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Local Peace Processes in Sudan

A BASELINE STUDY

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***“Our sons are deceiving us...
... Our soldiers are confusing us”***

Chief Gaga Riak Machar at Wunlit Dinka-Nuer Reconciliation Conference 1999

“You, translators, take my words... It seems we are deviating from our agenda. What I expected was that the Chiefs of our land, Dinka and Nuer, would sit on one side and address our grievances against the soldiers. I differ from previous speakers... I believe this is not like a traditional war using spears. In my view, our discussion should not concentrate on the chiefs of Dinka and Nuer, but on the soldiers, who are the ones who are responsible for beginning this conflict.

“When John Garang and Riek Machar [leaders of rival SPLA factions] began fighting did we understand the reasons for their fighting? When people went to Bilpam [in Ethiopia] to get arms, we thought they would fight against the Government. We were not expecting to fight against ourselves. I would like to ask Commanders Salva Mathok & Salva Kiir & Commander Parjak [Senior SPLA Commanders] if they have concluded the fight against each other. I would ask if they have ended their conflict. Only then would we begin discussions between the chiefs of Dinka and Nuer.

“The soldiers are like snakes. When a snake comes to your house day after day, one day he will bite you. Since God has given us this meeting together, we must ask the soldiers if they have concluded their conflicts... We Dinka and Nuer, did it ever happen, when we used to fight with spears and shields, that foreigners were called in to assist us? The cattle that were raided from both sides, and the children that were abducted [in the present conflict] - I think ordinary citizens were not involved in these actions. Basically we are not very powerful. But if we are indeed powerful then we must raise a case against the soldiers. If we decide to recover the cattle from Dinka and Nuer, you will not obtain them from ordinary citizens, but from the soldiers who hold them now.

“In the peace meetings we concluded with those of Twic County [in N. Bahr el Ghazal], I was a participant. I have always been called to attend these meetings, but I do not honestly understand the genesis of these problems. We have been called to reconciliation... Even if we sacrifice a hundred head of cattle to confirm our agreements...in the end will we be able to restrain the actions of the soldiers when they determine to raid?

“Our soldiers are confusing us... What are they really doing? [Dinka begin to sing]. What is happening is, our sons are deceiving us. Take Matip [leader of pro-Government Nuer armed group], when he split from Riek, he raided us. Traditionally, when we have a lion that attacks and eats our cattle, we kill it. I tell you, let us grasp hands, and ask Matip where he stands. If he says he is a man of Omer [Beshir, President of Sudan] let us prohibit him from taking our oil and get rid of him [applause]. I tell you Southerners, if John Garang and Riek Machar are deceiving us by allowing us to have this meeting, and later refuse to honour our agreement, then we must rebel against them... We must overthrow them so that we can be united and move forward. I will stop here, since I was taken by a fever last night.”

Contents

2	Epigraph
3	Contents
5	Introduction
9	Summary of Findings
17	Observations on the Political Economy of Local Peacemaking in Sudan
	22 Table: Typology of conflict (from Pact and UNICEF reports)
	27 Table: International organizations and their selection of peace-building activities
	Case Studies
31	I Wunlit and the “people-to-people” movement
	45 Table: Counties and districts represented at Wunlit
62	II Ceasefire and local dialogue in the Nuba Mountains
73	III Abyei and the North-South peace process
	75 Table: Peace markets in Northern Bahr-al-Ghazal and Abyei
	76 Table: Sections and subsections of Misseriya Humr
	81 Table: Abyei peace process: participants and their interests
85	IV The crisis of the <i>judiyya</i> system in Darfur
	87 Table: Ethnolinguistic groups in Darfur
105	Bibliography
139	Acronyms
143	Glossary of indigenous terms
145	Acknowledgments
147	List of peace meetings by region and date
176	Chronological and geographical table of peace meetings
181	Map of peace meetings and ethnic groups in Sudan
183	Annexe: Comments by Pact on the present study



Introduction

Civil war and local conflict in Sudan

Sudan has been at war for more than two decades. The war in the South (and in the transitional zone between South and North) came to an uneasy end in 2005 with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). At the time of writing the war in the West, in Darfur, remains unresolved. In the East the threat of conflict is ever present. The CPA offers a partial solution to the endemic violence that afflicts many parts of the country, but it is widely recognised that local conflicts, among other factors, have the potential to undermine any existing agreement, disrupting the process of political normalization envisaged during the six-year interim period.

Parallel to the internationally-sponsored peace negotiations that brought an end to the war in the South – and the current talks that aim to do the same in the case of Darfur – there has been an array of local peace meetings and conferences between representatives of ethnic and other groups involved in smaller-scale conflicts in various regions of Sudan. Some of these local disputes precede the wider civil war; some have contributed to it; some have been caused or exacerbated by it. The meetings held to try and resolve them have their roots in established indigenous processes of conflict resolution, such as the *judiyya*¹ practised in Darfur and elsewhere in the North. These processes were developed and supported by earlier administrations in Sudan from the Condominium era onwards, sometimes being incorporated into the structures of local government. In recent years they have been revived and modified, often under the aegis of international non-governmental organizations.

In the north of the country today, some mediation under the auspices of the Government of Sudan (GoS) still continues, but this has been increasingly compromised by the same government's use of tribal militias for purposes of counter-insurgency. In the South the SPLM, in its earlier role as a military administration and its new role as the majority party in the new government of South Sudan (GoSS), has endorsed or participated in numerous local peace meetings. The GoSS has as yet no publicly defined policy on their relation to administration under the CPA, though it was reported that early drafts of the new constitution of South Sudan proposed a representative assembly of traditional leaders. So far, the impetus behind the expansion of local peace meetings in Southern Sudan has come, principally, from churches, civil society activists and international agencies.

Global politics and local peace

The war in Sudan, like the other civil wars that have proliferated in the past two decades, has presented novel challenges to international diplomacy. The doctrines and instruments designed to deal with international peace and security during the Cold War proved inadequate when confronted with a new era of internal wars. These wars, such as those in Sudan, have less to do with the power struggles between states or power blocs and more with structural inequalities in the local and global economy, poor governance and disputes over resources and ways of life. And they often manifest themselves along ethnic or religious divides. In such wars, which are characterised by fragmented political authority

¹ Refer to glossary for a translation and definition of local terms.

and predatory economic activity, it has been non-combatants who have borne the brunt of the violence, sometimes to the point where entire social groups have been threatened with extinction.

During the Cold War period a separation was established between the domestic needs of states and the maintenance of international security. On the one hand there was the issue of the promotion of social and economic development and fulfillment of basic human needs; on the other the perceived need to maintain a balance in relations between individual states and, more broadly, the western and communist blocs. In the post-Cold War period this distinction has evaporated: development and international peace and security have become intimately linked.

Responding to the new international environment, the United Nation's *An Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992) offered new policy instruments to address the twin challenges of violent conflict and underdevelopment. Introducing the concept of "peace building", it marked a shift from classic peacekeeping to multiple and multi-level forms of intervention designed to establish enduring peace in specific conflicts. It is now commonly – and plausibly – asserted that peace agreements which neglect public consultation and participation and which are not complemented by local-level peace processes are unlikely to last. As such, peace building can also be seen as part of the current restructuring of global governance. This has involved a weakening of the role of the nation-state as a vehicle for promoting the well-being and security of its citizens, and a world-wide growth in non-state actors, including non-governmental aid agencies, many of which have taken on tasks of peace building.

Sudan, in many respects, is the epitome of this new approach. With a variety of international economic and military security interests at stake, there is a remarkable range of multilateral development organisations, international non-governmental organisations, private consultancies and private security firms involved in peacemaking and peace building. As responsibilities are divided up, happenstantially, among these actors, there is considerable overlap and little overall coherence. Their interventions with existing indigenous processes of conflict resolution are not always explicit, or fully understood by the protagonists.

Indigenous conflict resolution and the international aid presence

In the 1990s, with the administrative apparatus in many parts of the country abandoned or subverted as a result of war, international NGOs (INGOs) and others involved in assistance to Sudan began to engage with and, in some cases, revive local modes of local conflict resolution. Support for such local peace meetings has now become an established part of the complex intervention by humanitarian and human rights organizations in Sudan. This is a development that has been paralleled in a number of other conflict-affected countries.

The potential of local conflicts to undermine peace agreements at the national level has generated particular interest among donor governments in community-level peacemaking and reconciliation processes. In 2002, for example, the US government, through the Sudan Peace Fund (SPF), budgeted US\$10 million over three years to support inter-community dialogue in southern Sudan. In government-controlled areas of the North, UN agencies and INGOs have supported a wide range of activities under the rubric of "peace building" and "conflict transformation". At the same time, the war in Darfur and the associated breakdown of relations between ethnic groups in western Sudan despite numerous tribal

conferences, serves as a sharp reminder of the political limitations on local-level peacemaking.

Research methods used in this report

The present report is an analytical survey of the literature of local peace processes in Sudan — variously referred to in English-language literature as “people-to-people”, “local”, “non-official” or “grassroots” peace processes — from the 1980s to date. It attempts to bring together the available written records of peace meetings in all parts of the country and to provide the most comprehensive possible bibliography, to-date, of these sources of information. The bibliographical research has been guided and supplemented by interviews with researchers and participants in key peace meetings. The report examines the relationship between people-to-people meetings and other activities conducted under the aegis of peace building and it assesses the relationship between these local level processes and the national political dialogue.

The core of the report is a series of case studies of particularly significant local peace processes: Wunlit and related meetings in the Nilotic areas of the South; Abyei and the Nuba Mountains in the North-South transitional zone, and Darfur in the North. The four studies present a historical account of peace meetings in each location, discussing their effectiveness and situating them in the political economy of the wider war. Together these essays provide a framework for understanding the wide variety of transactions that have taken place under the rubric of peace building in Sudan.

As well as a comprehensive bibliography and an extensive glossary, the report has established a database of over a hundred known local peace meetings. Information in the database, which can be updated, is presented in two forms: an analytical list that summarises the key features and outcomes of all recorded meetings (where evidence of these is sufficiently clear), and a geographical and chronological table that plots the locations of peace meetings against the date when they took place. Finally the report also includes a map showing the locations of the meetings and the ethnic groups involved in them.

