the region are being re-shaped to take into

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4   Patrick Stewart, 'The Brutal Truth' in *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2011, p. 1.
5   The analysis focuses on the six-month period, beginning in July 2011 and ending December 2011, with South Sudan's formal accession to independence.

account the new dynamics that define regional relations, and how they might more constructively contribute to easing tensions between Sudan and South Sudan. The analysis finishes with a series of related policy recommendations.

The central objective of this report is to identify and analyse key warning signs of possible fissures in governance and society that could lead to broader destabilization, violent conflict and insecurity in the region. Attention is also paid to factors that might promote greater stability, including how they might be better supported and encouraged: what are the key drivers of peace and stability, and how might these be strengthened? The ultimate goal is to better inform preventive diplomacy and related decision-making processes. As one commentator has observed, 'Any new policy toward failed [or fragile] states needs to focus on prevention rather than reaction, not only to avoid the need for military force, but also because in many places intervention simply will not be possible... once violence breaks out.'[6]

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6   James Traub, 'Think Again', in *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2011, p. 6.

Part I. Primary Reference Points: Sudan and South Sudan

The following discussion focuses on South Sudan and Sudan as primary reference points for better understanding the regional implications of South Sudan as a new state. It examines key internal dynamics and challenges of each country, and the impacts on north–south relations. At issue in both cases is a concern to identify critical warning signs and potential flash points for heightened tensions and hostilities between these two unfriendly neighbours. The analysis also takes into account possible drivers of peace – those factors that might constructively serve to defuse what is undeniably an extremely volatile situation.

At present, relations between Sudan and South Sudan dominate the regional landscape, threatening even greater instability in this already unstable part of the world. Normalizing north–south relations is therefore imperative. Moreover, given their high degree of economic, security and social interdependence, both countries would also benefit from peaceful relations and enhanced cooperation.

For South Sudan, troubled relations with the north serve only to perpetuate and further undermine its own internal stability. Among other things, hostilities with Sudan distract valuable resources and attention from the overwhelming domestic challenges of nation- and state-building, which should be South Sudan's highest priority. In his opening speech to the second session of the South Sudan Legislative Assembly in Juba on 24 January 2011, President Salva Kiir stressed two points above all others: if South Sudan was to avoid the risk of becoming a non-viable entity, it would have to build strong relations with the north and create a shared national identity in the south.[7] To date, these aspirations have not been achieved.

Despite its own large-scale internal problems, Sudan remains intent on being a spoiler and trouble-maker in the region, with growing animosity toward the south, especially as regards outstanding CPA issues. Early promises of cooperation between these two new neighbours vanished rapidly, replaced by aggressive rhetoric on both sides. Nor do Sudan's relations with other neighbours in the region appear to be

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7   Paul O'Grady and Geoffrey Weichselbaum, 'Prospects for Democracy in the World's Newest State', *Democracy Reporting International Country Report*, April 2011, p. 8.

faring much better. The recent decision of the East African Community (EAC) to prevent Sudan from joining on technical and ethical grounds, combined with the controversy surrounding the court decision in Kenya on President Omar Bashir and the International Criminal Court's indictment,[8] all illustrate the current state of these relations. Khartoum finds itself caught in a vicious circle of isolation – within its own territory and with respect to the south – where its actions only work to reinforce the unfavourable image of Sudan in the region. Sudan, like South Sudan, urgently requires special attention from the international community. Qualified engagement with Khartoum is the only way towards establishing greater stability and security in the region.

1. South Sudan: Key Internal Dynamics

In addition to the pressing need to find a negotiated settlement to still-unresolved CPA issues (see section 3 below), South Sudan faces two key strategic issues. First, the government must build a stable and prosperous state based on a coherent and inclusive national identity – after decades of marginalization, oppression, civil strife and war, deep political and ethnic divisions, along with poor institutional capacity, virtually non-existent infrastructure and widespread poverty. Second, the world's newest state must build and develop relations with the community of nation states to which it now belongs, with focused attention on developing strategic cooperative relations with its neighbours in the region, Sudan in particular, and with key donors.

In the best of circumstances, achieving any one of these goals would be daunting. Today's South Sudan faces these and many other challenges in a deeply unstable environment, at home and in the broader region, and with extremely limited human and physical resources.

1.1 State- and nation-building from scratch

The question of the government of South Sudan's almost total lack of capacity to exert sovereign authority and the politically-exclusive character of the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which has overwhelming control over power at national and state levels, remain key features of the new state, as does the more general need to make the difficult transition from the long fight for independence to the business of good governance: from 'freedom fighter' to politician, from rebel to civil servant or demobilized civilian, and from combatant to disciplined (professional) soldier in a modern force.

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8   Toby Collins, 'AU opposes Kenyan ruling in favour of Bashir's ICC prosecution' in *Sudan Tribune*, 05 December 2011.

These factors seriously menace the country's stability and democratization processes, and are also major impediments to development.

Among a host of urgent and overwhelming tasks related to building South Sudan as a nation state, three stand out as central priorities. South Sudan must: a) more effectively resolve its internal conflicts; b) undertake a comprehensive approach to creating an effective, credible and professionalized security sector, with a functioning judicial system; and c) better enable a truly representative form of government. Addressing these closely related issues would contribute to stabilizing and strengthening the fragile internal situation in South Sudan.

a. Resolving domestic conflict

South Sudan continues to be a society caught up in fierce violent conflict with itself. According to UN sources, at least 1,500 people have been killed in the violence that has affected all of the south's 10 states since the January 2011 referendum.[9] This number rose steeply with the inter-tribal violence in Pibor in Jonglei state in late December 2011, where unconfirmed estimates from local authorities indicate that more than 3,000 people were killed and tens of thousands more displaced. There are no less than seven significant rebel militias currently fighting against the government, plus an undetermined number of other local armed groups.[10] Violent clashes between these armed groups and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) are a common occurrence, giving rise to massive displacements in affected areas.[11] There are also deep ethno-political divisions within the SPLA, and divisions between the SPLA and government leaders in Juba. All this is made more complex by tendencies to link local-level grievances to nation-level politics. In addition to tensions along the border with Sudan, there is also insecurity and tension along the borders to Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

As regards rebel militias, thus far the Juba government has taken an approach defined by buying them off (patronage in the form of excessively high ranks and/or financial incentives) or attempting military defeat. Neither approach has been successful, but arguably instead has added to the emergence of new rebellions and greater instability. On the one hand, patronage sends a message to local militia leaders that, at the end of the road, they can expect some form of compensation worth fighting for. On the other hand, aggressive SPLA tactics have backfired: they have angered the local communities aligned with mili-

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9 This is a conservative UN estimate based on reported incidents, as of mid-December 2011.
10 'Fighting for Spoils: Armed Insurgencies in Greater Upper Nile', *Sudan Issue Brief*, Human Security Baseline Assessment, Small Arms Survey, 18 November 2011, p. 3.
11 For example, the OCHA Humanitarian Appeal for 2012 indicates that an estimated 300,000 people have been displaced since southern independence.

tia groups and created conditions for continued instability and the escalation of violence.[12]

By failing to resolve these conflicts, as well as continuing to ignore their underlying root causes, the government in Juba perpetuates the fragilities of its own state and contributes to increasing instability in the region. None of the post-conflict processes related to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, including civilian disarmament, have been properly planned for – whether by the South Sudanese government or by the international community. Implementation of activities in these areas has remained largely *ad hoc*. State- and nation-building in South Sudan will require a comprehensive conflict management package to help establish lasting peace within the country. An integrated and coordinated approach should be fully supported by South Sudan's top political leadership, and backed by an alliance of key international partners. In particular, consideration should be given to linking up the current phase of national construction to the support that could be provided by the UN Peacebuilding Commission. South Sudan is, of all cases, the best suited for inclusion in the mandate of the Commission. A decision on this matter is expected during the first half of 2012.

b. Comprehensive reform of the security sector

Closely related to the need to settle internal conflicts, it is time to plan for holistic reform and reconstruction of the armed and security forces. As part of developing the professionalism of the SPLA (an objective assisted mainly by the US Department of Defense, with some UK participation), it is crucial to recognize the need to re-organize the military, reduce its numbers, demobilize those who are no longer necessary or cannot respond to the new tasks assigned to the national armed forces, reintegrate demobilized military personnel into civilian life, and bring balanced representation to the institution in terms of ethnic composition. It is estimated, for example, that the SPLA has between 170,000 and 180,000 troops, the majority of whom are Dinka. Close to 90% of the soldiers and officers are illiterate, which poses additional challenges for successful reintegration. The transformation of this armed force into a modern army is thus a major undertaking that will require considerable resources, a carefully planned multi-year programme and close attention to the issue of reintegration, which must be seen as an essential component of the broader development agenda for South Sudan – especially as civilian employment opportunities are so limited. The donor community must address this crucial strategic matter in close liaison with the government, and in a tightly coordinated and carefully phased manner. Without an overall strategy for re-

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12 'Fighting for Spoils: Armed Insurgencies in Greater Upper Nile', *Sudan Issue Brief*, Human Security Baseline Assessment, Small Arms Survey, 18 November 2011, p. 9.

form, this process may turn extremely volatile, as has been seen in the growing hostilities between army factions and the government.

Other components of the security sector, such as the prison service, and the national and state police forces, are also in need of large-scale reform and capacity building. These activities should go hand-in-hand with strengthening the justice system, which is almost non-existent. There is ample evidence and experience available from neighbouring countries, as well as throughout the whole of Africa, in such reform initiatives and processes.[13] There are valuable lessons to be learned, in terms of both the successes and failures of similar undertakings elsewhere. Particularly crucial is the need to involve relevant civil society organizations in all efforts related to security sector reform.

c. Creating genuinely representative politics

The government in Juba must make a strong and genuine commitment to establishing inclusive, representative government at all levels: national, state and local. With most resources and power concentrated in Juba, the goal of decentralized state authority remains elusive. Transparency and accountability are equally important. South Sudan is a diverse and multi-ethnic society, with more than 60 ethnic and linguistic groups. The government in Juba must not only pay attention to building state institutions from scratch, but must also focus on establishing national unity amidst great diversity, in particular as this can be reflected in those very state institutions it is creating. As Kiir has stated:

> Creating and forging a common identity for all Southern Sudanese irrespective of ethnicity, region or creed is... imperative... [W]hat is critical is the maturity to recognize the fact that none of our communities can go it alone. ...It is now time to consolidate the unity of the people of Southern Sudan and cease from pointless manoeuvres and conspiracies that will take us nowhere.[14]

Are such inclusive aspirations that value the rich diversity of South Sudan's peoples already in jeopardy? There are well-founded fears that SPLM dominance of the national and state legislature, combined with the experience from the general elections in 2010 and trends related to constitutional reform, will result in South Sudan becoming a *de facto* one-party state.[15] Grievances and political wrangling at the state and national levels appear to indicate that discontent is growing,

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[13] Mozambique, which was in a very similar situation in terms of a lack of the minimum critical mass of basically trained human resources, might offer valuable insights.

[14] Opening speech by President Kiir to the second session of the South Sudan Legislative Assembly, Juba, 24 January 2011.

[15] For an in-depth analysis of constitutional reform in South Sudan, see Paul O'Grady and Geoffrey Weichselbaum, 'Prospects for Democracy in the World's Newest State', *Democracy Reporting International Country Report*, April 2011.

which some link to what they see as the SPLM politics of exclusion.[16] Dinka domination of the armed forces and the economy is a cause for concern, as are nepotism, cronyism, lack of meritocracy in hiring practices, corruption, as well as tribal, age and gender biases.

As one commentator asserts, '… South Sudan must defy the reality in Africa that losing an election means remaining in the cold until the next election, a situation that polarizes and raises political temperatures that sometimes lead to conflict.'[17] Although the SPLM managed to create a sense of unity during the war of liberation, it must now forge a renewed and redefined sense of national unity from the elements of representative democracy in a fractious, multi-cultural society.

1.2 Diplomatic Priorities for the World's Newest State

As a result of joining the world community as an internationally recognized independent state, South Sudan now has the right to establish diplomatic relations with every member of the United Nations. At this stage, mindful of its limited resources, South Sudan would be best advised to focus its initial diplomatic initiatives on its own immediate region, with a concerted focus on improving relations with its northern neighbour. Alongside this, efforts should be made to improve and build on its relations with key donors and development partners, including the USA, the UK and Norway ('the Troika'), as well as the UN, World Bank, African Union and more recently, Turkey and China.

At present, South Sudan maintains 13 embassies abroad, including in key neighbouring countries like Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, the DRC and Kenya. However, it has no diplomatic missions in Sudan, Chad or the Central African Republic. As an important step toward normalizing north–south relations, South Sudan urgently must open an embassy in Khartoum, as Sudan did in Juba. This would not only help facilitate better dialogue and reduce growing tensions between Khartoum and Juba, but such a move would also bring benefits to those citizens of South Sudan who will continue to live in the north. Protecting the rights of its own citizens has become a more pressing matter for South Sudan: on 13 January 2011, the parliament in Khartoum passed a law cancelling the Sudanese nationality of people from the south or whose origins could be traced to what was to become South Sudan. This law

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16   Joost van der Zvan, *Evaluating the EU's Role and Challenges in Sudan and South Sudan*, September 2011, International Alert, p. 14.
17   Kizito Sabala, 'Sudan: Beyond the 2011 Referendum', *African Peace and Conflict Journal*, Volume 4, Number 1, June 2011, p. 58.

is unjust and violates basic rights of the citizens. Its abrogation should be part of negotiations between the two countries.[18]

Despite the imperative to develop these crucial relations, South Sudan is currently determined to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. This is evident in the December 2011 visit of President Kiir to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem and the significant Israeli diplomatic presence that is planned for Juba. Here it is strategically important for the leadership in South Sudan to be clear about what deeper ties with Israel mean. This must be fully understood by South Sudan's regional neighbours, especially Sudan and Egypt. Two main issues must be clarified in this regard, with both South Sudan and Israel bearing a burden of responsibility to do so.