Assembling the material on local peace meetings has not been a straightforward task. This situation is in contrast with the documentation of the national North-South peace process, for which key documents are widely available (see, for instance, Justice Africa 2002; USIP 2005). In the case of local peace processes, the written material, though clearly extensive, is widely scattered and hard to track down, archived as they are in offices of NGOs in Nairobi, Khartoum or elsewhere. Though some organizations involved in supporting peace programmes — such as Pact, the NSCC and the Larjour Consultancy — have endeavoured to make records of their work available online, there are many other reports commissioned by NGOs that have never been distributed, or that did not get beyond the draft stage, or that are buried in the mass of grey literature generated by the aid presence in Sudan.

There are cases of peace meetings that are known from project proposals to have been supported by international organizations, the outcome of which remains undocumented. The exemplary documentation of the Wunlit peace meeting between the Dinka of former Lakes Province and the Nuer of Western Upper Nile, which produced translated transcripts of the entire proceedings online (see SSFI 1999), and which has consequently become a document of historical importance, has not been replicated. There are, no doubt, records of peace meetings made by officials of the Government or the SPLM that remain unavailable to the public. Finally, for many meetings, particularly those that have taken place without external sponsorship (for instance those between sections of the Dinka of

Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Baggara groups from South Darfur known to have taken place in the 1990s) there is no written documentation. Such meetings form part of an oral record that has an important role in local peacemaking, but they are beyond the scope of the present report.

Research for the report took the form of initial, unstructured interviews with facilitators and protagonists of local peace meetings, with particular officials of international NGOs who have been involved with support for peace building, and with academics and researchers who have studied them. These interviews and conversations, which took place in offices of aid organizations and academic institutions in London, Khartoum, Kadugli, Nairobi and Lokichokio, were helpful in developing an analytical and interpretive framework for the report and in locating elusive archival material. Document gathering and interviews in the field were followed by the ordering and analysis of the materials, the creation of a database of peace meetings and the further acquisition of literature as more documents became available. The bibliography and the database of peace meetings cover a period up to early 2005.

One of the purposes of the project has been to bring together the literature of local peace in one place and make it more widely available. The report is designed as resource for those involved in current and future peace projects in Sudan, and for future researchers. The bibliography and database, therefore, provide additional information to the meetings referred to in the text of the report. Copies of all the documents listed in the bibliography have been collected, in digital form or hard copy. These will be made available, in due course, online and on disk as part of a wider project for a digital, open-access library of documents on Sudan, the Sudan Open Archive (www.sudanarchive.net) developed by the Rift Valley Institute. URLs are included in the bibliography when the documents are already available online.

In both the short and the long term, an understanding of the relation of local conflicts and peacemaking to national-level political and military activity is clearly crucial to the success of any peace agreement in Sudan, a country where political fragility, the unresolved history of conflict and the ubiquity of automatic weapons threaten order at every level. During the six-year interim period laid down in the CPA a continuing programme of historically informed monitoring of local conflicts will be necessary, in particular, to ensure that the conditions exist for the fulfilment of the provisions of the Agreement. The same will be true of any agreement that is reached in Darfur, or in the east of Sudan. The present report is intended as a contribution to this work.

Finally, as noted, support for local peace making and conflict resolution processes has become an established part of foreign interventions in countries undergoing conflict. But it is a growing field of endeavour, and further research and analysis and a critical dialogue and sharing of perspectives is required to understand its impact. In the interests of generating such a dialogue, the authors of the present report solicited a response to its penultimate draft from Pact, the principal international organization supporting local peace processes in Sudan. This can be found in the Annexe.

Summary of Findings

LINKS BETWEEN LOCAL AND NATIONAL PEACE PROCESSES

- **Violent conflict at the local level cannot be separated from the wider armed conflict and politics of the country.**

Local conflicts in Sudan have been deliberately fomented and sustained by warring parties - particularly by successive Khartoum Governments. Ethnic and religious difference and local competition over resources have been manipulated for military advantage, in the South, in the North and in Darfur. This is the most obvious of various ways in which local- and national-level conflict are related.

- **Local disputes reflect competition for representation at the centre.**

Ethnic groups and individuals within them compete for access to central power, in state administration, national and regional governments, and in rebel movements. This is an additional set of linkages between the two levels of conflict.

- **Local peace building is no substitute for a national peace agreement.**

Inter-tribal peace conferences can have tangible benefits. They may settle local disputes and restore relations between communities, act as a check on the excesses of armed groups, and can encourage greater public participation in politics. Local mediation may be an important prelude to a national level peace process, or a necessary follow up to it. But the sustainability of the local agreements is dependent on support, or at least non-interference, from the government and other authorities. Local peace agreements have not endured where hostilities continue between insurgents and the government or government-backed forces, as has become clear in Darfur.

- **Local agreements are limited in the extent to which they can address structural factors underlying the war.**

Local peace processes can be useful forums for challenging the status quo and stimulating debate on contentious issues, such as the control of natural resources, rights to land, unequal political representation, racial and cultural discrimination and lack of access to justice. A strong argument can therefore be made for supporting local-level reconciliation as an end in itself. But local peace agreements will only be transitory unless supported by government and other controlling authorities. A peace settlement in Darfur will require a comprehensive settlement of land and residence rights that is both locally and nationally supported if it is to be long-lasting.

- **The sustainability of local peace processes depends on the success of national peace agreements. And the success of the latter will involve renewed attention to local disputes.**

Events in Upper Nile in 2004 — and in Darfur since the ceasefire there — indicate that the implementation of a peace agreement may be as fraught as the negotiation phase. Similarly in the Nuba Mountains the ceasefire agreed in 2002 did not change the conditions that led to war and if future conflict is to be avoided, the Nuba peoples' demands for equal political rights will need to be advanced and their access to land safeguarded. Peace support operations by the UN or AU will need to incorporate an institutional understanding of local conflicts and their history in order to monitor ceasefire arrangements and disarm militias.

- **Local peace processes need support from representative government at the national level.**

International diplomacy in Sudan has brokered a national peace agreement between two belligerent parties. There are provisions in the agreement for an electoral process, but no detailed commitment to a democratic transformation of politics. Local peace processes can increase public participation in politics, and in the South this may have influenced the creation of more representative government. But this cannot compensate for the lack of public participation in the national settlement. Without progress towards more representative government at the national level, success in local peace building will be undermined.

- **External support for local peace processes started with a post-Cold War change in the dynamics of the war in South Sudan and in international mechanisms for engagement in sovereign countries and has been reinforced by current concerns about regional security and counter-terrorism.**

Since the Wunlit conference of 1999 there have been more than fifty peace meetings in South Sudan and numerous others in the North. Though many of the best documented and publicised of these have been characterised as “people-to-people” dialogue, this is only one among various kinds of peacemaking and peace-building activities that have been sponsored by international organisations. The proliferation of local peace processes and international support for them in Sudan, and elsewhere, reflects a greater readiness by international bodies to engage in the internal politics of sovereign countries since the end of the Cold War. Renewed support for peace meetings in recent years is part of a broader concern on the part of donors to develop aid interventions that address political problems at the level of governance, an aim given added urgency by concerns about regional security and anti-terrorism.

LACK OF COMMON OBJECTIVES AMONG PARTICIPANTS AND SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

- **There is no clear, shared understanding between donors and supposed beneficiaries over what peace-building projects are intended to achieve.**

The ending of the civil war between the North and the South and the restoration of peaceful co-existence between war-affected communities has been the commonly articulated aim of people-to-people and other local peace initiatives. But now that a peace agreement has been reached, both the rationale and the modalities of peace projects are shifting, sometimes away from conflict resolution towards integration into economic development. This adaptability is purchased at a cost in coherent and distinctive programming.

- **The interests of the institutions involved in supporting local peace processes need to be identified as well as those of the parties to the conflict.**

Some non-Sudanese sponsors of local peace initiatives in the South – and some Sudanese activists – see them as part of a process of awakening wider political consciousness among Southern communities. Others, including the SPLM/A, supported them during the war as overtly political meetings aimed at uniting the South against the Northern-dominated Government. In the North support from UNDP for peace building in Government-controlled areas (which began before the war in the South ended), aimed to create an environment for safe return and reintegration of displaced populations. Whereas UNICEF's expressed interest in peace building is to create an environment for the delivery of development services. The Sudan Government's involvement in local peace-building activities, by contrast, may be considered to have had more to do with extending its authority and creating a secure environment for the exploitation of oil or other resources. The variety of aims and interests means that local peace processes need to be understood in terms of the interests of the parties sponsoring the processes, as well as those of the parties in conflict.

- **Making peace can be a precursor to waging war.**

In a fractured political environment, an armed group may make peace with another group in order to more effectively prosecute a war against a third. It is important to understand the motives and incentives of parties involved in a peace process before offering support.

- **There is a risk that material support for local peace processes may feed the conflicts they are meant to resolve.**

Emergency relief programmes in Sudan and elsewhere have been criticised for exacerbating problems whose consequences they were intended to relieve. The introduction of financial and material resources into war-ravaged economies can mean that the resources themselves become a new point of conflict. There is a possibility that international support for local peace processes may have a similar

effect. Competition for representation and access to external resources in the peace process itself is a factor that needs to be understood. Channelling financial resources through particular local institutions and individuals may reinforce inequitable power relations. And community-based peace processes may present a false picture of relationships that mask more malign underlying dynamics.

- **There is a contradiction between the rationale presented for local peace processes and the nature of the support provided by donors.**

A national peace process will not reduce or eliminate tensions and conflicts in the regions, until, in the words of one implementing agency “fundamental structural issues are addressed” (PACT 2002c). The analysis generated by local peacemaking programmes provides some account of what these structural issues are, such as inequitable development, or political, property and cultural rights. But the peace-building programmes themselves put a much greater emphasis on superstructural phenomena such as the strengthening of civil society through capacity building, “confidence building through dialogue” and “problem-solving workshops”. It is unclear how attitudinal change and civil society capacity building can influence the underlying causes of violence. This deserves more research and analysis.

- **Support for processes of dialogue and mediation are inadequate without support to implement agreements.**

In the South and Darfur local agreements have foundered in the absence of support to implement the terms of the agreements.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE ANALYSIS OF LOCAL CONFLICT IN SUDAN

- **International support for peace building is generating an expanding body of useful literature.**

This includes conflict mapping in support of local peace projects, analysis of traditions of conflict resolution, and land and natural resource studies in the Nuba Mountains and Abyei. What is missing is an account of the role of the state and state elites in these conflicts, whether this is the Government of Sudan, or the SPLM/A, or the new Government of South Sudan. While recognising the constraints to such analysis in a politically charged terrain, without taking into account the state’s largely coercive and exploitative role it is not possible to address the underlying causes of conflict.