First, lack of transparency about the reasons for deepening South Sudanese–Israeli relations raises the stakes in Khartoum. For example, in a tit-for-tat response to Kiir's visit to Israel, the Sudanese regime took no time to invite the chairperson of Hamas, Ismael Haniyah (who is also the political leader and the *de facto* prime minister in the Gaza Strip), to Khartoum. If ambiguities about deeper relations with Israel persist, that may further erode north–south relations and consequently contribute to further regional destabilization. Khartoum's invitation to Haniyah also indicates that if South Sudanese–Israeli relations remain unclear, then this has a broader, albeit indirect potential to affect Israeli/Palestinian relations. In Khartoum, Israel is perceived as a threat, for reasons that have much to do with the pan-Arabism policies of Bashir and his close relations with extremist elements within the Palestine cause, as well as in view of recent allegations of drone activity over eastern Sudan.[19] Khartoum's invitation to Haniyah appears to signal that Sudan is ready to expand its support to Hamas through both financial and military assistance.

In particular, the South Sudanese leadership cannot give the impression that their security concerns will be responded to with the direct or indirect assistance of Israel, especially in relation to actual or perceived security threats from the north. Some 40 years ago, as older SPLM/A members will undoubtedly recall, Israel sent military teams to help train SPLA combatants. Equally so, Khartoum has not forgot-

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18 In what was regarded as a breakthrough, Sudan and South Sudan negotiated and initialed framework agreements on nationalities in March 2012. These agreements permit nationals of each state the rights to enjoy 'freedom of residence, freedom of movement, freedom to undertake economic activity and freedom to acquire and dispose property' (quoted in 'North, South sign agreements on nationality, border demarcation' by Tesfa-Alem Tekle, *Sudan Tribune*, 14 April 2012). This agreement should have been signed by both presidents at the planned summit meeting in Juba in April 2012, but this meeting was postponed due to growing tensions between both countries. Confusion around the 8 April 2012 deadline for southerners resident in the north to return to the south to obtain the necessary documentation for residency in the north has also complicated matters.

19 'Sudanese president says Israel behind airstrike on convoy', *Sudan Tribune,* 26 April 2009.

ten this. There is already a strong Israeli presence in the region (not all of it of a diplomatic nature), especially in Ethiopia, but also in Kenya, Eritrea and Uganda. From the perspective of Khartoum, strengthening Israeli cooperation with South Sudan looks very much like another step towards closing the circle around Sudan.

Second, development cooperation with Israel in the area of water management can leave no space for ambiguity. This means, above all, that Israeli support must not be perceived as an attempt at controlling the waters of the Nile in a manner that would threaten the vital interests of countries downstream, notably Sudan and Egypt. With ratification, the Nile Basin Cooperation Framework Agreement of 2010 (which entered into force in March 2011) would remove Egypt's previous powers to veto upstream countries from developing hydroprojects. Both Sudan and Egypt are against the agreement. It is therefore crucial for South Sudan to provide clear guarantees that the Nile waters will not be interrupted. This is of vital importance as regards the regional external relations puzzle.

Such diplomatic moves raise a question about responsibility. South Sudan has an obligation to act responsibly and transparently in its diplomatic relations, particularly those perceived as sensitive in relation to regional stability. However, the international community is equally bound to act responsibly in its efforts to establish and/or deepen diplomatic relations with South Sudan. This is a mutual obligation to contribute constructively to, not undermine, a region that is defined by a collection of fragile states. Supporting stability in South Sudan, and therefore the broader region, is in the best interests of the entire international community.

2. Sudan: Key Internal Dynamics

Sudan is now a more fragile state than before the January 2011 referendum for southern secession and the creation of South Sudan as an independent state six months later, on 9 July that year. A range of factors have contributed to the growing instability in Sudan, several of the most important of which are considered here. Closer examination of these factors can offer insight into current Sudanese political realities – not only as these bear on domestic dynamics, but also as they impact on north–south relations, the broader region and the international community, especially two central geopolitical actors, the USA and China. In each case, what is at stake is power. This is the primary political challenge facing the regime in Khartoum, as understood by its leadership: how can it most effectively hold onto and reconsolidate power?

The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) is known for lurching from crisis to crisis, as well as taking a fractured approach to the problems it faces – the long-used 'divide and rule' strategy, combined with generous forms of patronage, nepotism and cronyism, that has been effective in keeping the Bashir regime in power for so many years. Some consider this government as a crisis management mechanism. Certainly the regime in Khartoum is under increasing pressure both from inside and outside the NCP. How it responds to these challenges, namely appearing to seek to preserve power at all costs, perhaps indicates that the political balancing act is about to topple. Crucially, mounting pressure on the ruling regime indicates that this is a different government than the one which negotiated the CPA a number of years ago. Although the political actors in Khartoum have remained largely the same, it is essential that South Sudan and the international community recognize the changed circumstances in which the Sudanese government finds itself. This implies the need to devise new approaches to Khartoum.

These complex domestic political dynamics must also be seen in the broader context of Sudan's economic crisis. The economic foundations of the country have become very weak and continue to erode, especially as the stalemate over oil revenues persists. At a time when a large percentage of state resources continue to be spent on the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the economy faces collapse and desperately needs international help, particularly with its crushing burden of external debt, estimated at US $38 billion. The IMF projects negative real GDP growth for the northern economy: –0.2% in 2011 and –0.4% in 2012. Foreign currency is scarce, the Sudanese pound has lost value against the dollar (about 70% since the split of the country), inflation is hovering at 20%, creating malaise and hardship among urban populations and adding a new layer of opposition to the government. Extreme poverty is widespread. The UN Development Programme reports that 46.5% of the population lives on less than US $1 per day and 31.8% children under the age of five are malnourished.

2.1 Internal Party Divisions: the National Congress Party

The NCP leadership circle is beset with deep divisions. Presiding over the breakup of Sudan has put Bashir in an increasingly difficult position, both with respect to his own party, the NCP, and opposition parties. The 75% loss of oil revenue as a result of southern secession and the current economic crisis in Sudan adds significantly to these political pressures. The seriously reduced revenues make it increasingly more difficult for the regime in Khartoum to maintain and continue the system of political patronage (pay offs, financial gifts, high level appointments and so on), which has traditionally been the glue that

binds supporters to the NCP and Bashir, both in Khartoum and throughout the rest of the country.

At present, it is unclear how deep the divisions within the NCP are. NCP leadership is not only opaque, but also adept at dissemblance. However, the party is undoubtedly embroiled in heated debate about the most effective way for the NCP to retain power. Opponents are divided into two camps: those who want to maintain the status quo (pro-Bashir), and those favouring a change of party leadership (anti-Bashir).[20] Those inclined to preserve the status quo are aligned with presidential assistant Dr Nafie Ali Nafie, a long-term supporter of Bashir, and deputy chair of the NCP, a party position of critical importance to NCP leadership dynamics. Seeking to conduct NCP business as usual, this side of the debate continues to regard a military solution to the consolidation of power as credible. Although facing multiple threats (e.g., security, political, social and economic), Bashir and Nafie nonetheless consider the opposition forces to be weak and therefore easy to defeat by military means. Following southern independence, both men expressed the view that despite current crises, Sudan would eventually be stronger.[21]

Anti-Bashir NCP members appear to have as flag-bearer First Vice President Ali Osman Taha,[22] who has reportedly expressed interest in negotiating with opposition political forces and engaging in dialogue to narrow the gaps between the north and the south. Such moves have remained stalled by party leadership, thus sidelining what some see as this more moderate NCP camp. A public dispute between Taha and Nafie over southern independence seems to illustrate the deep fractures within the NCP. Whereas Taha was seen to have made too many concessions to the south during the CPA process, and was consequently marginalized in the post-CPA period following the death of John Garang, Nafie was opposed to the split in the first place. In stark contrast to Bashir and Nafie, Taha has said that if establishing an Islamic state would lead to secession, then he would not do this. In a statement to African delegations participating in a recent NCP convention, Taha explained:

> We hope the other countries that live in similar experiences reach better solutions. Because, in spite of our acceptance of the principle of self-determination,

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20 Some commentators refer to a divide between 'hardliners' versus 'moderates' or 'reformists', but such terms do not aptly capture the nature of debate within the NCP. Hence the characterization used here: those in favour of the status quo and those who seek a change of leadership; the pro- and anti-Bashir camps

21 'South Sudan's secession is not a model for conflict resolution', *Sudan Tribune*, 27 November 2011.

22 Taha is suspected of playing a key role in the crisis in Darfur, and human rights groups have accused him of having strong links to the purported Janjaweed leader, Musa Hilal, whom he is said to have helped get released from prison in 2003. However, Hilal later slammed both Taha and Nafie.

we feel it should not be the first choice on which can be built relations between the groups in the same country. We have to look for other alternatives.[23]

Although Taha might be perceived as associated with pushing for a new way forward, this appears to be restricted largely to NCP party politics, despite calls for engaging the opposition and improving north–south dialogue. Taha is merely advocating an alternative route for the NCP to continue its hold on power – a change in top party leadership.[24]

In early December 2011, President Bashir finally announced that he had formed a new government following four months of negotiations with both of the largest opposition parties, the National Umma Party (NUP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).[25] The DUP joined the coalition government at the last minute, despite internal disagreement about the decision.[26] However, the NUP refused to join, with its party leader, former Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, stating: 'The biggest failing [of the new government] is the absence of a declared political program which means the continuation of the old NCP's program which created the crises.'[27]

As Bashir announced when the new government ministers were sworn in, 'We have waited for long in a bid to involve the biggest number of the political forces in the new government and we have succeeded…'[28] Despite the multi-party character of the new cabinet, it would be wildly inaccurate to interpret this as a genuinely representative government. It is merely a façade in the bid to re-consolidate ruling power, as is reflected *inter alia* in the distribution of government portfolios – the NCP retained responsibility for 11 key ministries. Moreover, Bashir has made it clear that he now perceives Sudan as more homogeneous since southern independence.[29] This blatant denial of

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23 'South Sudan's secession is not a model for conflict resolution', *Sudan Tribune*, 27 November 2011.
24 Also seen by many as the leader of the regime's Islamist faction, this is reinforced by Taha's support for the imposition of Sharia law, whereby he has stated that those who oppose Sharia will be the first to be tried and punished under it.
25 Beset by their own deep divisions, the two largest opposition parties have nonetheless tried to take advantage of Bashir's weakened position in post-secession Sudan. However, so far these efforts have been undermined by internal party political differences (notably among youth factions in the Umma who seek leadership change), as well as rifts between these main opposition parties. Hassan al-Turabi, who founded the Popular Congress Party after his split with Bashir and the NCP in 1999, might best be regarded as a political wild card: considered to be Sudan's leading Islamic ideologue, he is a canny long-term political survivor and an unpredictable political strategist.
26 In addition to the DUP, the new government coalition includes break-away factions from both the DUP and NUP, as well as break-away representatives from the SPLM-N. According to the Doha agreement, signed in July 2011, the new government also includes members from the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), a former rebel group from western Darfur. Source: 'Sudan's New Government Sworn In', *Sudan Tribune*, 10 December 2011.
27 *Ibid*.
28 *Ibid*.
29 'South Sudan's secession is not a model for conflict resolution', *Sudan Tribune*, 27 November 2011.

the rich diversity of the Sudanese population is further reflected in Bashir's assertion that Sudan is ready for the implementation of Islamic law.[30] He seems to ignore the risk that South Kordofan and Blue Nile might become, in the very near future, the 'new south of Sudan' in terms of increasing potentials for civil war. As the situation appears to be shaping up at present, this could signal the launch of a re-run of Sudanese post-colonial history.[31]

2.2 Troubled relations with the Sudan Armed Forces

Greater fragility in Sudan is also related to growing rifts between the government and the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), which has become increasingly critical of the regime in Khartoum. These tensions are potentially far more serious than divisions within the NCP. In July, Nafie came under fire from Brigadier-General Mohamed Ajeeb Mohamed, who publicly denounced Nafie in *al-Guwat al-Musalaha* (the SAF newspaper) for signing a peace agreement that would have recognized the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) as a legitimate political party in Sudan. Referring to the agreement as 'a betrayal of the nation and the faith', Mohamed concluded by stating that the SAF did not understand many NCP actions and perceived the regime as weak. He demanded that Bashir overrule Nafie, as otherwise the regime would face serious consequences. Bashir conceded and disavowed Nafie's decision to sign the agreement.[32] Bashir also outlawed the SPLM-N. In turn, however, these actions only served to reinforce SAF perceptions that Bashir's position is increasingly weak and dependent on serving SAF interests if he wishes to remain in power.

As with Bashir's struggle to control the NCP, this raises questions about government control of the SAF, which appears to be acting of its own accord:

> Today the General Headquarters of SAF, not the National Congress Party (NCP), is calling the tune in Sudan. The NCP's civilian leadership has been marginalized by the generals, who, having agreed to withdraw undefeated from the south, feel the political class risks a compromise too far. That includes tolerating endless, unproductive talks with Darfur's fractious armed movements. On May 5, five days after 11 soldiers died in an SPLA ambush in Abyei, the heads of the army and military intelligence presented President Omar al-Bashir with a de-

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30 *Ibid*.
31 At the same time, however, the extraordinary challenges related to building South Sudan from the ground up mitigate against this possibility. The international community in particular would think twice before embarking on a similar path in this fragile region of Africa.
32 Before this, in late April 2011, a clash between presidential security advisor and chief of intelligence, Salah Gosh, and Nafie also revealed power struggles in the NCP. After Gosh had approached two of the main opposition parties to explore whether either would be open to government talks, Nafie accused Gosh of betraying Bashir, who then sacked Gosh (who was also an ally of Taha in his long-standing rivalry with Nafie).

mand: 'Authorize us to take any necessary action without prior consultation.' Although the ultimatum was explicitly addressed to the international community, felt to be prevaricating over Abyei, it was also implicitly an ultimatum to the civilian leadership, including the president.[33]

Clearly, Bashir cannot afford to alienate the SAF leadership any further. To do so would expose him to even greater risks than he now faces within his own party. Reflecting a long-established practice in relation to maintaining the status quo, Bashir currently seems to be managing SAF disaffection through a strategy of 'divide and rule'. To minimize the risk of a potential coup, he has attempted to fragment the SAF leadership and/or engage in the patronage that has traditionally served to bind together NCP support. His present power base appears to rely on personal loyalty and tribal alliances, as well as the goodwill of key officers within the SAF.