- **The proliferation of local peace-building activities, the range of external parties supporting them and the frequent absence of documentation make it difficult to assess their impact.**

There is no agreed measure of the success or failure of peace processes or an accepted time-scale over which an assessment should be made and no accepted

practice for reporting on meetings. There has been very little objective indepth research or evaluations undertaken of the impact of externally supported local peace processes. The documentation collected for this study does provide indications of continuing areas of conflict and possible flashpoints. It also provides baseline information and bench-marks for future assessment. However, much of it describes specific time-limited events and gives only a partial insight into complex processes. It is also deficient in certain areas, notably the north-east of the country.

- **Peace-building is evolving.**

For the parties involved local peace projects have been a learning process. But understanding of the dynamics of these processes and their impact remains limited. International organisations therefore should support the production of documentation and analysis, the exchange of information between the institutions involved, and the dissemination of information to the Sudanese public.

THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND TRADITION

- **In local-level peace meetings emphasis is placed on indigenous traditions of arbitration, reconciliation, forgiveness and resolution, but these traditions are not well understood by outsiders.**

The sacrifice of a white bull at the first Wunlit meeting (a feature of Nuer and Dinka religious practice) set the tone for the ritual component of peace meetings in the Nilotic area. A more systematic understanding of such local institutions in the South and the North is necessary, also of the historical role of marriage and trade relations between communities in conflict and of their shared histories which give them a common language of peace as well as war.

- **Reviving regular inter-tribal meetings of the type sponsored by government authorities under Condominium may be desirable but would be difficult.**

Such meetings continued in the early years of independence, but the conditions in which they occurred have changed. Firstly, there is the erosion of central authority in large parts of the country. Secondly, many of the institutions of tribal authority and local government have been changed by successive governments. Thirdly, there are changes in the relationships between the communities in conflict and the resources they share. For example, in the transitional zone between North and South Sudan, the historic agreements between tribes for sharing land were usually seasonal and short term. With environmental changes, the need may be for prolonged or even permanent periods of resource sharing, which may lead to more profound tensions. Traditions of resource management need to be understood to inform policies and develop appropriate mechanisms for managing shared natural resources that reflect these changing conditions.

- **International organisations sponsoring peace building do not always speak the same moral and political language as the people they are assisting.**

International support for processes of conflict transformation and related activities are liable to impute moral and political significance to aspects of the peace process that may not correspond to local understandings of the same events, and ignore other meanings that do not fit into a global moral template. The same is can be true of local actors such as controlling authorities. An example is the return in 1998 of the dissident SPLA commander Kerubino Kuanyin Bol to his home area. Although Kerubino had been responsible for extensive raiding in the area, burning and looting villages and killing their inhabitants, he was able to rejoin the SPLA and return home without reprisals, and without formal reconciliation. In this case, community survival and political convenience may have been seen as being more important than individual survival or the rights of the individual. Outsiders should be cautious about imputing meaning to events without scrutinising them with care.

FROM PEACE BUILDING TO GOVERNANCE

- **The role of traditional leaders, the restoration of native administration (*idara ahalia*), rural courts and the emphasis on traditional practices of mediation are common themes in local peace processes throughout Sudan, and reflect a broader search for good governance.**

Local leadership and traditional practices of mediation retain an important role in managing conflicts between communities. Traditional leaders can be a force for reconciliation, but this is not always the case. Traditional leadership is itself a product of a history of negotiation between local and national powers. Government manipulation of tribal institutions and authorities has in many places weakened their local legitimacy and the role that they can play in mediation and peacemaking. One should therefore avoid assumptions about the intrinsic nature of such social actors.

- **International aid agencies should take care not to fill the vacuum of government.**

In their peacemaking activities, international agencies appear to be attempting to fill the vacuum left by the decay of rural administration in Sudan. For churches and international NGOs this is a new development. There are problems associated with both churches and aid agencies taking on this governance role.

- **The notion of “civil society” remains undefined.**

Emphasis is frequently placed on the role that civil society organisations and traditional leadership can play in peace building in Sudan. Yet the term “civil society” itself is consciously non-specific. In Sudan, as elsewhere, it is a catch-all term that needs to be examined in terms of the political ethnography of Sudanese societies, North and South, and the webs of kinship that define them. Today’s civic leader may be tomorrow’s warlord, and vice versa. And today’s traditional leader

may be tomorrow's national politician. The interests of the representative of civil society may not map onto those of the traditional leader. Thus individuals may have ambiguous relations both with government authority and with armed groups.

THE COMING IMPACT OF OIL

- **Oil exploitation is the wild card.**

The issue of oil has seldom been an explicit part of local-level discussions in Sudan, yet it looms over the future of the entire country, the South and the transition zone in particular. Oil has a contentious history, as recorded in numerous human rights reports. In Western Upper Nile in particular this has involved large-scale forced displacement of people, and internecine conflict along lines of ethnic fission. Even with a national peace agreement, the impact of the oil industry on local populations is likely to be significant. Oil is by far the biggest economic development project in Sudan, but one in which no development organizations have been involved. Oil developments have taken place without impact assessments and without national or local consultation or documentation. There has been virtually no research undertaken on the potential impact of oil, either on the macro economy or - most significantly for the purpose of this report - on local relations, local livelihoods and the environment. As is clear from cases elsewhere in Africa, there is huge potential for oil to become a cause of instability in the interim period in Sudan.

THE INCORPORATION OF PEACE BUILDING INTO DEVELOPMENT

- **Community-based peace building and conflict transformation are increasingly being included as elements in broader-based aid projects in war-affected areas.**

Such projects include the rehabilitation and delivery of social services, restoration of livelihoods, rural development and governance (a tendency signalled by the phrase "peace through development"). But these projects characteristically reduce the resolution of conflict to a technical issue, such as the management of land and water and productive activities, while the political dimensions of resource allocation are left unaddressed. Such programmes, promoted as "transformative", are often very similar to development programmes implemented in the same locations before the war. But the end of the war does not mean that there has been a return to the status quo ante. Such reconstituted pre-war aid programmes are liable to ignore both new economic factors, changes in demography and the transformation of local expectations as a result of the war. They do not incorporate an understanding of the paramount importance of disputes over the control of access to land, or, in key areas of the transitional zone, the impact of oil development. In the final analysis, peace-building as part of a development programme cannot be separated from national political transformation

Observations on the Political Economy of Local Peacemaking in Sudan

Introduction

From the 1980s onwards there were numerous external attempts to end the civil war in Sudan. In the jargon of multi-track diplomacy these efforts to end the conflict took two principal “tracks”².

The first track involved international mediation between the GoS and the SPLM/A. Latterly this was under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Agency on Development (IGAD), but other African governments, including Nigeria and Egypt, were involved at various stages. The protracted IGAD talks produced a series of agreements: in 1994 an agreed Declaration of Principles (DoP) for the future constitution of Sudan; in July 2002 a framework for negotiations for a comprehensive settlement of the war (the Machakos Protocol); in May 2004, a framework agreement for power sharing in Sudan; and finally, on 9 January 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Nairobi. The CPA ushered in a six-year interim period with a timetable for the implementation of various protocols including power sharing, wealth sharing, security, self-determination for the South, and the status of the interstitial areas of Abyei, Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile.

The second track in the peace process – as distinct from the first-track mediation between representatives of the warring parties – involved local-level mediation within the country. This has been characterised, in the idiom of humanitarian assistance, as a process of “building cooperation between communities in conflict with each other through dialogue and development”. But it has also had a religious dimension, with key events in local peace processes in Southern Sudan being sponsored by church organizations and employing the ritual language of Christian and indigenous belief systems. During the 1990s in Southern Sudan this support for local peace efforts took the form of sponsorship for a continuing series of meetings known as people-to-people conferences. In the Muslim North (and West) of the country, the established system of mediation by tribal elders known as *judiyya* has endured, despite deterioration in the system of local administration that supports it. *Judiyya* has not received external support on the same scale as the people-to-people process and it is correspondingly less comprehensively documented.

The two tracks to peace were seldom coordinated, but both were influenced by wider geopolitical events and by the changing interests of donors.

The label “People to People”, was used for a series of talks between warring communities in the South co-ordinated by the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC)³. The best known of these meetings is the 1999 Wunlit conference between Nuer and Dinka, two of the largest ethnic groups in Sudan. The Wunlit conference brought together Dinka communities

² Some advocates of “multi-track diplomacy” identify as many as nine tracks (See Diamond and McDonald 1996). Diamond and McDonald argue that diplomacy should be holistic, involving many parts of society. Oddly, however, this general theory of multi-track diplomacy does not involve any concept of traditional authority, an institution that has been fundamental to the process in Sudan. For purposes of simplicity, the present report distinguishes only two tracks - internationally mediated state-level dialogue and community-level dialogue.

³ The term “people to people” seems to have been first used by peace activists in the Middle East, where it referred to ordinary citizens - as opposed to politicians - meeting in a personal capacity to overcome national, political, racial, cultural and religious differences to discuss - or make - peace. (It is also the name of a long-established US-government sponsored programme of cultural exchange unconnected with the peace movement.) In this report we distinguish between “People to People” (capitalized), as a name for the NSCC programme, and “people-to-people” (hyphenated) for the approach that it used, and popularised, of promoting dialogue between stakeholders who ordinarily do not exercise much authority.

from the former Lakes Province area of Bahr el Ghazal and Nuer from Western Upper Nile, and it brought a negotiated end to extended hostilities between them, which has, on the whole, endured to the present.

Wunlit was not the first such meeting. It was preceded in 1994 by a conference in Akobo, on the Ethiopian border, between two Nuer groups, the Lou and the Jikany. It is Wunlit, however, that has become the bench mark against which all subsequent local peace talks and agreements are assessed, in South Sudan at least. Since the Wunlit meeting there have been at least fifty further conferences between ethnic groups (or tribal sections within ethnic groups). The style of meeting established at Wunlit has continued in various forms into the current era of uneasy peace in the South. The communities involved include various Dinka and Nuer tribes or sections, and several other ethnic groups such as Didinga, Anyuak, Shilluk, Murle and Moru.

The initial sponsors of People-to-People meetings were Southern Sudanese church groups — specifically the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) and the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS) — and Christian-based INGOs. The NSCC, the PCOS and the international ecumenical agency Pax Christi continue to sponsor local peace talks in Southern Sudan. Since 2002, however, secular organisations have become increasingly prominent as sponsors and facilitators of talks using a people-to-people approach. These organisations include, in the South, Pact and the consortium of NGOs (including the NSCC) funded by USAID's Sudan Peace Fund (SPF), and, in the North, UNDP, UNICEF and various international and indigenous NGOs.

People-to-people has mostly been used to describe inter- and intra-community peace conferences in South Sudan. However, the phrase has also been applied to inter-community dialogue in the North, between groups that meet in the North-South frontier zone. These are neighbouring groups with long-established relations of intimate enmity: the Aweil Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal and the Rizeigat of South Darfur, the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya Humr of Kordofan. This is the area — known in the literature of aid as the “transitional zone” — where the people-to-people process meets the *judiyya* tradition of the Islamic areas of the North.

The people-to-people process and other local peace programmes

People-to-people processes are distinguished from state-level negotiations by two principal factors. First, they are primarily concerned to address what are variously described as “local”, “grassroots” or “second-tier” conflicts. These are not necessarily directly related to the war between the Government and the SPLM/A. There is an implicit recognition in this approach that Sudan is “mired in not one, but many civil wars” (Johnson 2003: xiii) and also, now, that the disputes have not necessarily ceased because of the CPA.

The second way in which the people-to-people processes are distinguished from state-level diplomacy is the far greater level of public participation and, in most cases, the absence of international and government mediation. The “people” in people-to-people talks include, variously, chiefs, elders, women community leaders, military commanders, and intellectuals (the term used in Sudan to refer to educated professionals), rather than high ranking leaders of the warring parties. The description of equivalent processes in the north of Sudan as *kalam al wataneen* (people's talk), *mutamarat al sulh* or *al sulha al gabali* (tribal reconciliation), illustrates their non-state, non-governmental nature.

The people-to-people dialogues are only one of a number of the localised peacemaking and peace-building activities that mushroomed in Sudan from the late 1990s. Others include

“peace markets” established in rebel-held areas to provide safe passage for traders from government areas, sponsorship of dialogue between political and civil society organisations⁴, and development projects that aim to facilitate cooperation between divided communities. Supported by an array of external parties, both religious and secular, including UN agencies, INGOs and donors, these developments aim to build cooperation between communities that have been divided by the civil war. They occur both in government and non-government controlled areas. In the last few years of the war in the South and the Transitional Zone many international aid organisations established peace offices and programmes. Examples are the UNDP programme for Capacity Building in Conflict Transformation and Peace-Building in Khartoum and its Programmes to Advance Conflict Transformation in the Nuba Mountains (NMPACT) and Abyei (PACTA)(Pantuliano 2004; PACTA/UNDP 2004). Another is UNICEF’s Rights Protection and Peace Building Programme (UNICEF 2003b). The longer the war continued, the greater, it seemed, was the number of programmes and organisations having the word “peace” in their name.

Through such programmes strands of “peace-building” and “conflict transformation” have now been incorporated (or “mainstreamed”) into many broadly-conceived aid programmes in war-affected areas. In the post-conflict period in the South, peace building is seen as a component in a conventional development package that includes the rehabilitation of infrastructure and delivery of social services, livelihood support, rural development and governance programmes. To such initiatives can be added the international ceasefire monitoring mission in the Nuba Mountains, the Joint Monitoring Mission and Joint Military Commission (JMC). This was a product of international diplomacy in working towards the CPA. It supported cross-boundary confidence-building (JMC 2004). (Since the signing of the CPA, the JMC has been wound up and incorporated into the overall United Nations Mission in Sudan - UNMIS.)

The interest of international aid organisations in peacemaking in Sudan has generated a new literature on conflict analysis and peacemaking. This includes records and analyses of many people-to-people dialogues in the South (previous overviews include: Jenner 2000; Flint 2001; NSCC 2002b; SSFI 2003; PACT 2003e), studies on conflict related issues, such as land resources in the Nuba Mountains (Suliman 1999a; Harragin and Gullick 2003) and Abyei (Intermedia/NCG 2003; PACTA/UNDP 2003; Fox 2003), and the cross-boundary conflict impact assessment coordinated by NMPACT in the Nuba Mountains (NMPACT 2002b). In northern Sudan institutes of higher education such as the Universities of Khartoum, Juba and Al Ahfad, have also produced substantial reports on conflict and peace in Sudan (Wassara and Al-Tayyib 1997; Mohamed and others 1998; Martin and others 2005).

Certain studies, such as the NMPACT cross-line study, establish a model for conflict and peace impact assessments that could be replicable elsewhere, possibly in the present conflict in Darfur. Some accounts of single meetings, such as that analysed in the Darfur case study in the present report, provide valuable insights into the dynamics of local peacemaking. However, the documentation of local peace processes in Sudan in general has been erratic and uncoordinated. There has been no subsequent account of a single peace meeting that reaches the high standard established by the record made at Wunlit, where detailed, translated transcripts of the proceedings were made available on the web soon after it took place and can still be found there (SSFI 2003). There are several reasons for this. Wunlit was in many ways a unique event which captured the support from donors, the authorities and aid agencies at a time and in a way that was never fully replicated.

⁴ These include the Sudan Peace-Building Programme facilitated by the African Renaissance Institute and Relationships Foundation International (which held consultations outside Sudan on issues including the Nile waters and agriculture, federalism and self-determination, religion, constitutional frameworks, mineral resources, security issues, IDPs and refugees), and a series of meetings facilitated by Justice Africa involving southern and northern Sudanese civil society organisations and activists. The latter were held in Kampala and Entebbe and are briefly considered in the Wunlit case study of the present report.

Although subsequent people-to-people meetings were inspired by the Wunlit model, they were adapted to the particular circumstances. Furthermore, capturing the nuances of a peace process in a written form is also challenging in what is a predominantly oral culture.

The Sudan government, pursuing its own political programme under the banner of “peace from within” (*salaam min al dakhal*), has invested in the establishment of peace institutions, such as the Peace Advisory Council in the central and regional governments, as well as peace departments in a dozen Sudanese universities, some of which have contributed to the research mentioned above.

Multiple tracks to peace in Sudan’s North-South civil war

Since the end of the Cold War, the prevalence of internal and regionalised cross-border conflict, as opposed to wars between states, has been accompanied by an evolution in practice and theory on how to end these new wars. Given the unconventional nature of internal wars, it is argued, the strategy of narrow political negotiations between warring state parties is inadequate. Peace processes are political processes that can produce structural changes in the nature of governance, security, power relations and political and economic rights. Consequently the nature of the process itself is integral to the success of any agreement that is reached. In this view of conflict resolution non-state actors, both national and international, have a key role to play in peace negotiations. Transparency and public participation are necessary for agreements to be sustained (Barnes 2002).

In Sudan local-level peace negotiations occurred in parallel with intermittent high level talks between the government and the SPLM/A from quite early in the war. But the two dimensions of the overall peace process were never directly linked. The Sudanese government, like most governments, sees peacemaking as a governmental function and has been reluctant to concede any role to civil society. The SPLM/A has also seen direct negotiation with the Khartoum government as the means to a settlement. And for donor governments, ending hostilities between these two major protagonists has been the overriding priority. To expedite this, perhaps understandably, they resisted demands for the participation of civil society and other opposition groups in the negotiations that led to the CPA, and for the inclusion of the Darfur issue in the agreement. The consequence is a peace agreement between two parties whose claim to representativeness is either dubious or untested, in a country that is still half at war with itself.

As an internationally brokered elite settlement between the GoS and the SPLA/M, the CPA leaves unaddressed the myriad armed conflicts that have proliferated during the last two decades, conflicts that have both contributed to and been exacerbated by the war. These local conflicts have not all ended with the CPA; some may get worse (Institute of Security Studies 2004). Yet the success of the six-year interim period agreed in the CPA depends on their peaceful resolution. Thus, even as the national peace process was approaching fruition in 2003-2004 donors and others also turned their attention to the question of smaller-scale local conflicts, particularly in the South. In 2002, the US government invested US\$10 million over three years in support to local peacemaking. The European Parliament suggested that the national peace process would not be successful without broader public participation.

[P]eace in the Sudan can only be considered to be achieved when all parties involved in areas of conflict across the country agree to, and respect, a ceasefire, and when peace processes involving community and tribal leaders, MPs, civil society and women's groups as well as the warring factions have been undertaken and concluded, including in Darfur. (European Parliament 2004)

The people-to-people dialogue and other local-level peace activities have been seen by some as a complementary track to the national peace talks. It should be noted, though, that these processes have their own dynamic, independent of international diplomacy. In the South the “People to People” dialogues preceded the current national talks. The impetus behind them had more to do with South-South reconciliation, Southern unity and the immediate economic survival of the communities involved. Only in the Nuba Mountains and Abyei have there been local peace processes that paralleled the national peace process in the sense that they brought together communities on the Government side with communities on the SPLA side.

But local peace processes within the area of control of one of the parties may support the national peace in another sense. In the South, certainly, they have acted as a check on the excesses of the SPLA and other armed groups and promoted reconciliation between them. On occasion local peace meetings have acted as a consultative mechanism for the SPLA. They have, arguably, thus made a contribution to the emergence of representative government in the South. In the sense that this has made the SPLA a more representative body, the local peace processes can be said to have contributed to the national peace process.

Understanding the increasing complexity of conflict

There has been civil war in Sudan since 1955, the year before Independence, with only a decade-long interlude between the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, which ended the first war, and the 1983 Bor Mutiny, which marked the start of the second war⁵. The North-South peace process that culminated in the CPA of 2005, was preceded by the outbreak of war in Darfur. Although the war between the GoS and SPLM/A was the dominant conflict in Sudan from 1983 to 2004, the uprising in Darfur underlines the fact that Sudan’s crisis is not limited to a war between the North and the South, or between the government and the SPLM/A, or between Muslim and Christian, or Arab and non-Arab. Sudan is today characterised by a “network of internal wars” fought at national, regional and local levels (Johnson 2003: 127). These conflicts may be defined along ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic lines. The people-to-people dialogues and other peacemaking activities in the South have focused on these local conflicts. While some of them were mitigated by the signing of the CPA and the formation of the GoSS, and others by the subsequent policy of political inclusion of southern armed groups pursued by the SPLA, others have not (PACT 2002c).

Two studies, one commissioned by UNICEF and UNDP in Khartoum (Gore and others 2002) and the other by Pact in Nairobi (PACT 2002c), map out a picture of Sudan in which conflicts of various scales affect almost every region. According to UNICEF 65% of the population of Sudan live in regions defined as conflict-prone, whose population is classified as low-income, and who are predominantly rural. The UNICEF and UNDP study of “second tier” or “grassroots”⁶ conflicts in government-controlled areas and the Pact study of violent conflict in areas controlled by the SPLM/A, provide a broad typology of local disputes based on their characteristics and their structural causes. These include ecological degradation, weak and poor governance, political and economic competition.