2.3 Conflicts within Sudan

At present, rebellion in Sudan now stretches from the western border with Chad to its eastern border with Ethiopia. Since Sudan lost one third of its territory, tens of thousands of people have fled their homes and many have been killed in the escalating violence. Combat between the SAF and SPLM-N, which began in June 2011, has displaced an estimated 230,000 of the 1.2 million people living in this area. Beginning in early September 2011, violence in Blue Nile state has killed many, seen the arrest of hundreds of SPLM-N supporters, and displaced thousands. According to a recent UNHCR report, there are more than 30,000 Sudanese refugees, mostly from Blue Nile state, now living in western Ethiopia.[34] Embroiled in violent conflict since 2003, the UN estimates that the conflict in Darfur and the related humanitarian crises it has created have killed 300,000 people and displaced a further 2.7 million. Although violence has slowly tapered off since 2009, this region remains in a state of volatile instability. With Sudan battling on these different fronts, it is difficult not to characterize the country as already at war with itself again.

Some of this violence may be defined in relation to key unresolved CPA issues: future governance arrangements for South Kordofan (the Nuba Mountains) and the Blue Nile states, where the popular consultations on greater autonomy have not yet been implemented. Although these popular consultations are designed to determine the degree of autonomy and power sharing between these two states and central government in Khartoum (as opposed to full independence), Bashir

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33 Julie Flint. 'Return to War in Sudan's Nuba Mountains', *Peace Brief* 112, United States Institute of Peace, 2 November 2011, p. 4.
34 Fatoumata Lejeune-Kaba, 'Hundreds flee fresh violence on Sudan-South Sudan border', UNHRC news, 06 March 2012.

perceives the prospect of greater power decentralization as a threat. One way to interpret the fact that the government in Khartoum has been ignoring these political processes, preferring to leave them unresolved for the time being, is to see it as part and parcel of the more general problem Bashir faces in relation to holding onto power. This may be understood from at least two different perspectives, neither without serious risks.

First and foremost, the use of military power to suppress the ongoing conflicts (instead of opting for a political solution) is a smart move in light of SAF disaffection with the government in Khartoum.[35] Although Sudan is in a severe state of economic crisis, continued conflict in these regions nonetheless guarantees additional financial resources for the SAF, as well as more opportunities for personal enrichment, status and power among the military leadership. In turn, this may help ease tensions between the armed forces and the government – especially Bashir, who is dependent on the SAF to retain government control. Perhaps an SAF pre-occupied with combat on several fronts, far away from Khartoum, will be too busy to cause more problems for Bashir – even as this is probably a weaker motivation to avoid a political resolution of the conflicts. At the same time, however, this strategy poses its own dangers: it allows the SAF to flex their muscle and demonstrate their power to the government. Indeed, the generals appear to hold the upper hand now. As the Sudanese director of National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS), Mohamed Atta, recently pledged, '2012 is the year that will witness the crushing of all rebels whether in Blue Nile, Darfur or South Kordofan'.[36] This bodes ill for the possibility of political solutions to Sudan's internal conflicts. It may also increase the chances of a military coup as the SAF's contribution to regime change.

Second, and closely related, conflict on many fronts in Sudan serves to unify supporters of the beleaguered Bashir while working as a distraction from his adversaries within the NCP and other opposition parties (as well as the general public). Along similar lines, brutal displays of military might can work as an effective tool for discouraging civilian dissent. Likewise, however, this can work to stimulate opposition forces in Sudan, as is demonstrated in repeated calls for regime change by the National Consensus Forces, a group of opposition polit-

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[35]   At the same time, however, there is growing disaffection within the SAF itself, especially strong dissatisfaction with the ongoing conflicts in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. In particular, SAF members recently complained about a lack of resources (in case of a full-scale war with the south) and rampant corruption, and have called for political reforms to change the status quo which is threatening national security. See 'Sudan army officers warn Bashir & Hussein against rush to war with south', *Sudan Tribune*, 29 January 2012.

[36]   'UPDATED – Sudanese military plane crashes in North Kordofan', *Sudan Tribune*, 30 December 2011.

ical parties.[37] The formation of the Sudanese Revolutionary Front, an alliance between rebel militia groups in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, along with the SPLM-N, also offers further evidence that the regime's policies lead to radicalization. Among armed militia rebel groups in these disputed territories, SAF aggression has only worked to escalate violence. Defining a vicious circle, in turn, this offers continued justification for the regime in Khartoum to raise the military stakes (despite being unable to decisively defeat them). Likewise, this serves to reinforce an aggressive stance in negotiations with South Sudan on other outstanding CPA issues (see section 3 below).

The conflict in Darfur also remains unresolved, deeply tangled over issues of ethnicity, and access to resources and power sharing. For some, the question arises as to what extent the independence of South Sudan can be considered a viable option for various stakeholders, particularly in Darfur. In turn, this raises the question of a piecemeal approach to the remaining CPA issues relevant to Sudan versus the value of initiating a national dialogue process in Sudan.

Although Darfur has been somewhat more secure since 2009,[38] the conflict continues to simmer, and local grievances over government neglect and issues of autonomy remain. This is a rapidly changing conflict environment, set to hair-trigger responses. Escalating violence in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states is also seen as a compromising factor in relation to a peaceful settlement of the Darfur conflict. Despite the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, signed in July 2011 by the Government of Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), commitment to its full implementation does not appear forthcoming. Questions remain as to whether Khartoum is ready for a political solution, or would prefer to continue with military intervention –

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37 The National Consensus Forces (NCF) includes the NUP, Hassan Al-Turabi's Popular Congress Party (PCP), the Sudanese Communist Party and a number of smaller political formations. The NCF calls for the ruling NCP regime to be toppled through peaceful means—popular uprising and civil disobedience. Indicating the disarray of political opposition forces in Sudan, tensions are mounting between the NCF and the NUP. Source: 'Tensions escalate between Umma & opposition parties over regime change in Sudan', *Sudan Tribune,* 18 March 2012. There are additional tensions between the NCF and Sudan's Islamist parties and groups, who recently founded the Islamic Constitutional Front to advocate for the implementation of Sharia law. Members of the new group include the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi Ansar Al-Suna, the far-right Just Peace Forum (JPF) and a number of Sufi groups. NCP representatives were also present at the launch. Although attending the meeting in a personal capacity, Turabi was quick to dissociate the PCP from the radical coalition. Source: 'Sudanese opposition slams calls for Islamic constitution', *Sudan Tribune*, 1 March 2012.

38 Better cooperation between Sudan and Chad since 2009 has been a positive influence in reducing violent conflict in Darfur. Prior to this, both Chad and Sudan were known to have actively supported armed rebels as part of a proxy war effort to topple their respective regimes. However after numerous violent attempts by rebel groups to effect regime change, both leaders concluded that a peace aimed at maintaining the political status quo was more mutually advantageous and would better serve their own interests. The recent toppling of Colonel Gaddafi in Libya has also helped to create an environment more conducive to peace in Darfur, as he was likewise a known supporter of rebel groups throughout the region, including the JEM in Darfur. At the same time, regime change in Libya has also increased the flow of small arms in the region, which contributes to instability.

which would be a mistake. There are further questions about the willingness of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) to reach an agreement with Bashir versus their intent to provoke regime change.

The most significant of the armed groups in Darfur, the JEM, did not sign the Doha peace agreement. Efforts to formulate their own peace agreement with Khartoum so far have come to naught. Led by the UN, the AU and Qatar, the international community should advise both sides to reach a compromise. Such questions become even more important in light of SAF claims to have killed Dr Khalil Ibrahim, leader of the JEM, in late December 2011. Ibrahim's death, along with public outcry against this, may in fact re-ignite fighting and deepen rebel commitment for regime change in Khartoum. This would further impede implementation of the Doha agreement. It remains to be seen whether the newly-appointed members of the Darfur Regional Authority, the group tasked with implementing the peace agreement, can make progress. Among other challenges, the representative nature of this authority is in dispute.

2.4 The Arab uprisings: domino effects?

The extent to which the Arab Uprisings may spillover into Sudan, further destabilizing an already unstable situation, is anyone's guess. Sudan has some remarkably similar characteristics to those of other countries in the Arab region that have experienced recent upheavals. The people are struggling to cope with rising costs of living, especially for food and fuel. Moreover, as a primary cause that sparked previously successful public revolts against the government, as happened in 1964 and 1985, growing social unrest and discontent could boil over – as it has elsewhere.

Sudan's population is also relatively young, with approximately 70% (including South Sudan) under the age of 30. Like their counterparts in other Arab states, many youth are unemployed and seeking political inclusion, especially given the old, aging, corrupt and self-interested political leadership that dominates party politics in Sudan. Young people are also opposed to the 'Sudanization' of the education curricula, which prevents them from learning English and consequently limits their professional opportunities later in life, including the chance of jobs in the Gulf states. Having been in power for more than 20 years, Bashir is the only ruler many young people have known. Many think it is time for change.

Alongside this, Sudanese civil society has been marginalized, co-opted and manipulated for decades. Repeating past practice, recent demonstrations in Khartoum have also been rapidly infiltrated by the NISS. Despite such obstacles, civil society nonetheless remains an

essential advocate of genuinely democratic and representative government in Sudan. However, any efforts aimed at more active citizen mobilization are greatly hampered by the lack of genuine political opposition in Sudan, an absence of leadership on the civil society side and the persistent threat of government repression.

One significant difference between the Sudanese and their Arab neighbours who have taken to the streets is that the Sudanese population is war-weary after decades of brutal violence and civil war. In this, Sudan and Algeria seem to be in similar situations – too traumatized by conflict to want more deep social unrest. At the same time, Sudan seems to be on the verge of becoming engaged in civil war yet again in Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Abyei. If events in the broader region are to have an effect on triggering change in Sudan, this will have a uniquely Sudanese character, rather than simply replicating events elsewhere. It is also not likely happen any time soon.

These profound and multiple tensions indicate that the regime in Khartoum faces a range of governance issues, which in turn may lead to increasing instability if not properly addressed. These issues include civilian control of the armed forces, the gap between central government and the periphery (a problem of marginalization), constitutional reform oriented to enabling more democratic and representative politics, transparency and accountability, and so on. In short, these are questions about power and difference. While poor governance may be seen as a root cause of violence, it is arguably also only a symptom of the blunt power politics that has dominated and defined Sudanese political history. Regardless of how it is understood, poor governance is clearly a central dynamic in relation to the ongoing conflicts.

Although faced with such serious challenges, there are strong incentives for the NCP (most notably Bashir) to hold onto power at virtually any cost. The international community offers what is perhaps the most compelling of these. This is not ironic, but gives rise to complex questions about sovereignty, international conflict management and international law, timing and sequencing, and how to uphold international human rights obligations most effectively.[39] If Bashir loses his status as head of state, he will consequently become more vulnerable to arrest on behalf of the International Criminal Court.[40]

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[39] Indictments against members of the LRA also have similarly uneven consequences: some of those facing indictments would like to leave the LRA but are afraid to do so precisely because of the indictments. Instead, they remain in the LRA and perpetuate the cycle of violence. Source: 'The Lord's Resistance Army', policy briefing from the People's Peacemaking Perspectives, a project of Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, October 2011.

[40] Others who have been indicted alongside Bashir, include Ahmad Muhammad Harun (aka Ahmad Harun) and Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman (aka Ali Kushayb); Bahar Idriss Abu Garda; and Abdallah Banda Abakaer Nourain and Saleh Mohammed Jerbo Jamus.

Domestic circumstances offer a parallel incentive for Bashir to maintain control. He has held on to power for more than two decades in a complex, shifting and violent political environment. In order to survive in and dominate such hazardous circumstances, he has made a range of deadly foes at home. Many of these enemies would not hesitate to seek revenge if Bashir were to lose power.

The Arab Uprisings also offer Bashir and the NCP a possible reason to hold on to power. While this has the potential to further destabilize Sudan, it also holds out the prospect of stronger allies emerging in the region. The Muslim Brotherhood has already made gains in the 2011 Egyptian elections, perhaps further inspiring like-minded political parties elsewhere in the region on similar trajectories. In the shorter term, the collapse of the Gaddafi regime in Libya brings with it the added potential benefit of making it more feasible for Bashir to reduce and/or remove the threat of rebel militias from Darfur (although at the same time, the flow of small arms from Libyan mercenaries into this region escalates potentials for greater violence).

3. North–South Relations: Outstanding CPA issues

The unresolved CPA issues that demand priority attention are the management of the oil sector, security protocols, demarcation of the disputed common border and the future status of Abyei. If not resolved, these issues may further destabilize relations between Sudan and South Sudan, and consequently the broader region. However, if progress can be made in dealing with these issues, that might promote more rapid normalization of relations between South Sudan and Sudan. This is fully in the interests of both countries – indeed, it is a necessity. The perspectives of the two neighbours, however, differ. For South Sudan, further to economic benefits, improved relations with the north would better enable the country to focus on its own domestic challenges, which are considerable. Although this is likewise the case for Sudan, with its own troubled domestic agenda and economic recession, the government in Khartoum appears to believe it is in its interest to leave these outstanding issues unaddressed for the foreseeable future – NCP party-political divisions notwithstanding.

Although this is a high-risk strategy in terms of exacerbating internal challenges, the motivations underpinning such an approach on the part of the ruling NCP government can be seen from two related perspectives, both closely linked to Bashir's bid to retain power at any cost. First, leaving key CPA issues unresolved effectively creates economic havoc and greater instability in the south. In turn, this sends a clear message that the consequences of any further attempts at secession in Sudan will be severe. Second, contributing to instability in South

Sudan, especially in terms of undermining the economy, represents a strategic move to ensure that the government in Juba is no longer in a position to provide support (military assistance, safe havens) to the rebel movements in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan. For an increasingly weak South Sudan, the costs of continued assistance would be too high, especially when these are weighed against the more pressing need to build a new nation state.