The reports differ in their analysis of the conflicts and illustrate how different forms of analysis can lead to different solutions. While the UNICEF report, written in collaboration with the Sudanese Ministry of Higher Education, emphasises the ecological and resource

⁵Even the interlude saw episodes of insurrection. Remnants of the rebels who did not accept the Addis Ababa Agreement withdrew to Ethiopia and continued a low level war; in the early 1980s militias began to emerge under the name Anyanya II in Nuer and Dinka areas of the South.

⁶ Grassroots conflicts described as ‘conflict at the community or tribal level’.

dimensions of conflicts, Pact's analysis is more concerned with questions of governance. There are other factors that may be insufficiently emphasized in either. For instance, neither of these studies gives much prominence to the impact of oil exploitation, other than to predict that this is likely to be a catalyst of more conflict in the future.

The UNICEF study, reflecting UNICEF's particular institutional concerns, is mostly devoted to the relationship between poverty, control of natural resources, and access to social services. It identifies a variety of conflicts, from localised disputes over ownership and access to land, clashes between transhumant pastoralists and sedentary farmers, to conflicts fuelled by the actions of political authorities. It distinguishes these from what it terms the "political conflict" between the SPLM/A and the GoS, although it recognizes that political factors fuel grassroots conflicts.

Table: Typology of conflict (from Pact and UNICEF reports)

Type of conflict	Parties to conflict	Particular causes
Competition for natural resources	Farmers and nomads Rival Nomadic groups Farmers and <i>jellaba</i> Farmers and government	Climate change Ecological decline and depletion Changes in land use affecting farming and <i>maracheel</i> (migration) Declining water resource availability Government appropriation of land National land use policy Inequitable access to natural resources Inequitable national legal framework
Disputes over political authority and administrative boundaries	Neighbouring ethnic groups	Competition over tribal homelands and land ownership Non-representative political system Social and economic discrimination Loss of respect for traditional authority
Wider political struggles within Sudan	Government & insurgents Tribal militias	Military strategy Economic opportunity
Politics across international borders	Governments of Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Chad and Uganda Ethnic groups living both sides of borders	Support for armed political opposition
Ethnic conflict	Tribal militias and civilians	Ethnic intolerance Political manipulation Sponsorship
Criminality	Criminals, bandits, Government	Decline in government credibility as mediator and instrument of law and order Absence of government Proliferation of small arms

The Pact study concludes that most conflicts are ethnically based, that is between and within ethnic groups, but that two thirds of these are politicised, or fuelled by external political factors. Other causes are identified as: weak governance systems; tensions between internally displaced persons and resident populations; the proliferation of arms; and the tendency for a traumatized population to reproduce a culture of war.

There are problems with typological classifications of local disputes, such as those put forward by Pact and UNICEF and synthesised in the above table. Every dispute is multifactorial and multidimensional. Each is rooted in a local history of conflict and, at the same time, linked to the wider militarisation of politics in Sudan.

The nature of these links between the local and the national conflict varies, but there are common themes. Chief among these has been the counter-insurgency strategy of successive governments in Khartoum, based on arming tribal militias to attack neighbouring groups that have links to rebel forces. This tactic has been employed in the South and the frontier area between North and South, and is currently employed in Darfur.

The strategy of arming tribal militias against the SPLA began under the Nimeiri Government. Within months of the Bor mutiny and the formation of the SPLA in 1983 the Government armed Southern tribes such as the Toposa, Mundari, Murle and Nuer remnants of Anyanya II in order to harass the newly formed SPLA (Johnson, 2003). At the same time the government was arming the Baggara to attack Nuer and Dinka populations in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. Through its use of surrogate Northern and Southern militias, the Government was able to fight the war on the cheap, minimising losses among northern Sudanese. It was also able to present the fighting as a product of ethnic rivalry rather than misgovernment.

Later, a new Government policy of "peace from within" exploited the fragmentation that had been encouraged by this proxy counterinsurgency tactic. "Peace from within" aimed to bring southern leaders, one by one, to agreement with the Government, without the assistance of outside mediators or guarantors. Combined with continued military support for pro-Government forces, the effect was to encourage further factionalisation and internecine war within the South. In the latter phase of the war the SPLA also developed links to militia leaders – notably in Western Upper Nile – and, armed by the SPLA, a number of them changed sides, then changed sides back to the Government again. Shifting relations between armed groups and their ethnic base – and between the leaders of armed groups and their patrons in Government or other armed groups – all complicate the picture when it comes to representing the interests and issues involved in local peace negotiations.

Conflict and the decay of governance in Sudan

There are differing interpretations of the hierarchy of causes in Sudan's various civil wars (Johnson 2003) and the causative factors shift in relative importance as the conflict develops. But there are two constant themes that are relevant to the analysis of the war and the national peace talks: the crisis of state formation in Sudan and the decay of administration and governance. The people-to-people processes and other community-level peacemaking activities reflect, both in their objectives and substance, this same crisis of government, *hakuma*. Local peace talks have taken place, in fact, in a 'governance gap'. That is on the periphery of the state, where local forms of governance exist, but central government and the opposition movements have little or no formal administrative capacity and limited control. This gap has been significantly widened by the war.

Historically, Sudanese states have been built on the predatory exploitation of this periphery; on slavery and natural resource exploitation. The modern state likewise, rather than trying to unite the country under a rubric of cultural diversity, has tended to reproduce the inequity in regional development, and intensified antagonisms in relations among its citizens. The accumulation and expansion of power and wealth in the central riverain states today continues to involve exploitation of the inhabitants of outlying regions of the country, variously by expropriation of land, forced displacement and denial of basic human rights (Johnson 2003).

Imperial administration in Sudan, as in British colonies in West Africa, was based on the principle of indirect rule, or, as it was known in Sudan, Native Administration (*idara ahliya*). The basic principle of native administration was that local administration should be conducted through indigenous structures of authority, employing local law or custom. In Northern Sudan this involved support to the hierarchy of tribal chiefs – *sheikhs*, *omdas* and *nazirs* – who were given specific judicial and administrative powers. In the South, among the sedentary agriculturalists of Equatoria, similar hierarchical structures were introduced. In the case of Southern pastoralist societies, however, such as the Dinka and Nuer, with their historically acephalous political organisation, the lack of hierarchical structures meant that these offices had to be created. Thus the chiefs' courts of Southern pastoralists owed as much to British innovation as to indigenous custom.

Under the Condominium the regulation and management of local conflict became part of the responsibilities of government. Through the Native Administration, this impinged on existing institutions for conflict resolution, such as the *ajaweed* council and the *judiyya*. In certain areas of the country annual tribal conferences were arranged between different pastoralist groups – and between pastoralists and farmers – in order to settle disputes, make reparations and agree on the timing and direction of annual movements of herds and people. These inter-tribal peace meetings were conducted under the guidance of government officials.

The administrative structures established under the Condominium endured until the end of the first civil war. In the 1980s administrative changes under the Nimeiri Government, including the abolition of native administration, significantly weakened local control over land and livelihoods⁷.

The decay of rural administration in much of Sudan and divisions within the state itself, means that governmental authority and capacity to manage conflict between its citizens is weaker than it was in the past. Under the current Government in the north, there has been a further decay of customary tribal authority and rural administration. The introduction of a federal system of government with twenty-six states has weakened the existing administrative apparatus. The financing of social services has been delegated to federal states, but without significant devolution of powers by central government. At the same time the Government has reintroduced a new kind of native administration in parts of the North, with the introduction of the new office of *amir*. This gives recognition to previously unrecognised tribes and tribal leaders, creating a form of ethnic federalism. (See Darfur case study.) The authority of existing tribal leaders has, in certain places, been divided up, so that groups which previously had one *nazir* may now have several Government-appointed *amirs*.

⁷ The system of native administration in the North was abolished; the 1970 Unregistered Land Act did away with customary rights to land; the 1974 Law of Criminal Trespass strengthened the rights of leaseholders to their lands; and the 1990 Civil Transactions Act prohibited the recognition of customary land rights in courts.

The rationale behind these administrative changes may have had less to do with creating effective administration, and more to do with breaking the power of the secular political parties that enjoyed support bases in the West, particularly the Umma Party. It has also formed part of the Government's counter-insurgency strategy. In Government-controlled areas of the Nuba Mountains and among communities of displaced Dinka the Government has appointed new tribal authorities (NMPACT 2002b). In the most extreme cases, as in Darfur, the undermining of customary regulation of land use has led to war. And the three developments together have provoked an unresolved crisis in traditional local-level mediation in Darfur.

Aid and peacemaking

The increasing complexity of the conflict in Sudan and the internal pressure for peace were accompanied and influenced by changes in the international response to internal conflicts in the 1990s. The people-to-people dialogue, the Sudan Peace Fund, and UNDP's peace-building programme in Abyei and the Nuba Mountains, all reflect an evolution in this international response. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, international welfare organisations involved in disaster relief proliferated, and new institutions were created that enabled them to work in zones of conflict. In a period of assertive humanitarianism in the early 1990s, Sudan, and the Horn of Africa more broadly, became a site for innovative cross-border relief operations which challenged the principal of absolute state sovereignty. Notable among these was Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), the UN-led umbrella arrangement that included most of the aid agencies working in Sudan.

A number of the INGOs that entered Sudan in the mid-1980s to provide famine relief and remained to pursue longer term relief and development programmes subsequently developed peace-building programmes, variously offering peace education and training in conflict analysis, facilitating dialogue between warring parties, or promoting reconciliation and preventing conflict through reconstruction or economic development.

This change of focus from welfare provision to development and peace building reflected a dissatisfaction with the inadequacies of humanitarian assistance as a way of addressing long-term emergencies. It also reflects a change in the nature of international engagement in Sudan; from one of political disengagement in the early 1990s to one of re-engagement in the late 1990s. As proposed in the UN's *Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992) international responses to internal conflict have moved from peacekeeping to peace building (Goodhand and Hulme 1997; Smith 2003; Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst 2003). That is to say, there has been a change from managing political violence to encouraging "the development of the conditions, attitudes and behaviour that foster and sustain social and economic development that is peaceful, stable and prosperous." (Smith 2003: 12). In pursuit of this goal aid organisations have taken on new responsibilities in governance, capacity building and wholesale social transformation.