3.1 Management of the oil sector

The most pressing of these outstanding CPA issues concerns oil revenues, upon which both countries are heavily dependent. Oil revenues constitute an astonishing 98% of government income in South Sudan. They provided some 90% of Sudan's hard currency earnings before southern independence, which has caused its currency to devaluate sharply since July 2011.[41] As a result of southern independence, Sudan has lost 75% of its national oil earnings.[42] Because of the current economic crisis in Sudan, as well as pressures in South Sudan, a negotiated settlement of the oil issue is crucial.

Especially important is to agree on the share to be retained by each side (management of the oil sector; pipeline fees), without any further delays. Recent radical measures implemented by South Sudan, including the stoppage of production, are unsustainable in the short to medium term[43] and have already exacerbated the deterioration of relations between the two sides. Although some work is underway under the auspices of the AU, the dispute must be brought to a swift conclusion that can address the legitimate aspirations of both countries. In November 2011, in a bid to resolve the dispute over oil revenue-sharing, the International Monetary Fund, the AU and South Sudan agreed on an amount of US $5.4 billion as appropriate compensation by the south to the north to make up for lost revenue, infrastructure expenditures and investments. However, Khartoum requested nearly three times that figure – US $15 billion over seven years. That is an excessive amount that can only produce a deadlock in the negotiations. It also signals Sudan's unwillingness to reach agreement, despite the dire economic consequences. According to Pagan Amum, South Sudan's chief negotiator, Sudan does not want the AU to mediate negotiations.[44] All of this gives rise to a critical question: how far is Sudan willing to go to get its share of the oil revenues? On the one hand, the

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41 'Sudan: Country Says Fuel Subsidies a Big Burden On Budget, Hints At Removing It', *Sudan Tribune*, 31 October 2011.

42 ' Sudan to Cut Spending, Raise Revenue After South's Secession', *Bloomberg Business Week*, 06 January 2012.

43 South Sudan is already exploring alternative pipeline options through Djibouti and Kenya (also see footnote 67 below). There has also been talk of diversifying the economy to avoid oil dependency.

44 Jared Ferrie, 'Sudan Demands $15 Billion in Compensation for Lost Southern Oil', *Bloomberg Business Week*, 24 November 2010.

high levels of interdependence between these two hostile neighbours could work as a deterrent to greater conflict. On the other, a continued stalemate in negotiations on this crucial issue might serve to provoke an all-out military confrontation between the two countries.[45]

3.2 Security protocols

The second priority for both countries is related to security protocols, in particular defining the nature and scope of military liaison and co-operation between them. This includes protocols related to sharing intelligence, and confidence- and trust-building. In this regard, the 2009 agreement on border cooperation between Chad and Sudan can offer a constructive example of a way forward between Sudan and South Sudan (also see section II.1 below). Moreover, both countries should include measures that leave no room for supporting rebellions and proxy wars in the other's territory. It is important to preclude even the perception that this may be going on.

Typical of the political brinkmanship between Khartoum and Juba, both sides accuse the other of such actions. For example, Khartoum accuses Juba of supporting SPLM-N forces in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, as well as offering support and safe haven to Darfuri rebels, notably the JEM. Following a similar line, Juba accuses Khartoum of arming rebel militias operating in the south, along with fuelling inter-communal violence in the border regions. Both sides must back down from this dangerous rhetoric – and it is essential that they disengage from such activities. In particular for the south, the risks are high: Khartoum might see a stronger motivation to step up its efforts to de-stabilize the south. Moreover, such support activities might justify and deepen northern reluctance to adhere to its responsibilities in imple-menting the remaining CPA issues. South Sudan has nothing to gain from either outcome.

3.3 The shared border

A third area of priority concerns the demarcation of the contested common border line, which is closely related to the valuable natural resources in this area – oil, mineral wealth and agricultural schemes, as well as pasture lands. Today, the border regions remain highly mili-tarized, with the active presence of SAF, SPLA, rebels and militias – notably the Misseryia militias. These realities reinforce the necessity of exploring the possibility of initiating joint border patrols. In fact,

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[45]   In part, the recent confrontation between 700 SAF officers and Bashir (and Minister for Defence, Abdel-Rahmin Mohamed Hussein) was sparked by Bashir's calls for prepared-ness for war with South Sudan. Already over-extended and under-resourced at home, the SAF officers who lodged complaints baulked at the prospect of war with the south be-cause of the current state of the SAF. Source: 'Sudan army officers warn Bashir & Hus-sein against rush to war with south', *Sudan Tribune*, 29 January 2012.

security cooperation along the common border should be recognized as the best opportunity for building confidence between the armed forces of both countries. Joint border security operations are not difficult to organize, if there is political will, and they would certainly generate enhanced levels of trust between these suspicious neighbours.

Considered attention should also be given to the need for a 'soft' and porous border because of the local populations in these areas, which migrate on a seasonal basis. A soft border would also help nurture the traditional familial, social and economic ties between cross-border communities, which in turn could help to defuse local-level tensions and strengthen the interdependence of relations between South Sudan and Sudan. In contrast, a 'hard' border would pose new challenges for these communities to continue to interact with one another. It would also create even greater security demands and challenges for both countries.

In conjunction with this, local border communities must be encouraged and enabled to re-establish traditional methods of nonviolent conflict resolution. Once effective in preventing and resolving local-level conflicts, use of these traditional methods has diminished and eroded due to interference from national-level political forces in Khartoum and Juba. Urbanization, displacement and the proliferation of small arms, which are legacies of the civil war, are also factors that reduce the effectiveness of traditional approaches.[46] In turn, this has led to prolonged violence and growing mistrust between the various tribal communities living in these border areas.

3.4 Future status of Abyei

It is critical to make progress on the future status of Abyei. If this issue remains unresolved, there is a risk of even greater destabilization with respect to the area itself and in terms of north–south relations. Local-level conflict between the Misseryia and Dinka in Abyei is closely linked to national-level conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. As such, this creates conflict dynamics that are susceptible to rapid escalation. Despite this, both governments – Khartoum in particular – appear to be exploiting the Abyei issue as a political bargaining chip in the ongoing negotiations. At the same time, the local residents in Abyei are of significance to both Sudan and South Sudan.

Military action by the SAF in Abyei, as well as along the 1.1.56 border, sends a clear message to Juba that Bashir does not want to lose

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46 Rebecca Barber, 'Getting it Right from the Start: Priorities for Action in the New Republic of South Sudan', September 2011, Oxfam International, p. 9.

full control of the disputed territories. Although he accepted southern secession, he has now been signalling an unwillingness to agree to more territorial concessions. Among other things, the CPA left Bashir with the resource-poor part of Sudan. In terms of agriculture, land, oil and other commercially valuable minerals, the border areas are productive parts of Sudan for Bashir to keep.

3.5 Other issues
If these key priority areas can be effectively addressed, this will create more favourable conditions for resolving the other remaining shared CPA issues. These include matters of citizenship, debt and asset distribution, and management of the waters of the Nile. Resolution of these priority issues is also critical for both countries to be able to establish the good relations that are expected between these two neighbours and to allow them to address some the central security threats facing them both. Perhaps most importantly, normalization of relations between Sudan and South Sudan would allow each country to focus much-needed attention on its own challenging domestic agenda.

Are the north and south willing to find ways of cooperating? Or will these two neighbours continue along the familiar path of mistrust, leading to even greater hostilities that could further destabilize their domestic situations and impact negatively on the broader region to which they both belong? Is there a real risk of all-out warfare between the two states, as some observers have forecast? How might the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP)[47] play a more effective role in relation to these key challenges?

Unfortunately, the leaders in Khartoum seem more inclined to adopt hardline positions and settle old scores. Juba is also playing its own games. All this follows a deeply-entrenched historical pattern of brinksmanship, revenge and mistrust, characteristics that have defined the prevailing political culture in many areas of this unstable region for decades. However, to continue with this approach would be a serious strategic mistake for both countries.

Instead, both leaders must recognize the importance of negotiations leading to workable political and economic solutions – for the sake of their own national, personal political and economic interests, and most importantly for the well-being of their populations. The incentives for peace must outweigh the incentives for violence. The AUHIP, chaired

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47 Formed in 2008 by the African Union's Peace and Security Council to investigate the crisis in Dafur, the AUHIP is led by former presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Pierre Buyoya of Burundi and Abdulsalami Abubaker of Nigeria. According to the AUHIP memorandum of understanding, negotiations between Sudan and South Sudan are divided into four themes, each with its own working group: citizenship; security; financial, economic and natural resources; and international treaties and legal issues.

by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, has been instrumental in bringing the two countries together, but there is scope for further engagement. This is a daunting task. While the AUHIP is the key mechanism for facilitating negotiation, it appears that leadership in Khartoum has only paid lip service to AUHIP initiatives. Hence, first and foremost, the AUHIP will have to regain some of its independence and neutrality vis-à-vis the key players. In particular, some recent statements by Mbeki have been perceived by Juba as too close to the agenda of Khartoum. Mbeki's management of the AUHIP process has also been criticized for being authoritarian and non-inclusive, thus making it difficult for other key international actors (notably the USA and UK) to exert constructive influence over negotiations. If it is to be effective, the AUHIP must be even-handed in its approach. In addition, the ongoing process could gain greater momentum if the USA opted for more direct involvement, as was the case during the period leading up to southern independence.[48] While Washington has acknowledged AUHIP leadership in the negotiation processes, it could nonetheless play a more active support role, to constructive effect.

Given current trends, it is necessary to consider how the AUHIP might be better supported by the international community so that it can achieve its mandate. Special efforts are required towards the north, as Bashir and his supporters continue to be spoilers betting on military solutions – despite the glaring realities that only diplomacy and political agreement can provide durable solutions to differences with Kiir and the Juba government.

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[48] US policy in relation to South Sudan and the broader region is discussed in Part III below.

Map compiled from United Nations data, for information purposes only. Borders are approximate.
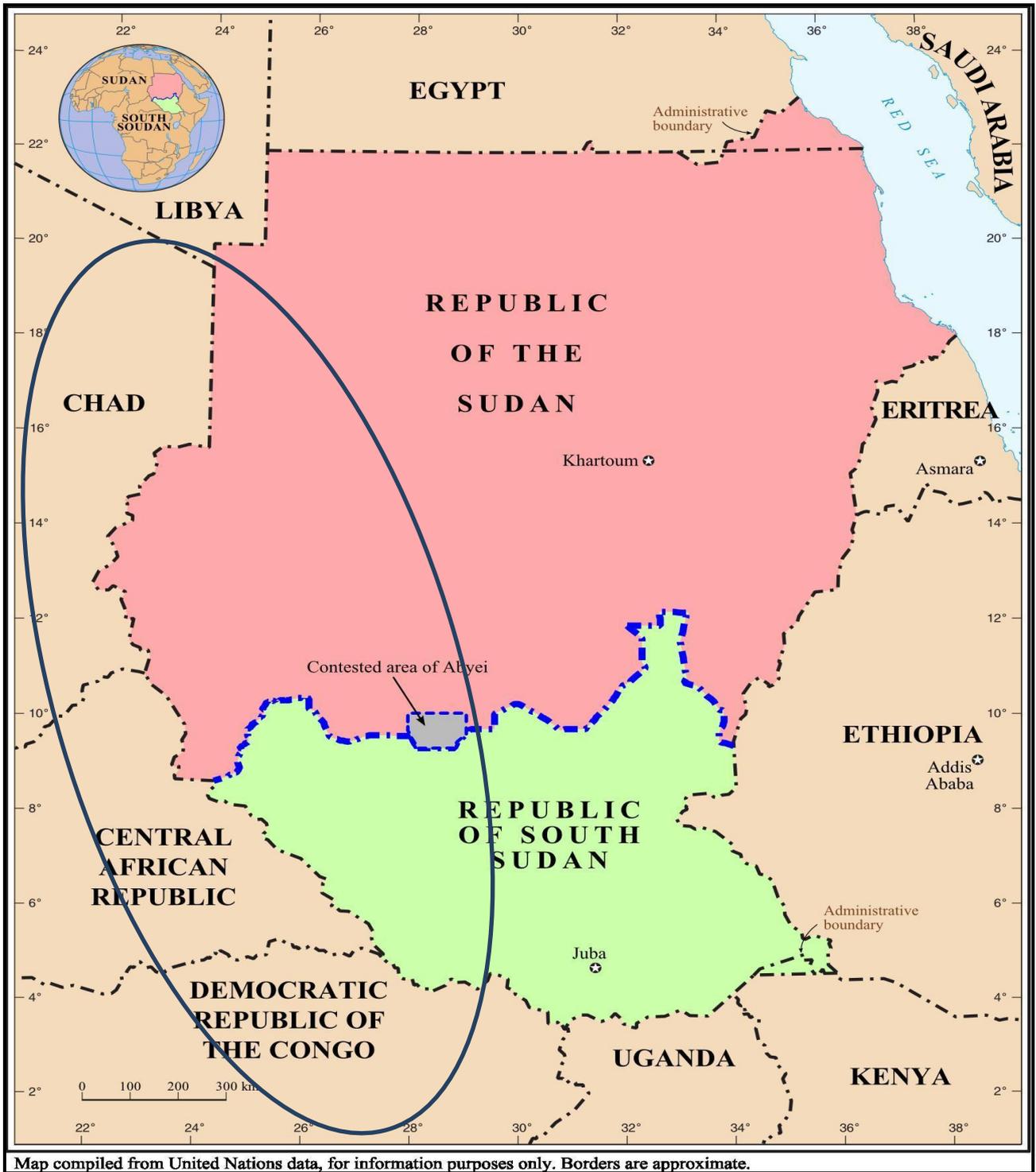
Part II. Regional Dynamics: National Interests amidst Widespread Instability

The states that share a corridor of fragility with the old Sudan (Chad, CAR and DRC) form what some have called the 'tormented triangle', referring to the process of regionalization of armed conflict facilitated by specific structural conditions increasingly apparent since the escalation of conflict in Darfur began in 2003.[49] Since the emergence of South Sudan as an independent state, this triangle has widened considerably and may now be regarded as an *'ellipse of insecurity'*, with its main axis running from north to south, along the frontier line separating the French-speaking states from the former Sudanese territories (see map above).