It is generally acknowledged that during the course of the war in Sudan humanitarian assistance has been incorporated into the structures that sustain armed conflict and violence (Keen 1994; African Rights 1997; Bradbury and others 2000). The link between aid and peacemaking in Sudan is less well researched, although it has a long pedigree stretching back to at least the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement⁸.

⁸ For example, the reconstruction programme that followed the Addis Ababa Agreement that ended the first war in 1973, included, among other developments, the construction of water yards along the migration routes of Misseriya and Rizeigat in southern Kordofan and Darfur. Although the water yards did nothing to stop the resumption of war in 1993, the Rizeigat leadership today argue again that the installation of water yards in south Darfur would reduce conflict between them and the Dinka. (Bradbury interview, El Da'ain, 2001).

The involvement of local and international aid organisations in peacemaking and peace building has taken various forms since the early 1990s and has followed different courses in the North and the South. The table on the next page illustrates a few of the peace-related activities supported by different agencies in the South and the North. This is not a comprehensive table, and of course does not illustrate the linkages between different types of interventions or their impact.

Humanitarian aid and peacemaking

Since the late 1980s, the linking of peacemaking to the delivery of humanitarian assistance has been a recurring strategy of both aid agencies and would-be peacemakers in Sudan. When OLS was created in 1989, "Corridors of tranquillity" were briefly established for the delivery of food aid and "days of tranquillity" for inoculation programmes. The basis of OLS was a unique access agreement between the warring parties that required continuous diplomacy to maintain. For much of the 1990s, as political negotiations faltered, OLS access negotiations became one of the few conduits for formal dialogue between the GoS and the SPLM/A. The strategy of linking peacemaking with the delivery of humanitarian assistance was subsequently used in the Nuba Mountains in 2001 (JMC 2004) and in Darfur in 2004.

The Nuba Mountains Cease-Fire Agreement of January 2002 (Republic of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Nuba 2002) had dual political and humanitarian objectives. As one of the four confidence-building measures proposed by US special envoy John Danforth, it was intended to prepare the ground for a comprehensive peace process, while also facilitating humanitarian responses to war-induced famine and displacement in the Nuba Mountains (Danforth 2002). In Darfur international pressure on the warring parties produced a humanitarian ceasefire in April 2004 to facilitate access to war-affected populations. Diplomatic pressure regarding the conflict in the West was diluted, however, by efforts to bring closure to the peace talks that were going on at that time between the SPLM and the Government, with the aim of ending the war in the South.

An earlier innovative humanitarian strategy in southern Sudan was the development of the Ground Rules signed by three southern rebel movements and the UN in 1994. Although the Ground Rules were not directly concerned with peacemaking, but more with regulating and humanising the conduct of war through respect for humanitarian principles, they did set a precedent for engaging the Southern political leaders in a humanitarian dialogue⁹.

⁹ The use of civilian instruments to moderate the impact of war by linking humanitarian action with law and advocacy has a long pedigree in the work of the ICRC.

Table: A selection of international organizations and peace-building activities

Agency	Security: (Disarmament and reintegration)	Social and economic Foundations: (Physical reconstruction, economic infrastructure, social services, repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs, food security)	Political Framework: (Democratisation - NGOs civil society, media, good governance, accountability, institution building, human rights monitoring, rule of law, judicial system)	Reconciliation and Justice: (Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups, grassroots dialogue, truth and reconciliation, trauma therapy)
Christian Aid			Support to civil society.	Supporting NSCC as an institution and specifically the NSCC-sponsored People to People dialogues.
CPMT	Monitoring of attacks on civilians in war affected areas.			
IBAR		Provision of veterinary services.		Support for mediation between pastoralists.
Oxfam			Training in conflict transformation	Support for dialogue between groups in Juba, Cuibet.
JMC	Monitoring of ceasefire.		Support for cross-line dialogue; monitoring of ceasefire violations.	Support for community-level dialogue.
Pact		Social service infrastructure.	Democratisation, good governance.	Support for people-to-people dialogue between antagonistic communities in many areas in the South
Pax Christi				Support for community dialogue.
Save the Children (UK)				Community mediation to gain release of abducted women and children.
UNDP		IDP repatriation; area development schemes.	Support for civil society; dissemination of information on peace building; training in conflict transformation.n	
UNICEF North Sudan	Demobilisation; Protection.	Repatriation of IDPs	Retrieval of abducted women and children	Support for dialogue between communities (e.g. in Nuba Mountains)
UNICEF South Sudan		Support for social service infrastructure.	Capacity building for Sudanese NGOs; civic education; community centres; dissemination of humanitarian principles and human rights law.	

Peace through development

External and internal support for grassroots peace-building activities in Sudan has often been presented as an aspect of peace through development. In the mid-1990s, for example, the GoS stated that its aim was to “bring peace to the South through development”¹⁰. The same idea can be discerned in statements from organisations as diverse as the UN, international NGOs, the churches, the SPLA and other Southern movements, though each may have different strategic objectives.

In the benign version of this idea, peace building is seen as a way of addressing human security rather than the security of the state. Theorising in this area converges on the idea that poverty and underdevelopment are underlying causes of the war, and that the conditions that fuel conflict can therefore be addressed through poverty alleviation and development¹¹. But the reality of peace through development may belie this ameliorative vision.

In the first place, it fails to acknowledge that poverty in itself is not a necessary condition for conflict. And it assumes that development is an uncontested ideal. However, conflict can arise from exploitative and extractive forms of development. And when elites are pursuing their own economic advantage conflict and instability can be a means to maintain power. In Sudan internal development has historically been a violent process. The proposition that it is possible to build peace from development is flawed if the conflict emerges from the very nature of the development process. This can be illustrated by three contested notions of development that are linked directly to the war in Sudan.

First, at the outset of OLS, in 1989, the UN proposed to “help the government of the Sudan to put sizeable amounts of its displaced citizens back into the *mainstream development process* of the country” (cited in Karim and others 1996, emphasis added). The presence of a large displaced population was not, however, an unintended consequence of the war, but part of the Government’s military strategy to harass the civilian population in areas controlled by rebels. Furthermore, the migration of Southerners (and Westerners) has often benefited landowners and capitalists in the North, by forming a cheap labour pool. In this way forced migration therefore became part of the mainstream development process in the Sudan.

Second, in the mid-1990s, following the split in the SPLM/A and with the IGAD-mediated peace talks faltering, the Government embarked on its political strategy to create “peace from within” (*salaam min al dakhil*) by forming alliances with Southern commanders that had split with the mainstream SPLM/A. At a time when Sudan had become an international pariah, this internal peace strategy was complimented by a development policy of national self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Economically, this involved the replacement of subsistence production with capital intensive mechanised farming for export. The policy of peace from within involved the creation of “peace villages” for the war-displaced, where new forms of agriculture were promoted. In the Nuba Mountains and Government-controlled towns in the South, such as Wau, these peace villages on the outskirts of the town were, in fact, part of their military defences. Thus GoS economic policies of self-reliance, the expansion of mechanised farming, and the creation of peace villages were all linked to the Government’s military strategy.

¹⁰ A briefing by the National Foundation for Development in March 1996, prepared for the OLS Review Team, cited in Karim et. al. 1996.

¹¹ This discourse was also popularised by the UN Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992; UNDP 1994).

The UN in Northern Sudan consistently failed to understand this. UNDP's strategy of peace building through poverty reduction involved establishing Area Rehabilitation Schemes (ARS) in Government created peace villages in the Nuba Mountains and in Wau (Karim et al, 1996)¹². The assumption that development assistance to war-displaced, in the form of food security, environmental protection, capacity building and community empowerment, would assist them to resume normal economic activities misunderstood the reasons for their displacement. Rather than enhancing prospects for peace, international interventions of this kind were effectively supporting Government policies that prolonged displacement and impoverishment.

A third example, is derived from some current assistance programmes. As recently as January 2004, UNDP strategies and programmes in the transitional zone of Sudan appeared to take no account of the impact of oil development in this region¹³. Oil exploration and extraction is currently the biggest development project in Sudan, affecting not only the national economy, but also rural production and livelihoods, pastoral migration, labour and the environment. As has been well documented, oil development in Sudan has been the occasion for large-scale forced migration and a wide range of associated human rights abuses (Verney 2000; Harker 2000; ECOS 2001; Gagnon and Ryle 2001; International Crisis Group 2002; Human Rights Watch 2003). It illustrates again the violent nature of the "mainstream development process" in Sudan.

The future of external support for capacity building and peace building

In South Sudan the evolution and cooption of local peace-building programmes has followed a different pattern from the North. The establishment by USAID of the \$10 million SPF for peace building in the South brought a significant change to the people-to-people process. What arguably began as an indigenous (if externally brokered) process managed by the churches, the SPLM/A and Southern civil activists, has become part of a broader political and developmental strategy by external agents. The Pact programme can be seen from this perspective as a descendant of earlier capacity-building initiatives such as the STAR governance programme (also USAID-funded). Both programmes aimed to bring peace through development in Southern Sudan. The Pact programme under the SPF, subtly incorporated features of the people-to-people approach, but with its donor, the US Government, intent on establishing a viable Southern polity, the phase of large-scale support for local peace programmes in the South may turn out to be as short-lived as the STAR programme was. Indeed, the SPF became controversial within USAID, as SPF-supported local dialogue and peace processes challenged the authority of the SPLA on a several issues. Funding is now likely to shift towards direct support for the administrative structures of the new Government of South Sudan (GoSS).

In Darfur, finally, the international relief presence is, at the time of writing, confined to emergency aid programmes. The armed conflict precludes external involvement in local peace processes. Established practices of mediation have been undermined by the Government, yet they remain the only available means to resolve the local conflicts that are enfolded in the wider war. When there is a peace settlement in Darfur, *judiyya* and *mutamarat al sulh* will doubtless come into their own again. If they then receive external support as local peace processes in the South and the transitional zone have done, it is to be hoped that some of the lessons of the latter can be learned.

¹² This was also linked to a broader reconciliation process - the so-called Barcelona Process - under the UNESCO Culture for Peace Programme, which comprised a series of confidence building meetings between representatives from Northern and Southern Sudan to discuss 'non-political' topics such as development and humanitarian aid.