This ellipse consists of the hinterlands of these three countries, on their eastern frontiers, and the corresponding border regions in Sudan (Darfur), as well as South Sudan (Western Bahr Al-Ghazal, Western Equatoria and Central Equatoria states). It also includes the northeastern territories of the DRC. Geography and history have placed these areas far away from their respective capitals.[50] When national and state-level authority is weak, merely symbolic or virtually non-existent, such regions become fertile ground for the emergence of numerous armed groups, local militias, outlaws and criminals. The incapacity of national and state authority to exercise law and order, border protection and basic human security in these remote areas has transformed them into one of the most dangerous parts of Africa. Such problems become worse when local populations flee to safer havens in neighbouring states.

This ellipse constitutes a contiguous web of insecurity within a broader region that is highly unstable. Our analysis must reach further afield to include reference to Uganda, given the security role the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) plays in the region. Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea also merit comment as regards regional dynamics in the

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[49] For example, see: 'The Tormented Triangle: the Regionalisation of Conflict in Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic', Jennifer Giroux, David Lanz and Damiano Sguaitamatti, *LSE Crisis States Working Papers*, series no. 2, April 2009, p. 3. The specific structural conditions identified by the authors include: state deficiency, uncontrolled hinterlands, general regional instability, cross-border trade, migration, and identity issues.

[50] Located in Central Equatoria state, Juba is an exception in terms of being a capital city that is in close proximity to the ellipse of insecurity. At the same time, much of South Sudanese territory remains isolated and difficult to access from Juba.

context of South Sudan as a newly emergent independent state. North of the ellipse, two Arab neighbours, Egypt and Libya, should also be noted.

1. The Ellipse of Insecurity: Chad, CAR and DRC

1.1 Chad

For several years, especially from 2006 to 2009, the government in Chad regarded Sudan as a hostile neighbour. At that time, tensions between these two countries were a defining feature of regional instability. Khartoum openly supported the non-state armed groups opposed to President Idriss Déby by providing them with sanctuary in Darfur and logistical support.[51] This support was critical in January and February 2008, when the Sudanese-backed rebels managed to invade Chad, moving across more than 900 km, starting at the eastern border, to launch a direct attack on the presidential palace in N'Djamena. Again, in May 2009, more than 200 armed vehicles drove across the border from Sudan and for several days attempted to travel beyond the eastern region of the country. In the end, the rebel column suffered a crushing defeat, with the remaining rebels pushed back by the Chadian Armed Forces into Sudan. Khartoum subsequently realized that supporting armed rebellion in Chad was no longer a viable option. Not only had the weaknesses and incapacities of these forces become obvious, but Bashir lacked the necessary political support within the NCP due to a rapid decline in public finances.

As payback during these years, the Déby government covertly tolerated the presence of the JEM in Chad to regroup, recruit fighters and channel necessary materiel for its operations in Darfur.[52] In addition to the obvious motivation of supporting Bashir's opponents because he supported Déby's opponents, tribal affinities offered another level of justification for tacit support to the JEM: Déby and the late leader of the JEM both belonged to the Zaghawa ethnic group and were distant relatives.[53] More generally, the ethnic compositions of both eastern Chad and Darfur are similar, with many such common ancestral bonds among these populations. On balance, however, primary responsibility

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[51] It was from Darfur that Déby himself launched the coup which overthrew the Habré regime and brought him to power in 1990.

[52] While some of this materiel came from Libya, most of it came from undefined sources that have yet to be identified.

[53] However the binding character of these tribal affinities should not be overstated: prior to his support of the JEM, which began in 2005, Déby maintained an alliance with Khartoum, even attempting several times to arrest the JEM leader, Khalil Ibrahim, as part of this pact. Déby switched his alliance from Khartoum to the JEM because of internal party-political pressures. In particular, the shift was an effort to appease the disaffected Zaghawa elites in his ruling coalition. Source: 'The Tormented Triangle: the Regionalisation of Conflict in Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic', Jennifer Giroux, David Lanz and Damiano Sguaitamatti, *LSE Crisis States Working Papers*, series no. 2, April 2009, pp. 6 and 7.

for the crisis between the two countries rests with the regime in Khartoum, which had been a lead instigator in perpetuating hostilities. Once Bashir came to the conclusion that maintaining the political status quo in N'Djaména better served his own interests, relations between both countries rapidly normalized. In late 2009, Sudan and Chad signed an agreement to cease mutual aggression: Sudan agreed to stop backing armed opposition against Déby, and Chad agreed to expel JEM forces. They also decided to establish joint border patrols, which were fully operationalized in 2010. This approach has improved the security situation in eastern Chad, but its broader effect on the Darfur conflict has yet to be fully assessed.

As of this writing (February 2012), the struggle for power within the inner circle of leadership in Khartoum and the Darfur peace process are key areas of concern for the Government of Chad. Chad must be seen as an interested observer of politics in Khartoum, rather than an active player. Despite an acrimonious past, relations between Déby and Bashir are now on good enough footing. However, this remains a precarious alliance. Government leaders in N'Djaména do not trust Bashir and the top NCP leadership. Although not in a position to influence the internal political dynamics of Sudan, the political leadership in Chad would prefer to see a more reliable group of leaders in charge in Khartoum, with people who fully understand the mutual strategic interest of a sound relationship between both countries.

If conflict in Darfur escalates this could have a serious impact in eastern Chad. From 2006 to 2010, this shared border region experienced major insecurity, with armed bandits and Janjaweed rebels operating on both sides of the border. They targeted humanitarian workers, refugees and displaced persons, as well as some of the local communities. Such actions provided the primary rationale for the deployment of the UN peacekeeping operation, MINURCAT, in eastern Chad between 2008 and 2010. However, when the joint patrols were operationalized, responsibility for security was handed over to both countries. As previously noted, the recent death of the JEM leader, Dr Khalil Ibrahim, could provoke revenge attacks by JEM rebels, many of whom believe that top political leaders in Chad may have shared the intelligence necessary to locate Ibrahim. However, the stronger presence of the Chadian armed forces in the border areas due to the joint patrols, and the overwhelming presence of state security agents in N'Djamena, would limit the reach of such potential attacks.

Darfur provides the key link between Chad and regional instability, with its own domestic fragility also a contributing factor. For Chad, its eastern border regions remain the top security priority. Even now, after the improvement in diplomatic relations between N'Djaména and

Khartoum, and the interdiction of JEM activities in Chadian territory, civil war in Darfur continues to have a spill-over effect on these regions. Refugees, the availability of weapons in civilian hands and banditry constitute major impediments for the re-opening of the traditional and profitable commercial routes between eastern Chad and Sudan, including the vital trade link between Abéché and the sea at Port Sudan. In addition, the end of the armed conflicts within Sudan – particularly those in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States – is also considered by Chadian leaders as part of the country's strategic interests. For them, a stable and less conflict-prone Sudan would allow for a re-orientation of Chad's security resources to the western borders with Nigeria and Niger, where they see an expansion of violent religious extremism gaining ground, including the shores of Lake Chad.

However, notwithstanding the fact that Chad is ranked as number two in the Failed States Index, it should be recognized that state authority has been significantly reinforced throughout the country over the last two years (2010–11). In particular, the armed forces have gone through an internal reform programme and are now far more professional than they were when the rebel offensive took place in May 2009. While Chad remains a fragile state in a region of great instability, it is at the same time one of the most stable – second only to Uganda. As such, perhaps Chad should be encouraged to play a more active diplomatic role in relation to ameliorating tensions in the region, in particular in Darfur. As noted, N'Djamena fully recognizes that peace and development in its eastern regions are intrinsically linked to stability in Darfur. Key Chadian politicians have their ancestral roots in these regions and would like to see them reconnected with the trade routes that used to link the Red Sea with this part of Africa. The international community should build upon this base and provide the necessary leverage to the Chadian leaders.

Whereas constructive relations with Sudan are important to Chad, South Sudan is regarded as lying outside its area of strategic interest. Chad understands itself first as a Sahelian country, like Sudan, and second as a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).[54] History, culture and tribal affinities have contributed to separating the identities of these two countries. In these circumstances, Chad does not feel directly threatened by domestic instability in South Sudan. However, the alleged support that the government of Southern Sudan might be providing to rebels in South Kordofan and Darfur could be perceived by Chad as running against its own strategic interests and as an indirect threat to its security. Moreover, the spill over of LRA activities from Uganda via South Sudan into CAR,

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54   ECCAS is a loose association of French-speaking countries and does not include South
      Sudan.

in a broad area that adjoins Chad's southeastern region of Salamat, is followed with some degree of attention in N'Djaména. A further important concern in Chad related to South Sudan is about political precedence: the regime in N'Djaména would not want the Chadian population, particularly those of Bantu extraction, to see the secession of South Sudan as a model for their own future. However, this appears unlikely, as there is no real movement towards any type of split in Chad in the foreseeable future. Moreover, any attempt at launching such an initiative would be crushed early on by Chad's wide-reaching security apparatus.

1.2 Central African Republic

The CAR remains an extremely fragile state – or what the International Crisis Group has called a 'phantom state',[55] despite several years of support from the UN Peacebuilding Commission.[56] While the situation in the capital Bangui has changed for the better in recent years, the rest of the country remains largely disconnected from this centre, and the outreach of government institutions is highly limited.

Despite a peace agreement in June 2008, there has been sporadic fighting and pockets of rebellion between government forces and armed groups in some parts of CAR, along with widespread banditry and criminal activity. Although a programme of national reconciliation has been agreed, the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programme has not been properly carried out, and many weapons remain in the hands of rebel militias, former combatants and criminal gangs. In particular, the government is not in a position to effectively exert state authority in the eastern regions bordering South Sudan: the regions of Vakaga, Haute Kotto and Haut Mbomou, as well in Bamingui-Bangoran, where a local armed group, the *Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix* (CPJP) compelled about 8,000 people to seek refuge in southeastern Chad in 2009.

These are vast geographical areas rich in mineral wealth, including diamonds, which are a primary source of funds for arms and critical bait for banditry. The border areas in the northeast (Birao and Sam Ouandja) are heavily influenced by the situation in Darfur. Both Chadian and Sudanese armed militias use this part of the CAR as a safe haven, a transit route and a base for criminal activity. The contiguous areas to the southeast (in and around Obo) also have direct links with South Sudan. They are the ideal grounds for armed gangs, rang-

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[55] ' The Tormented Triangle: the Regionalisation of Conflict in Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic', Jennifer Giroux, David Lanz and Damiano Sguaitamatti, *LSE Crisis States Working Papers*, series no. 2, April 2009, pp. 6 and 7.

[56] The UN's peacebuilding work in CAR, including the impact of the PBC, should be independently assessed. CAR could offer a case study rich in lessons learned for the future work of the international community in preventing failed states from total collapse.

ing from large groups of illegal hunters to LRA fighters, and for a variety of ethnic-based violent conflicts. This area – the shared frontier where CAR, DRC and South Sudan meet – is highly insecure and readily susceptible to repercussions from the current instability in South Sudan and Sudan. Heightened instability in either South Sudan or Sudan (particularly in Abyei), as well between both countries, could further negatively impact on the security dynamics in CAR. Greater stability in Sudan and South Sudan, along with more constructive north–south relations, is therefore in the national interest of the Central African Republic.

Although conflict in CAR is largely driven by internal root causes, it has regional dimensions as well. President Francois Bozizé seized power in a coup in March 2003 and was re-elected in January 2011 to serve another five-year term. Indicative of the regional character of conflict in CAR is the fact that Chadian regular forces and mercenaries helped Bozizé seize power. Chadian soldiers were a central component of his personal security force until the 2008 attack on N'Djamena, when many of them returned to Chad. However, some of those Chadians who have remained in CAR have been disillusioned with the failure of promised rewards to materialize as a result of supporting Bozizé to seize power in the coup. They are now part of CAR rebel groups and criminal gangs, particularly in the northeast of the country.

1.3 Democratic Republic of Congo

DRC is the 'fake giant' of Central Africa: it is indeed the largest country, but has remained far too fragmented to be able to project its size in the neighbourhood. Too caught up in its own serious domestic troubles, the DRC is not a relevant player in the region, even as it is heavily influenced by regional politics (Rwanda and Uganda). With pressures inside and outside of the country, the DRC continues to be a significant source of regional instability. It slipped down the Failed States Index from number five in 2010 to number four in 2011. During the civil war that raged in the DRC between 1997 and 2003, which also involved most of its regional neighbours, and in the current violence, the human cost has been unprecedented. Since the civil war, it is estimated that some 5.4 million people have been killed and approximately 3.4 million forced to flee their homes.[57] A study released in May 2010 indicates that sexual assault is so rampant that annual rape statistics would translate into 48 women being raped per hour,[58] earning the DRC a reputation as the 'rape centre of the world'.

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[57] 'Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: an ongoing crisis', International Rescue Committee, 2007.
[58] 'Forty-eight Women Raped Every Hour in Congo, Study Finds', by Jo Adetunji, The Guardian, 12 May 2010.

Recently re-elected President Joseph Kabila does not perceive South Sudan as important for his strategic interests – even though both countries share the same security challenges across their common border. There is also a risk that greater insecurity in South Sudan could spill-over into the DRC, causing further instability there. As such, a more stable South Sudan should be seen as in the national interests of the DRC. Nonetheless the central government in Kinshasa is preoccupied by rebel militia activity in the eastern part of the country, notably in the Kivus, the two provinces bordering on Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. It is here that the scant security resources available to the DRC are concentrated. However, the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC), the state armed forces, are among the least effective in the world, and FARDC members have also been implicated in widespread human rights abuses against civilians.

The northeastern part of the DRC, on the border with South Sudan, is closer to the direct or indirect influence of Kampala than Kinshasa. This vast region suffers from very poor infrastructure and difficult access in terms of transportation and communication facilities. Most of the time, the local state-level administration is disconnected from central government authorities and very weak. State control in this part of the DRC is mediocre at best. Ugandan army units have been operating in the region up until recently (2010), playing roles that the DRC security forces have been unable to fulfil. The 2007 Arusha Agreement between the DRC and Uganda appears to have created a tacit division of labour between the two state security forces in terms of policing the border areas: the DRC takes care of the Kivus, whereas Uganda is responsible for the triangle of shared borders with the DRC, South Sudan and CAR, the primary purpose of which is to eliminate the Lord's Resistance Army (also see section II.2 below).

In addition to the very weak and non-functional state apparatus, a major driver of recurrent violence is a wealth of high-value minerals – diamonds, uranium, gold and coltan (columbite–tantalite). In eastern DRC, militia groups and the state armed forces fight for control of and access to mines, thriving on the environment of instability this violence creates and sustains.

2. A Key Regional Player: Uganda
The role of Uganda in this fragile region must be taken into account for two primary reasons. First, under the direction of President Yoweri Museveni, the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) has been playing a key role in the ellipse of insecurity, especially in the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). When the Juba negotiations between the government of Uganda and the LRA collapsed in

April 2008, the LRA re-armed itself, intensified its operations in the border areas between southern Sudan and Uganda and began a tactical move into DRC territory. Unable to attack the LRA in Sudanese territory (i.e., Darfur) because of the historically strained relations between the two countries, the UPDF instead just forced them out of Uganda and started chasing them in the DRC. The LRA was then pushed northwards, in the direction of CAR. Founded some 25 years ago by Joseph Kony, a Ugandan citizen, this most notorious armed group currently operates in the triangular area situated where the borders of the DRC, South Sudan and the CAR meet.[59]

Second, Uganda is seen as, and actively seeks to be perceived as, a key ally to the international community in helping to stabilize the region. In many ways, Uganda has filled the regional diplomatic vacuum created by Kenya, which was obliged to look inward during 2007 and 2008 because of its own domestic crisis. However, it is important to bear in mind that Uganda is ranked number 21 in the Failed States Index, thus indicating certain limits in relation to its capacity to serve as a stabilizing influence in the region. It also faces its own increasingly unstable domestic situation. Despite this, and compared to other states in the region, Uganda is nonetheless an important partner for the international community. Its central geopolitical location and the relative strength of the leadership in Kampala have allowed Uganda to establish solid relationships with global powers, particularly with the USA and, more recently, with China.

Uganda's southern borders with Rwanda and Tanzania are relatively safe and Kampala's political relations with the governments in Kigali and Dar-es-Salaam are friendly. To the east, the border region with Kenya is also regarded as safe and there is no major tension with Nairobi. In contrast, the border regions in the west with the DRC, and in the north with South Sudan, are considered highly vulnerable to armed militia groups. The security of those borders is top priority for the UPDF. At the same time, since the LRA was successfully evicted from Uganda, greater stability has returned to the north of the country, with many of the nearly 2 million people who were internally displaced by LRA activity returned to their homes. Because of its relative peace and stability, Uganda also remains a haven for refugees, especially those fleeing from violence in the DRC and South Sudan (as well as some Rwandans, from previous crises).

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[59] LRA membership is estimated to be no more than several hundred, divided in small groups, for reasons of survival. However, such limited numbers do not hinder the LRA in terrorizing local communities, causing destruction, abduction, death and displacement. Since the collapse of the Juba talks in 2008, the UN estimates that in LRA-affected areas, more than 2,300 people have died and over 400,000 have been displaced.

Throughout the Sudanese civil war, from the mid-1980s onward, Uganda was a key ally of the SPLM/A, providing military and logistical assistance as well as diplomatic engagement. Moreover, the SPLM based part of its own diplomatic efforts in Kampala during the war. With deep historic, ethnic, political, military and economic ties between them, Uganda is a strong supporter of the newly independent government in South Sudan and therefore a critical ally in the consolidation of its state authority. There is recent evidence that Uganda is offering military technical assistance to South Sudan. Uganda is also South Sudan's biggest trading partner. In the end, the strategic interests of Uganda reside in having a safer northern neighbour, with an internal security environment strong enough to allow the expansion of Ugandan economic investments and business opportunities.

In stark contrast, Uganda's relations with Sudan have always been tense. Multiple factors explain these traditionally frosty relations. Uganda's proximity to SPLM political ideals has created serious antipathy to the political leadership in Khartoum, which is basically perceived by Kampala as racist. Moreover, Uganda has never been comfortable with the militant Islamism promoted by Sudanese leaders. Among other things, the possible expansion of Islamic extremism is seen as a threat to Ugandan unity. Museveni's formative years as a politician were also inspired by a secular, Marxist-influenced worldview, so a political leader like Bashir is seen to be reactionary, a relic from the past. Finally, Uganda has long been convinced that the Sudanese government is the main backer of the LRA, which is understood as retaliation for Kampala's support to the SPLM.

This juxtaposition of loyalty to South Sudan and animosity toward Sudan gives rise to questions about whether a stable South Sudan is perceived as being fully in the Ugandan national interest. On the one hand, given the economic ties between Uganda and South Sudan, tense relations between Sudan and South Sudan could offer greater economic benefits to Uganda. The current instability in South Sudan also offers justification for increased military engagement by the UPDF. On the other hand, improved north–south relations might create deeper divisions between Uganda and Sudan. For example, Kampala has been hosting Minni Minnawi and Abdul Wahid al-Nur, which is not conducive for improving relations with Khartoum.[60] The role of Uganda, then, may be a double-edged sword: is Uganda a regional peacemaker, or a source of instability in the pursuit of its own national interest?

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60 Minnawi and Wahid are leaders of the Darfur rebel militia group, the Sudanese Liberation Movement. Having recently joined forces, both are intent on overthrowing the regime in Khartoum.

Both Museveni and the ruling National Resistance Movement party were raised on a culture of insurgency. This history of armed struggle inclines the current government to see national security and regime continuity as closely linked to addressing various dynamics that are beyond Uganda's national borders. In this, eliminating the LRA offers chief justification for keeping the UPDF active and focused (especially in CAR), exerting regional political influence and enabling high-ranking military officers who are key allies of Museveni to enrich themselves. Continued LRA activity in this part of the African region also offers Museveni an opportunity to strengthen his relations with the USA, as do coordinated Ugandan–Kenyan military actions against al-Shabaab in Somalia. Using the US agreement to send special operations troops as military advisors to assist in the fight against the LRA as an opportunity to flex his military muscle in the region, Museveni explained, 'Better to call them US personnel, not troops... I cannot accept foreign troops to come and fight for me. We have the capacity to fight our wars.'[61]

However, UPDF credibility among local communities in LRA-affected areas in the DRC, South Sudan and CAR is debatable and sometimes quite low.[62] Despite a civilian protection mandate, the UPDF has not been delivering this in practice. Not only do efforts to scale up the military offensive against Kony result in LRA retaliation on local communities, creating more violence, but some UPDF soldiers have been accused of human rights abuses. Moreover, many local people are as suspicious of the UPDF as they are of their own national armed forces. In this part of the world, uniformed men are frequently associated with fear and repression, not protection and improved security.

Local perceptions of the LRA also vary across the region. In DRC and CAR many suspect the LRA presence to be a pretext for Uganda's exploitation of those countries' natural resources. In South Sudan people see the LRA as an instrument of Khartoum, used in turn by Uganda as justification for its occasional presence in South Sudan. In CAR, the LRA are considered a spill over from another theatre of war, and ultimately a problem for Uganda.[63]

Despite these challenges, the UDPF is comparatively better trained, equipped and disciplined than other security forces in the region, espe-

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61   Richard Kavuma, 'Threats and arrests in Uganda', *The Guardian*, 8 November 2011. The US deployment in support of the UDPF is called Operation Observant Compass. It is a precursor of the Obama Administration's new approach to US military deployments in out-of-area countries, which is primarily grounded in the use of Special Forces for well-defined and well-targeted objectives.

62   'The Lord's Resistance Army', policy briefing from the People's Peacemaking Perspectives, a project of Conciliation Resources and Saferworld, October 2011, p. 2.

63   *Ibid*.

cially those from South Sudan, DRC and CAR. With US advisors now in the region, this offers the UDPF further incentives to comport themselves in a professional manner. Given the right kind of support and supervision, the UDPF could become a much more effective means for regional security.

Moreover, an increasingly militarized Uganda has corresponding domestic advantages – at least from the perspective of the ruling elite. A key concern for Museveni's regime is to keep its authoritarian grip on power. His re-election in February 2011 for a fourth term has extended Museveni's rule to 30 years. There are deep divisions between the ruling National Resistance Movement party and opposition parties, which are left with very little political space. Museveni has been accused of widespread official intolerance of dissent and using the security forces to forcefully quell public protests against rising living costs (food and fuel), arrest political opponents and jail journalists.[64] Intimidation appears to play a significant role in relation to political opposition, public protest and the press. In turn, this gives rise to questions about political freedom, the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and protection for human rights in Uganda.

In addition to political divisions and increasing social unrest, Uganda is plagued by crumbling health and education systems, rising unemployment (especially among young people), very high inflation rates (estimated at 30–45%), pressures from rapid population growth, and a decaying infrastructure. In addition to petty corruption within the police, which has become a fact of daily life, there are also claims of high-level government and military corruption. Although economic development has been significant, this is not evenly distributed throughout the country, with half of the population still living on approximately US$ 1.00 per day. The increase in Chinese investments in Uganda[65] has also fed into social unrest, with claims that the availability of less expensive Chinese goods is putting local Ugandan shop keepers out of business.[66] These growing domestic tensions offer further rationales for the Ugandan security sector to remain strong, in turn reinforcing Museveni's ambitions of being recognized as a powerful leader in the region. The international allies of Uganda should be mindful of these contradictions. While supporting the positive role that Museveni can play in the region, they also have an obligation to

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[64] Amnesty International, *Stifling Dissent: Restrictions on the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly in Uganda*, 2011.

[65] Whereas the UK was formerly the largest investor in Uganda, China is now the lead investor: according to figures from the Uganda Investment Authority, for example, in 2010 China created 6,117 jobs, compared to only 3,958 by UK investments.

[66] For example, in 2010 China exported $202 million in goods to Uganda. Revealing a huge trade deficit, Ugandan exports to China in 2010 totalled only $20 million. Source: 'Locals cry foul as Chinese expand in Uganda', *Dispatch* (Uganda news monthly), 29 August 2011.

recommend the implementation of an effective programme for domestic political reform.

3. The Broader Region

3.1 Kenya

Kenya is an important ally of South Sudan, given the significant role it played during negotiation of the CPA agreement, particularly in 2003 and 2004. It is likewise a key economic player in the region and an important trading partner to South Sudan. Not only has Kenya made some visible economic investments in South Sudan, along with Uganda it also supported South Sudan's membership in the EAC (while rejecting Sudanese membership bid on technical grounds).[67] However, only passing reference will be made to the role of Kenya in the context of regional instability. First and foremost, today's political leadership in Nairobi is preoccupied with its own domestic dynamics after the violence in connection with the presidential elections in 2007–2008. Those events created deep wounds, challenging national identity and further fracturing Kenyan society. They have also had a serious impact on the vitality of the national economy. New presidential elections are to take place during the second half of 2012, with most of the main candidates already actively involved in pre-campaign activities. Second, the Kenyan security forces have been deeply engaged in the southern regions of Somalia, where they are combating al-Shabaab militias.

Combined, these two factors – domestic politics and military engagement in Somalia – along with the declining state of the national economy, critically limit the capacity of Kenya to deploy a meaningful security presence in the ellipse of instability, even though cross-border raids and tensions between communities in Turkana (Kenya) and Toposa (South Sudan) fuel further destabilization in the region: this impacts negatively on border security and carries the risk of a refugee influx to Kenya. These political and economic factors also curtail Kenya's role in making a contribution to strengthening state authority in South Sudan. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that Kenya remains a reference point for many South Sudanese political leaders, who regarded Nairobi as a second home during the civil war in Sudan.

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67 As an alternative to the existing pipeline through Sudan, plans to build a new pipeline through Kenya are in early stages of discussion. This could suggest that continued tense relations between Sudan and South Sudan might be regarded as in Kenyan national interest. However, further speculation on this point is premature. More importantly, the pipeline is highly unlikely to materialize, especially given US opposition to this proposal on the grounds that remaining oil reserves in South Sudan are too limited to warrant such a large-scale investment. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that a new pipeline would have significant regional repercussions. It would be likely to cause irreparable damage to relations between Sudan and South Sudan, as well as dealing a fatal blow to the Sudanese economy – certainly unwise in the long term.

These individuals have maintained close relationships with key Kenyan political figures. Nairobi is also seen as a sort of safe haven for South Sudanese politicians who might fall out of favour in their home country.

3.2 Ethiopia

Ethiopia bears brief mention because it shares borders with both South Sudan and Sudan. Importantly, the government in Addis Ababa has decided to adopt a balanced and neutral policy towards both of its neighbours to the west. This is indicated by the mediating role Prime Minister Meles Zenawi continues to play between these two uneasy neighbours, including sending Ethiopian troops to join the UN mission in Abyei, and an agreement to monitor the border. Ethiopia is also willing to strengthen economic links with both countries. Above all, the political leadership in Ethiopia would like to see the outstanding CPA issues resolved, as well as greater stability and security in Sudan (most notably in Blue Nile state) and in Jonglei state in South Sudan. Unrest in these areas has once again increased refugee flows into Ethiopia and strains border security. In addition to the humanitarian demands this places on Ethiopia and its own local populations, migration on such a vast scale compels the country to divert security forces to a border that, in terms of national interests, has no real strategic value at this stage. Rather, Ethiopia's strategic security interests are focused on the situation in Somalia, as well as protecting its border with Eritrea. These border concerns are a higher priority for the political leadership in Addis Abba.