¹³ Interviews with UNDP, Khartoum, January 2004.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY I

Wunlit and the “People-to-People” movement

Introduction

The 1999 Wunlit Peace and Reconciliation Conference is the best-known and most comprehensively documented of the local peace conferences held in South Sudan during the civil war (Jenner 2000; Flint 2001; NSCC 2002b; SSFI 2003). The conference took place in Wunlit, a village in Bahr el Ghazal near the border between the Dinka of the Lakes region, and the Nuer of Western Upper Nile. The reconciliation between these communities that was negotiated at Wunlit after eight years of internecine strife marked a change in the dynamics of the conflict. It was a watershed in the war in South Sudan. At the same time, Wunlit illustrates the need for goodwill at a higher political level if local peace processes are to succeed.

This study describes the Wunlit conference and the People to People programme developed by the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), an ecumenical organization that was set up in the 1980s as an alternative to the Sudan Council of Churches in order to work in SPLA-controlled areas. The NSCC was to be the principle vehicle of the people-to-people approach in South Sudan.

Wunlit was designed as a meeting between warring tribal sections, rather than between political factions or military groups, and it brought to wider attention the concept of people-to-people peacemaking. The same approach was subsequently used in a succession of inter-tribal peace conferences facilitated by the NSCC as part of what was termed a broader “grass-roots peacemaking initiative” (NSCC 2002b: 2). As described in an NSCC document

People-to-People Peacemaking brings reconciliation, peace and peace agreements to communities who have been in conflict and engaged in hostilities among each other and now seek to end their fighting and unite for a better future for themselves and their communities. (ibid.:2)

The NSCC pursued the People to People programme with encouragement and support from its international church partners. At the same time, in many (though not all) cases, its connections with Southern Sudanese communities through local churchpeople were real and strong. The people-to-people model of community dialogue has since been adopted and adapted by international organizations that are more dependent on governmental donors; organizations such as Pact and its consortium partners funded by the SPF and Pax Christi in the South and UNDP in the North. These organizations were less concerned to explore the spiritual dimension in reconciliation, and arguably, and for better or worse, were less closely tied to existing institutions in the field. It is doubtful if any of them could have orchestrated an event with the impact of the Wunlit conference. Wunlit was, it seems now, unique. Its extensive documentation and enduring achievement mean that it has become a marker against which other local peacemaking processes in Sudan are measured.

The background of internecine conflict

The wider context of the Wunlit conference — its place in history of the war and in the complex ethnopolitics of the South — is crucial to an understanding both of its success and also of its limitations. The idea for the conference emerged from a sense among educated Southerners and their foreign sympathisers that the fragmentation of Southern forces was the greatest threat to the well-being of the South. The Wunlit conference marked a change in the relation between the armies in the South and the populations under their control. The documentation of Wunlit also deepened understanding of the complexity of the conflicts in Sudan and the ramifications of these conflicts in the lives of particular communities.

Douglas Johnson (2003: 127) has described the war in Sudan as encompassing multiple interlocking civil wars between military factions and ethnic groups. The aim of the Wunlit conference — and the People to People programme as a whole, by the NSCC's account — was to transform the dynamics of the wider conflict in Sudan by ending hostilities and healing divisions that had arisen between people in South Sudan in the course of the war. Such ethnic conflict, it was plausibly argued, had been responsible for a larger number of war-related civilian deaths than direct conflict between the rebel forces and the GoS.

The local conflicts were linked to the wider conflict at various points, most significantly in the use of Southern tribal militias by successive governments in Khartoum as proxy forces against the SPLM/A. Southern ethnic groups with associated Government-backed militias have included the Toposa, the Mandari, the Murle, the Bul Nuer, the Lak Nuer (in Western Upper Nile) and sections of the Lou and Jikany Nuer (in Eastern Upper Nile). It was the political trajectory of the latter groups — the Nuer of Eastern and Western Upper Nile — that became the cause of particular concern in the 1980s and 1990s. The Lou and Jikany had been one of the recruiting grounds for Anyanya II, a group that preceded the formation of the SPLA, (Johnson 2003: 67-69) and soon came into conflict with it. After defeat at the hands of the SPLA in 1983-4, the rump of Anyanya II became a pro-government militia, active around the oil fields of Western Upper Nile. But the most damaging of all the conflicts within the South were between the Dinka and the Nuer in Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal that erupted following the split in SPLM/A in 1991, and the renewed intra-Nuer conflict that followed.

In early 1991, the SPLM/A had been in the ascendancy in its war with the Government, with most Southern towns, many rural areas and large stretches of the Kenyan and Ethiopian borders under its control. But external events triggered internal changes and within a few months the SPLM/A's fortunes were dramatically reversed. In May 1991, the Derg in Ethiopia was overthrown and the SPLM/A lost its military bases in Ethiopia and its supply lines from the east. On 28 August 1991, as hundreds of thousands of Southern refugees trekked back to Sudan, three SPLM/A commanders in the town of Nasir — Riek Machar and Gordon Kong (Western Nuer and Eastern Nuer respectively) and Lam Akol (Shilluk) — announced that they had overthrown John Garang as leader of the SPLM/A. Their proclaimed agenda was to end human rights abuses, democratise the movement and pursue Southern independence rather than the political transformation of the whole country, as was official SPLM policy.

The coup failed to remove Garang, but split the movement and inflamed ethnic tensions within it. A majority of the Nuer officers and men in the SPLA adhered to the group led by Riek Machar (the Nasir faction, as it was first known). Their numbers were augmented by the Government-backed Anyanya II (drawn from the Bul Nuer of Western Upper Nile and

led by Paulino Matip) and the Lou Nuer Anyanya-2 of Yohannes Yoal¹⁴. In 1993, when former detainees of the SPLM/A, such as Kerubino Kuanyin Bol, joined them, the Nasir faction became the core of what was known as "SPLA-United". John Garang, based out of Torit, retained a broad base of support among various ethnic groups, but his "Mainstream" SPLM/A relied heavily on forces from his own people, the Dinka. Fears of Dinka hegemony among Equatorians led some to support the Nasir faction.

The 1991 split within the movement led to a particularly brutal period of warfare in the South. Despite the Nasir leaders' declared concern for human rights, the fighting involved direct attacks on civilians. The *titweng* or *gatweng* (cattle guards) of the Dinka was mobilised, and a popular militia known as the *decbor* or White Army, was created among the Nuer, intensifying the ethnic divisions in the conflict. Between October and December 1991 intense fighting took place between the Nasir and Torit factions around Kuachdeng, Kongor, Adok, Ler and Bor. A massacre of Dinka civilians and looting of cattle in Kongor and Bor by Nasir faction forces and Nuer civilians marked the beginning of a series of ferocious tit-for-tat killings (Human Rights Watch/Africa 1994). It has been estimated that around three quarters of Dinka from Bor District were forced to leave their home territory during this time (Jenner 2000). Dinka forces retaliated against Nuer communities in Upper Nile and Eastern Equatoria that were suspected of being sympathetic to the Nasir faction.

The fighting severed the reciprocal links between Dinka and Nuer groups in Upper Nile, destroying the regional exchange economy and creating famine conditions in what became known as the "Hunger Triangle" between Ayod, Kongor and Waat. Government flight bans and the general level of insecurity severely restricted access to aid agencies working under the aegis of OLS. In 1993 rates of malnutrition in Kongor reached record levels. The US Committee for Refugees estimated that between 1992 and 1993 some 300,000 people died as a result of the fighting; more than during the 1988 famine in Bahr-al-Ghazal (Prendergast 1997: 46).

As a result of the conflict, and Riek Machar's increasingly apparent links with the GoS, the Nasir faction began, in its turn, to fracture. Telar Deng Takpiny, from Yirol, who later became one of the architects and facilitators of the People to People programme, initially supported the Nasir group's pro-independence policy. He resigned when Riek Machar signed an agreement with the Government on a special political and constitutional status for the South (Johnson 2003: 202). Over the following four years the political and military situation in the South became increasingly factionalised, as GoS nurtured the growth of Southern militias. Riek Machar's own commanders were encouraged by the Government to take up arms against him. In September 1992 William Nyuon Bany broke with the SPLM/A Mainstream and joined the Nasir faction. In 1992 and 1993 there was widespread fighting on the East Bank of the Nile between between the Dinka and Nuer. And in 1993 and 1994 internecine conflict between the Lou, Gawaar and Jikany sections of the eastern Nuer led to the deaths of thousands of civilians and the theft of tens of thousands of cattle.

In July 1994 Kerubino Kuanyin Bol, a Dinka from Northern Bahr el Ghazal, a founding figure in the SPLA who had been detained for many years by John Garang, began a series of devastating raids with government backing into his own home area in northern Bahr el Ghazal. These became one of the chief causes of the famine that killed upwards of 50,000 in 1997 and 1998. The years 1994 and 1995 saw raids on the Dinka town of Akot in Eastern Bahr el Ghazal by the Nuer and on Ganyliel, in Western Upper Nile, by the Dinka. Both resulted in heavy civilian casualties. In August 1994 Peter Adwok, a Shilluk (Collo), who was later, like Telar Deng, to become an important figure in local peacemaking, sought to create yet another political grouping.

¹⁴ The government has been accused of facilitating the split, and certainly sought to broaden it by arming Riek Machar and others against the SPLM/A.

The 1991-93 disaster belatedly provoked international action on Sudan. The US Government, which had downgraded diplomatic ties with Khartoum over other issues, along with a number of other Western donors, began to fund an expansion of OLS Southern Sector (Bradbury and others 2000). In the diplomatic realm, with the war threatening to spill across their borders, the front line states of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGADD¹⁵), a forum comprising Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Somalia, embarked on a mediation process. The process made some progress, drawing up, in May 1994, a Declaration of Principles (DoP) which defined the constitutional issues that needed to be addressed in order to resolve the conflict. The DoP, which proposed a referendum on Southern self-determination and the separation of the state and religion, was accepted by the SPLM/A, but rejected by the Government until 1997.

Intransigence over constitutional issues and a deterioration in bilateral relations between Sudan, Uganda and Eritrea saw this IGADD initiative falter. Following an assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa in June 1995, and accusations that Sudan was harbouring the assassins, the Sudanese government became increasingly isolated on the international front. This coincided with the military and political resurgence of the SPLM/A. Various factors accounted for this: a regional alliance against Khartoum government which was backed militarily and economically by the US (Johnson 2003: 206); a new military alliance between the SPLM/A and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), in which John Garang was given overall command of the combined SPLM/A and NDA forces (the Sudan Alliance Forces or SAF); and an improved food security situation in the South, in part aided by food aid which stemmed distress migration from SPLM/A areas (Karim and others 1996).