3.3 Eritrea

Like its southern neighbour, Eritrea merits passing consideration here because of the Beja rebels. The Beja form the largest ethnic group in eastern Sudan, with a small number also living on the Eritrean side of the border. In October 2006, Eritrea facilitated the signing of a peace accord between the Sudanese government and the Eastern Front, an alliance of the Beja Congress and a small armed rebel movement called the Rashaida Free Lions. However, peace has not resulted in either power sharing or development in this remote region of Sudan. Instability and discontent have been growing. On 15 November 2011, for example, a dissident faction of the Beja Congress decided to join the Sudanese Revolutionary Front. Although Eritrea has been accused of supporting rebels in Darfur, thus straining relations between Asmara and Khartoum, the country's concern since southern independence has been to maintain sound diplomatic relations with Khartoum and to avoid being accused by Bashir of supporting Beja rebel bases in its own territory. There have been allegations that Eritrea is now supply-

ing weapons to rebel groups in South Sudan in cooperation with Khartoum.[68]

4. The Arab Neighbours

Lastly, it is important to consider recent events in the Arab states, notably in Egypt and Libya. Before being ousted in popular uprisings, the leaders of both of these countries were key counterparts to the regime in Khartoum. However, these were not strong alliances, but rather ambiguous strategic arrangements based on expedient self-interest and mutual containment. Whereas President Hosni Mubarak and Colonel Muammar Gaddafi were secular Arab leaders, Bashir is an expressly Islamic politician, closer to the Muslim Brotherhood movements in both countries. While Mubarak was particularly keen to maintain the status quo, and thus not interested in destabilizing Bashir's power base, Gaddafi was duplicitous: he entertained diplomatic relations with Khartoum, but could not resist his own predilection for supporting underground movements and rebel forces, especially those operating in Darfur.

4.1 Egypt

Egypt is the midst of its own turbulent democratic transformation. However, the current interim leadership continues to play an important role in relation to Sudan and regards itself as a strategic ally of the regime in Khartoum. Up until now, Egypt has been a secular state. Therefore one of its key historical concerns has been to ensure that Sudan would not be used as a rear base for the Muslim Brotherhood, which has significant influence in Sudan (through the National Umma Party, some factions within the NCP, and above all through those associated with Hassan al-Turabi and his Popular Congress Party), and other Egyptian radical Islamic militants. Notwithstanding his own Islamist rhetoric,[69] Bashir has long been considered by the leadership in Cairo as a safe bet – someone who could keep exiled Egyptian extremists on a short leash.

At a time of large-scale change in the country, the interim leadership in Egypt is uncertain about what might happen if Bashir loses power in Sudan. To see Turabi and his radical supporters in power would be unacceptable for Egyptian national interests as these are perceived by the interim military rulers. However, the ascendance of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egyptian politics could change this. Uncertainty sur-

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[68]   Since 2009, Eritrea has been subject to UN sanctions because of its alleged links to armed groups in the Horn of Africa. The leadership in Asmara is also seen as playing a covert game in the ongoing dispute between Sudan and South Sudan.

[69]   This uneasy strategic alliance is made even more complex by Khartoum's assassination attempt on Mubarak in 1995.

rounds the National Umma Party, which is perceived within Cairo military circles as too weak in leadership capacity and therefore would potentially be unable to prevent Sudan from sliding into a state of political chaos. As previously discussed, another key concern for Egypt is the South Sudanese move towards stronger relations with Israel, in particular as this bears on management of the waters of the Nile. For Egypt, then, South Sudan is now of critical strategic importance, and it is essential for the leadership in Cairo to maintain balanced relations with both Sudan and South Sudan.

4.2 Libya

Gaddafi's Libya was a major, if entirely ambiguous, player in the region – unpredictable, controversial, belligerent and complex. For example, Gaddafi provided funds, logistics and political backing to all manner of rebel movements in the region – but at the same time, he cultivated state-to-state relations, trying to take advantage of this double game to further the interests of the national elites in Libya. This was particularly the case with Sudan: one could see the investments Libya was making in Khartoum and, at the same time, meet rebel leaders from Darfur in the lobbies of Tripoli's sea-front hotels, who had come to collect additional material support from the Gaddafi regime.

Above all, Gaddafi was feared because of his erratic policies and abundant resources. He wanted to be seen in the region as a combination of peacemaker and kingmaker. In terms of his peacemaker role, this was limited because Gaddafi was not prepared to accept any other mediation efforts than those where he could take the lead. Especially after his failed attempts to facilitate peace between Chad and Sudan in 2008 (a framework also known at the time as the Dakar Process), in the end no leader in the region was really prepared to follow Gaddafi's lead.[70] On Darfur, Libya ended up excluding itself from the Doha discussions. As the regime unravelled, Gaddafi was left with the leader of the JEM, who had sought refuge in Tripoli in mid-2010, when Déby decided that it was no longer advisable to host him in N'Djamena.

With new authorities in Libya, the appetite for regional power politics and intrigue is now gone. Libya today is primarily concerned with domestic reconstruction and its own internal political fissures. At present, any ambitions related to the broader region are limited to restoring normalized diplomatic relations with its neighbours, with a clear focus on the Middle East and Arab states instead of Africa. Interest-

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[70] In the end, the peace agreement between Chad and Sudan was facilitated without Gaddafi's assistance, through direct talks between the two capitals. For some observers, this was an indication that the Libyan leader was already losing influence, in 2009, in this part of the Sahel.

ingly, one of the first visitors from the region to land in Tripoli was Bashir, who arrived in early January 2012. This was a significant event, taking into account the ICC's decision on Bashir and his travels. The key political message on the Libyan side was to make clear to its western partners that the new authorities in Tripoli intend to pursue an independent foreign policy. Bashir's visit was also of domestic political value, sending a signal to the more radical factions within Libya that the current leaders appreciate what Bashir represents as a promoter of Islamist-inspired governance.

PART III. Regional Geopolitical Interests: Comparing the USA and China

Two primary international influences in the region are the USA and China, each representing entirely different models and modes of engagement. Key aspects related to the roles of both countries will be considered here.

1. The United States

The USA has a long association with the southern regions of Sudan. As the civil war gained a new intensity in the early years of the 1980s, evangelical Christian churches in the USA took sides with their fellow Christians in southern Sudan. These African populations were portrayed as victims of northern Sudan's Islamic leaders. Over time, both political advocacy in Washington and broader public opinion managed to place southern Sudanese issues high on the African agenda of several US presidents. Supporting South Sudan became an important domestic political issue, especially for more conservative activists linked to right-wing Christian groups. However, the issue of southern Sudan's independence also had broader public appeal, including among them left-leaning political activists and Hollywood celebrities. During the 2000s, the Bush administration – with close ties to Christian evangelical churches – was particularly engaged in promoting the end of the civil war and a peace agreement between the central government in Khartoum and the SPLM.

US mediation was critical for the completion of the 2005 CPA agreement. During the period between signing the CPA in 2005 and the referendum on independence in 2011, the USA played a major role in advising leaders from both the north and the south to adhere to the agreement and keep the peace. In many ways, the relative success of the transition phase is linked to this strong, proactive US engagement with key actors in Sudan. Nonetheless, the intensive political efforts on the part of the US administration and its Special Envoys concerning implementation of the CPA also reveal a degree of strategic confusion.[71] In the end, this effectively benefitted hardliners in the north, as well as impacted on the neutral position of the UN and other inter-

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71 This was particularly true of the role of Major-General Scott Gration. As President Barak Obama's Special Envoy, he was too concerned with producing results within a tight timeframe at the expense of creating local ownership of the process by the various Sudanese factions.

national partners, who found themselves under serious pressure to align their positions with the one advocated by Washington.

Four examples illustrate this strategic confusion. First, there was a time during 2009 when the US administration seemed to have undergone a change of heart about supporting southern independence. After discussing these concerns with regional political leaders, along with key international partners deeply committed to and engaged in the region (like the UK and the EU), the administration in Washington rapidly concluded that it was too late to avoid partition. Consequently, the USA reverted to its original objective of ensuring a peaceful transition to independence for South Sudan. Second, the US administration appeared particularly concerned with the negative impact the unresolved conflict in Darfur might have on the process for southern self-determination. Following a series of frantic meetings with the JEM and government leadership in Khartoum, and with the endorsement of Qatar, in July 2011 the US Special Envoy forced through a partial agreement. This was the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur Agreement, between the Sudanese government and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), an insignificant Darfuri rebel group, along with a few other opposition personalities, with little real impact on the ground. Third, US ambiguity and lack of firmness concerning the status of the border states (Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile) has played directly into the hands of the leaders in Khartoum, allowing them to justify pursuit of a military approach. Fourth, Washington has been ambivalent in its condemnation of Sudan's aggressive actions against local communities and military incursions in South Sudan.

US policy towards the region urgently needs new impetus and clarity. Washington is the most critical international power in this part of Africa, especially when it comes to contributing to peace and compliance with human rights standards. However, strategic confusion and ambiguity has partially eroded US credibility, in particular since 2009. In Khartoum, this loss of credibility stems from the failure of Washington to live up to its promises on debt relief, as well as its agreement to remove Sudan from the list of states that sponsor terrorism. Instead, the USA is now attaching fulfillment of these commitments to a resolution of the conflict in Darfur. A clear, focused and renewed approach would help to restore some of this lost credibility.

The USA remains a major partner of South Sudan. At the International Engagement Conference on South Sudan, organized by the US government in Washington in December 2011, the Obama administration recalled its commitments towards the African nation:

- promote sound management of national resources and accountability to benefit the people of South Sudan

- create a climate for investment and promote trade to facilitate economic integration and growth

- strengthen education, health and agricultural sectors as the foundations for growth and long-term development of the South Sudanese people

- encourage the participation of women and youth and respect the diversity of the people of South Sudan

These areas of cooperation are complementary to the work of other key donors: Norway, the UK, Turkey, the UN and the World Bank. They place special emphasis on the development agenda, including the management of natural resources and private sector investment, as well as on key social sectors and agriculture. They include the promotion of respect for diversity, which could be a major contributing factor to domestic stability.

But neither the USA nor any other major donor has referred to the importance of comprehensively addressing the root causes of conflict, or the much-needed reform of the security sector. Instead, they appear to take it for granted that South Sudan is above all a deeply underdeveloped country in urgent need of economic growth, proper management of its natural resources and good governance. This approach gives the impression that decision-makers in Washington are completely overwhelmed by the extreme poverty and the formidable governance challenges facing South Sudan. The fragility dimensions might be recognized by the USA and all other external partners, but at present it is difficult to discern any coherent assistance programme designed to address them. It is as if the South Sudan dossier had been transferred from the more political institutions in the donor capitals, to those in charge of development cooperation, including USAID. However, development efforts cannot succeed without an effective and comprehensive approach to the security challenges that South Sudan faces, including the deep-rooted causes of these conflicts.

In addition, current levels of support to South Sudan will be incomplete unless this is integrated in a larger US approach that takes into account the key role played by Khartoum. Peace and security in the region require a more productive US engagement with Sudan. Although the USA has acknowledged the AUHIP as the lead actor in negotiations over outstanding CPA issues, Washington can still play an important role, both by more actively supporting AUHIP initiatives

and offering worthwhile incentives that encourage both sides to come to agreement. Here it is crucial for the USA and other key actors to recognize that the leadership in Sudan is no longer of the same character it was when the CPA was being negotiated. Southern independence has severely compromised Bashir's grip on power and changed the political stakes in Khartoum.

2. China

China's interest in the region is totally driven by economic considerations, access to natural resources in particular. It is highly unlikely that the international community has forgotten the deal signed between China and the DRC in 2008, whereby the two agreed that China would invest US $ 9 billion in key infrastructure development[72] in exchange for access to 10.6 million tonnes of copper and 600,000 tonnes of cobalt in the Katanga region. Seen from a Chinese perspective, this deal was intended as the beginning of a new and unique strategic partnership between China and its Africa partners – a partnership defined, *inter alia,* in relation to win-win economic cooperation. In short, the DRC deal was designed as a prototype that would be replicated in other African countries.[73]

In the region, China is now the top investor in Sudan, the DRC, and Uganda. It has recently increased its investment in Kenya and is currently establishing deeper links with South Sudan, especially in the oil sector. This is likely to be of specific concern to Norway, which has also brokered deals in the oil industry. Here it is pertinent to recall that China managed to take over US oil interests in both Kazakhstan and Angola through political astuteness and other types of compensation. This may give rise to fears of a similar pattern of incentives in South Sudan.[74] In both Uganda and Kenya, China has moved at breakneck speed to supersede the UK (historically the largest investor in these two countries) in economic investment. Trade between China and Kenya more than doubled between 2003 and 2005.[75] Interestingly, however, more recent Chinese investments in Kenya signal a change of strategy: instead of focusing primarily on the extraction and export of raw materials, Chinese firms are also establishing local production

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72 This consisted of: 3,215 km of railroads, around 7,000 km of roads, 177 hospitals and health centres, two hydroelectric dams, two universities and 5,000 accommodation units. Beijing also agreed to refinance the collapsing DRC mining sector.

73 In the end, the International Monetary Fund stepped in to attempt to thwart the deal, but succeeded only in reducing it from US $ 9 to US $ 6 billion.

74 Relations between China and South Sudan on matters related to oil are, however, very complex. They are affected by some serious misunderstandings, taking into consideration the Chinese investments in Sudan's refineries and how such interests are perceived by the Juba authorities.

75 'Chinese Manufacturers go local in battle for Kenya's consumers', *African Investor*, 11 April 2011.

plants expected to create thousands of jobs for young Kenyans (as well as diminish the market shares of western multinationals).[76]

Clearly, then, the Chinese approach to regional investment offers a stark alternative to typically western approaches to development cooperation, which arguably have been defined in terms of conditionality. In general, the Chinese model of investment (also referred to as the 'Angola Model' or the 'Beijing Consensus') is defined as follows: it takes place at a government-to-government level, with little attention to civil society or domestic investors; it is based on non-currency deliverables and barter; and focuses on building key strategic infrastructures (transport, extractive capacities, and telecommunications), along with developing the agriculture, health and education sectors. This is a long-term, 'no-strings attached' (i.e., a policy of non-interference in domestic affairs) approach to development that, however controversial among traditional donors and local populations, has gained considerable support from African leaders in the region.

This is economic pragmatism at its all-time best. It gives rise to a host of serious questions about economic diplomacy versus a western approach similarly based on economic interests, but with added emphasis on good governance, human rights, gender equality and so on. Recent comments about regime change in Libya, along with a revamp in China's broader image in the region – a shift toward a more 'soft power' presence – have left some observers wondering if this large-scale African investor might be undergoing a change of tactics. In response to public outcry about the effects of Chinese imports on local entrepreneurs, as well as criticism directed at the tendency for Chinese communities to segregate themselves from host-country populations, China has adopted a more active approach to social programmes, especially in the health and education sectors. Only time will tell whether this will be enough to quell local disaffection, stem popular resentment and prevent further social and economic cleavages.

Chinese investment aims to offer obvious benefits to local populations in this impoverished but resource-rich part of the world, but the results are clearly uneven. As has been the case with other oil companies, for example, Chinese oil companies are regarded as predatory: they are accused of forced displacements of local populations, environmental degradation and a lack of corporate social responsibility. Investments in a setting that lacks transparency and accountability also offer primary benefits to political elites and augment the visibility of dramatic income inequalities. China will have to take better account of the po-

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[76] Chinese firms now have a strong presence in the telecommunications, automobile, battery, and food and beverage markets (*ibid*).

litical dynamics of the region, especially the need for enhanced human security, popular participation and equitable growth.

People in this part of the world are highly insecure and do not see their governments as being able or willing to respond to their basic needs and concerns. In such contexts, radical transformations are common. Perhaps, then, one of the most effective potential levers for inducing China to take a more responsive political approach in this region is simply an appeal to the need to protect its own long-term economic interests and significant investments. Being seen as literally mining Africa has already backfired on Chinese interests (and will continue to do so), thus putting those very investments at risk. To counteract these negative effects, the importance of a proactive anti-corruption stance, better recognition of the need to contribute to stabilizing this fragile region and the value of constructive engagement with civil society cannot be underestimated.

Sudan and South Sudan are serious testing grounds for China as an international actor, especially with respect to issues of governance that can create the foundations for stability, security and development in the region. Although China is making overtures to South Sudan, it must also maintain good relations with Sudan. This can position China as a key influential partner in the region, able to exert constructive influence on key players. For China, stability along the border, as well as within South Sudan (most of the oil reserves are located here) are seen as key strategic interests, thus offering motivation for more active engagement. Some movement in this direction has been reflected in recent – and unusually bold – statements indicating Chinese concern about Khartoum's military aggression in the border regions. To reinforce the value of greater engagement and the constructive role China could play in the region, other members of the international community, especially the USA and other key donors to South Sudan, should look for ways of working closely with China in the region. Experience has shown that when there is a deliberate attempt by western countries to involve China in their African policy, as was the case in Chad in 2008–2010, the Chinese response is positive.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

1. Regional Dimensions

1.1 The January 2011 referendum in South Sudan was a watershed event with wide-ranging and multi-dimensional political, economic and social consequences – for the north and the south, as well as for relations between the two states. Moreover, the broader region, including the regional balance of power, has been impacted by the formation of this new state. A new equilibrium is emerging that places more emphasis on a sub-region defined by South Sudan and the states to its south, Uganda in particular. This in turn creates conditions for a more balanced relationship among the states of the region, especially vis-à-vis Sudan. The 1983–2005 civil war in Sudan created ambiguous relations between Khartoum and other capitals in the region because some of them were openly sympathetic to the SPLM. The establishment of South Sudan and the new diplomatic balance this defines should be taken as an opportunity to enhance regional cooperation in the political and security fields, as well as in the economic sphere.

1.2 South Sudan's independence adds an additional layer of fragility to an area that can be characterized as an ellipse of insecurity, a vast area of violence (that moreover easily spills over into other countries, thus acquiring region-wide dimensions), systematic violation of human rights and poorly governed territories. The ellipse runs from north to south, along the frontier line separating the French-speaking states from the former Sudanese territories. It consists of the hinterlands of Chad, CAR and DRC, on their eastern frontiers, plus the corresponding border regions in Sudan (Darfur), as well as South Sudan (Western Bahr Al-Ghazal, Western Equatoria and Central Equatoria states). The incapacity of government institutions, whether at national, state or local levels, to exercise law and order, guarantee border protection and provide basic human security in these remote areas has transformed them into one of the most dangerous parts of Africa. This ellipse constitutes a contiguous web of insecurity, with large-scale humanitarian consequences, within a broader region that is highly unstable. It will require the concerted efforts of the region and the international community to establish greater human security in the area. Importantly, such efforts must reflect a regional perspective that is tightly integrated and coordinated, in contrast

to current piecemeal and *ad hoc* approaches. This regional perspective must also account for the specific security needs and capacities of these individual states. Alongside political and security sector representatives, civil society actors should also be involved in devising a region-wide security plan.

1.3   Today, tense relations between Sudan and South Sudan dominate the regional landscape, threatening to cause even greater instability in this already unstable part of the world. The top priority in terms of peace and security in the region is the normalization of relations between these two hostile neighbours. The implementation of pending Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) matters can provide the basis for a holistic approach to enhanced cooperation between Sudan and South Sudan. The outstanding issues that demand priority attention include: management of the oil sector, especially oil revenue-sharing; security protocols; demarcation of the common border; and the future status of Abyei. If these four key priority areas can be effectively addressed, this will create more favourable conditions for resolving the other remaining CPA issues. These include matters of citizenship, debt and asset distribution, and management of the Nile waters.

1.4   Beyond the outstanding CPA issues, the region is confronted with two other sets of priority challenges that require action. First, it is necessary to jointly address the pervasive insecurity in the area encompassed in the ellipse of insecurity, with special attention to domestic security problems in South Sudan and Sudan. Insecurity leads to increased violence and the proliferation of armed groups, systematic human rights abuses, mass migration and internal displacement; it constitutes a major impediment to development and regional stability. Second, it is critical to promote political and economic cooperation among the states of the region, including Sudan. This will help mitigate the devastating effects of regional instability and lay the foundations of a more integrated and sustained process of human development.

1.5   Uganda is a key ally to the international community in helping to stabilize the region. It has the political will and the military capacity to go beyond its national borders and assist its immediate neighbours, particularly South Sudan, DRC and CAR. However, several crucial policy dimensions must be taken into account. Uganda is a strong supporter of the newly-independent government in South Sudan and should therefore be in a position to play a significant role in the consolidation of its state authority. In stark contrast, Uganda's relations with Sudan have always been uneasy. In such a context, it is important to ensure that Ugandan

assistance to South Sudan is not perceived as part of an aggressive plan directed at Sudan. Such an approach could lead to greater instability, thus undermining Uganda's potential to make a constructive contribution to regional stability. Moreover, relations with the international community in support of peace in the region should not be used as a shield to hide the need for democratization and better governance in Uganda itself. These two central provisos must be considered in relation to the role of Uganda as an important partner for the international community. Its central geopolitical location and the relative strength of leadership in Kampala have allowed Uganda to establish solid relationships with global powers, particularly with the USA and, more recently, with China. The international security cooperation should be reinforced and strengthened to better enable the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) to fulfill its obligations and deliver professional levels of service. This should be also complemented by systematic political dialogue on governance reform in Uganda.

2. Sudan

2.1. Sudan is beset with its own large-scale internal problems, including Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) involvement in a range of different counterinsurgency campaigns throughout the country. Nonetheless, Sudan has remained intent on being a trouble-maker in the region, with growing animosity toward the south. The key external partners will need to convince the leaders of Sudan that such a course of action runs against the long-term interests of their country: it distracts scarce public resources from productive investments and funding to ameliorate social needs; it indefinitely postpones urgently-needed reforms to establish more representative institutions of governance; it creates the regional instability that is a major discouragement for international capital in-flows; it provides justification to neighbouring countries to engage in an arms race and maintain large-scale defence structures; and it complicates the re-establishment of normal relations between Sudan, its regional neighbours and key international partners. At the same time, it should be fully acknowledged that the ruling NCP government that negotiated and signed the CPA is not the same government as that of today, due to mounting internal party political divisions and increased domestic challenges. New approaches to Khartoum are necessary.

2.2 The secession of the south has destabilized the centre of gravity of power in Khartoum, with the Sudanese regime feeling increasingly under threat and critically weakened, notwithstanding offi-

cial declarations to the contrary. Indeed, Sudan is now a more fragile state than before the referendum for southern secession on 9 January 2011 and the creation of South Sudan as an independent state six months later, on 9 July 2011. Its power elite are dangerously divided. A renewed partnership with Khartoum would require the international community to encourage launching a national dialogue process aimed at democratization, decentralization and political reform. New incentives for more genuine cooperation in these areas could prove constructive, provided they are defined in relation to achievable goals.

2.3   With the exception of oil-related matters, which are considered highly urgent by Khartoum, particularly now that production has been stopped by South Sudan, the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) believes it is in its interest to leave key outstanding issues of the CPA unaddressed for the foreseeable future, despite some pressure from the world community to resolve these. For the NCP, the unresolved issues offer a convenient rallying banner that can be used to shift the political focus away from the most pressing domestic reforms. In these circumstances, any strategic cooperation with Sudan should come not only in support of a domestically-led transformation process that can address political and economic cleavages, but also to help Khartoum to understand the vital importance of balanced relations with South Sudan.

2.4   Qualified engagement with Khartoum is the only route to establish greater stability and security in the region. The international community should be mindful that the most important contributor to regional stability will be a cooperative government in Khartoum, willing to make use of international law and constructive diplomacy to guide its regional relations. The parameters of engagement should be clearly defined, its conditions should be matched by corresponding incentives, such as debt relief, removal from the list of countries sponsoring terrorist organizations and even the application of Article 16 of the Rome Statute, which allows the UN Security Council to advise the International Criminal Court (ICC) to defer from investigating a case, like the one against President Bashir. In terms of promoting greater security, the 2009 border cooperation agreement between Sudan and Chad could be used as a positive example: lessons should be drawn and its replication elsewhere encouraged, particularly along the common Sudan–South Sudan frontier.

3. South Sudan

3.1 South Sudan is struggling to establish itself as a sovereign nation in a region of Africa defined by extraordinary fragility. The challenges of independence for South Sudan are shaped by three strategic issues. First, as in the north, it is imperative to find a solution to the outstanding CPA issues. The most urgent of these concern oil revenues, border demarcation, and Abyei. Second, South Sudan is confronted with the imperative of building a stable and prosperous state based on a coherent and inclusive national identity. Among a host of pressing and overwhelming tasks related to building South Sudan as a nation state, the country will have to resolve its internal conflicts; undertake a comprehensive approach to creating an effective, credible and professional security sector; and better enable a truly representative form of government at the central and state levels alike. The third strategic issue bears on the country's external relations: these should focus on cooperation with its immediate neighbours, especially Sudan, and with key donors.

3.2 The post-conflict processes related to demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, as well as (national) reconciliation will need to be properly planned for by the South Sudanese government, with the support of the international community. At present, implementation of these types of activities remains largely *ad hoc*. State- and nation-building in South Sudan require a comprehensive conflict management package to help establish lasting peace and reconciliation within the country. The transformation of the SPLA into a modern professional army should also be an integral part of the post-conflict stabilization strategy. However, this is a major and complex undertaking that requires considerable resources and a carefully planned programme, including close attention to issues of timing, and the need for a gradual and well-balanced approach. Otherwise there is a risk that the process will become volatile, impacting negatively on already complex security and conflict dynamics. It is vital to effectively include civil society in this process.

3.3 South Sudan and its key development partners could envisage linking up the current phase of national construction to the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). The PBC could support the key nation-building processes, such as those related to inter- and intra-communal conflict resolution, the administration of justice and security sector reform. The PBC could also play a role in keeping the international community focused on assisting, in a coordinated manner, the most pressing institutional needs of the

new state. Of all possible cases, South Sudan is best suited for in-clusion in the mandate of the PBC.

4. The International Community

4.1   The efforts of the international community should recognize the leading authority and responsibility of the African Union (AU). More specifically, it is necessary to consider how the AU High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), led by former President Thabo Mbeki, might be better supported by the main external partners, including the USA, the UK and Norway. Here it should be borne in mind that the AUHIP still has an important mandate to achieve: to facilitate negotiations between the two states in or-der to enable them to overcome hostility and settle the outstand-ing CPA issues. In this context, public perceptions of the panel's impartiality are critical for the success of its work. Mbeki and the other members of the AUHIP have to be seen as even-handed and neutral facilitators.

4.2   The USA remains the most important international stakeholder in the region. It has been able to develop good relations with Ethio-pia and Uganda, as well as maintaining a traditionally strong alli-ance with Kenya. The USA is also deeply engaged in South Su-dan. This commitment to nation-building in the south should be matched and complemented by more energetic investment in the political dialogue with Khartoum. US engagement in the region should not be limited to issues of development cooperation or military technical assistance, but should be comprehensive and clearly defined in scope. In addition to a more proactive political presence in the region, the USA should look for opportunities for joint actions with China in the stabilization of the region.

4.3   China can play a major role in the normalization of diplomatic relations between the international community and Sudan. Among members of the Security Council, China has the greatest political leverage in relation to the leadership in Khartoum. It should also be able to play a constructive role in bridging the in-terests of both Khartoum and Juba, and can be helpful in develop-ing new incentives for both sides to cooperate. The USA and oth-er key donors of South Sudan should look for ways to work closely with China in the region. China should likewise recognize that efforts aimed at increasing stability and security, within each individual state and at the region level, are in the long-term inter-ests of protecting its own considerable economic investments in the region.

4.4 The international community should make a commitment to responsible and constructive diplomatic and economic engagement. The pursuit of individual national interests should help to foster greater stability and security in the region rather than serve to undermine an already extremely fragile part of the world. This will require greater transparency and clarity on the part of those states that seek to establish or deepen diplomatic and economic relations with South Sudan, especially in highly sensitive areas like water management projects on the River Nile or investments in the oil sector.

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