Reforms in the SPLM/A

Another factor was the process of internal political reform that the SPLM/A embarked upon in 1994. The loss of Ethiopian sponsorship in 1991 and the fragmentation of the movement had made the SPLM/A more dependent on the civilian population within Sudan. This, and external pressure to reform, led to a change in the relation between the SPLM/A and the inhabitants of SPLA-controlled areas of the South. In 1991, in a response to the Nasir coup, the SPLM/A Mainstream issued the Torit Resolution, outlining plans for a civil administration. It took another three years for the SPLM/A to convene its first National Convention, at Chukudum in April 1994. At the convention proposals for the creation of a civilian administration independent of the army and answerable to the people and the law were adopted. The SPLM/A's aid agency, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRRA) was formally separated from the military, and the civil authorities were given responsibility for raising resources for the army. The Chukudum convention was followed in 1996 by a conference on civil society and the organisation of the New Sudan.

While some have argued that the SPLM/A's reforms were largely cosmetic, others conclude that its military resurgence after 1994 did owe something to its success in creating civil structures and retaining the support of the civilian population (Johnson 1998: 65). One important aspect of the SPLM/A's authority prior to the split had been its ability to control cattle raiding in areas under its control by establishing SPLM/A courts. As early as 1985, this had reduced raiding between Dinka sections in Bahr el Ghazal and Lakes regions (ibid.: 66). Reforms enacted at Chukudum, which both strengthened the role of chiefs and distanced the military from local administration, helped to improve relations

¹⁵ Later re-named IGAD (the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development).

with civilians in areas where the SPLM/A had previously been considered an army of occupation. By the end of 1996, the SPLM/A-Mainstream had restored its position as the major rebel organisation opposing the government. Its less predatory relationship with rural populations and greater tolerance of civil society and the emergence of legal institutions were important in creating a political environment within which the people-to-people process could take off.

This new political environment was encouraged by external funding, largely mediated by international aid agencies. The SPLA's greater tolerance for civil society organisations was influenced by a growing emphasis on institutional capacity-building of southern organisations by Western donors and aid agencies within the OLS consortium and an increasing investment in developmental aid projects. For USAID in particular, which had shifted its funding from the north to the south after 1993, humanitarian assistance was now meant to do more than save lives; it was intended to promote good governance in SPLA areas, thereby – though this was less explicit – curtailing the spread of the Islamist programme embodied by the Sudan Government.

In 1993 shortly after the SPLM/A announced its intention to hold a national convention USAID funded a feasibility study for an Institutional Capacity Building Programme (ICBP). USAID's investment in civil society capacity building in the early 1990s, was followed in 1998 by the STAR (Sudan Transitional Assistance for Rehabilitation) programme. The STAR programme was meant to build civil administrative capacity through paralegal, administrative and human rights training in non-government-held areas of Sudan (Bradbury et al. 2000). Both ICBP and STAR can, in retrospect, be seen as forerunners of the Sudan Peace Fund (SPF) established in 2002 which through the Pact Consortium has sought to develop the work begun by the NSCC's People to People programme. Indeed, USAID concluded that one major accomplishment of STAR was "contributing to the success of the people-to-people reconciliation process." (USAID/REDSO/ESA 2000: 5).

GoS-sponsored "peace from within"

The need for local-level mediation was reinforced by the break-up of the coalition that made up SPLA-United. In 1993 there was serious fighting between the Lou and Jikany Nuer in eastern Nuerland. A peace conference in Akobo in September 1994 appeared to offer a resolution to the Lou-Jikany conflict, but neither the Akobo conference nor the first National Convention of SPLA-United (which now renamed itself the South Sudan Independence Movement/Army) provided an enduring resolution. Lam Akol, one of the three founders of the Nasir faction, declared himself leader of a reinvented SPLM/United. And during 1995 Riek Machar, William Nyuon, Kerubino Kuanyin Bol and John Luk all made claims on the leadership of the SSIM/A. William Nyuon even claimed to have negotiated a reunification of the SSIM/A with the SPLM/A at Lafon in April. In January 1996 the SSIM/A was refused membership of the NDA, due to the opposition of John Garang, and the SSIM/A office in Addis Ababa was closed by the Ethiopian Government. With US and regional political support openly favouring the SPLM/A, Riek Machar and Kerubino, in April 1996, signed a Peace Charter with the Khartoum Government. At this point the IGAD talks were largely moribund, and the GoS presented the peace agreement with the SSIM as part of its policy of creating "peace from within" (*salaam min al dakha*).

In January 1997, the SPLA and NDA, backed by the Ethiopian army, captured Kurmuk and several other towns in southern Blue Nile and Upper Nile. In March the SPLA also made a series of military advances in central Equatoria, backed by the Ugandan army, and in April captured the towns of Rumbek, Tonj and Warrap in former Lakes Province. Faced with these defeats the Government sought to expand its peace from within initiative by signing

a new peace agreement with several Southern factions, including the SSIM/A, On April 21 1997, Riek Machar (Upper Nile), Kerubino Kuanyin Bol (Bahr el Ghazal), Arok Thon Arok (Bor), Kawac Makuei (Bahr el Ghazal), Dr Theopolous Chang Loti (Equatoria Defence Force), Mohamed Harun Kafi (Nuba SPLA) all signed the Khartoum Peace Agreement with the Government. The agreement, which established a Southern States Coordination Council, promised a referendum on the future of the South and, in principle, the right to Southern self-determination. In September 1995, after concluding the Fashoda Accord with GoS, Lam Akol and the remnants of his faction also signed the Khartoum Peace agreement. These Southern factions then became nominally united again under Riek Machar in the United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF) and its military wing, the South Sudan Democratic Forces (SSDF).

One of the Government's aims was to secure the oil fields in Western Upper Nile, where oil exploitation was recommencing. This involved the displacement of Nuer and Dinka groups in the oil fields, some of them into the Dinka areas of Bahr el Ghazal. The signing of the Khartoum peace agreement and the rapid developments in oil exploration thus provide the immediate backdrop to the genesis of the people-to-people process. On both sides the mid-1990s were a time of alliance-building. In terms of timing and rhetoric, the people-to-people peace process, mirrors the Government's own notion of building peace from within.

On the SPLM/A side the Khartoum Peace Agreement coincided with – and perhaps encouraged – rapprochement between the SPLM/A and the churches in the South. In July 1997, three months after the signing of the Khartoum Peace Agreement, a meeting was convened in Kejiko in Yei County (which had been captured by the SPLA in March) to resolve differences between the New Sudan Council of Churches and the SPLM/A. The NSCC/SPLA Yei Declaration, gave the NSCC the mandate to explore “ways and means through which the Church can pursue reconciliation efforts and unity among the political/military groups struggling for the liberation of Southern Sudan” (NSCC 1998).

Origins of the people-to-people approach: the role of the churches

The Wunlit peace and reconciliation conference has commonly been presented as a “grassroots” conference, and the People to People initiative as a “people's movement” (NSCC 2000a). Undoubtedly, these peace conferences captured and supported a popular mood for reconciliation among the rural populations of Southern Sudan. However, the primary architect and facilitator of the Wunlit conference and the people-to-people peace process in the South was the then-Nairobi-based NSCC, in collaboration with Southern civil society organisations and Southern intellectuals. The NSCC designed and organised the initiative, and provided a channel for external funding and logistical support. At the same time, the Wunlit conference, the maintenance of the Wunlit agreement and the subsequent local peace initiatives owe much to the relationship forged between the SPLM/A and the churches after 1997. Wunlit and the People to People peace initiative came to serve the SPLM/A's interests, or at least the interests of elements within it. The skilful exploitation of this new reality by NSCC officials was what permitted the event to happen.

The peoples of Southern Sudan, it should be emphasised, are socially and politically disparate, divided by geography, ethnicity and localised subsistence economies and kin-based loyalties. There is no unifying force comparable to the Arab-Islamic ideology that has dominated Northern politics, except perhaps a shared history of Northern domination. This absence of a unifying political culture may serve to explain the coercive centralism and authoritarianism that characterised the SPLM/A's leadership during the war. But Christianity has increasingly offered itself as a unifying discourse for Southerners opposed

to the North. Conversion to Christianity grew dramatically among Southerners during the course of the war, and the absence of central government has given the churches a greater social and political role. For the first decade of the war this was despite the SPLA's ostensibly Marxist orientation under the tutelage of the Derg regime in Ethiopia.

For much of the 1980s, partly because of the Ethiopian connection, relations between the churches and the SPLM/A were weak. When the SPLM/A began to dominate rural areas, most prominent clergymen resorted to the towns, where they could remain in touch with their institutional hierarchies. So the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) and the international churches – like the rest of the international community in the mid-1980s – knew little about the SPLM/A, and tended to see the problem for relief work as being one of diminishing access from Government-held areas. In turn, the SPLM/A, and those Southern intellectuals sympathetic to its aims, criticised the local churches for failing to enlist their foreign partners on the side of the Southern Sudanese cause. Having both a practical and ideological quarrel with the churches, the SPLM/A severely restricted their operation in Southern Sudan, though assistance given by church organisations in the refugee camps in Ethiopia did begin to create a body of converts among SPLM/A trainees and their families. This situation changed rapidly in 1989 with the creation of OLS, in the context of the end of the Cold War. Now that Western aid agencies were flooding into its territories, the SPLM/A could no longer afford to suppress the churches outright. But it was concerned to create a framework within which it could influence or regulate their operation. John Garang personally convened a meeting between Bishop Paride Taban of the Roman Catholic Church, and Bishop Nathaniel Garang of the Episcopalian Church, which resulted in the formation of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC). (The name of the organization seemed to tacitly take on the SPLM/A's core concept of "New Sudan".) Soon other churches were brought into NSCC, including the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS), the Africa Inland Church (AIC) and the Sudan Interior Church (SIC)¹⁶. (African Rights 1995b)

From the beginning the NSCC's relationship with the SPLM/A was ambiguous. The needs of refugees in the Ethiopian camps and in the South encouraged them to cooperate on humanitarian grounds, but the NSCC was reluctant to be perceived as the spiritual wing of the movement. At its first General Assembly in 1991, the NSCC stressed that its main purpose was pastoral care rather than political mediation.

The Christian churches do, nevertheless, have a history of mediation in Sudan (Medley 1999). Under the aegis of the World Council of Churches, they played a key role in mediating the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement. And following the 1991 split in the SPLM/A, the NSCC organized a series of meetings between faction leaders which produced what was termed a "Limited Peace Agreement" between John Garang and Riek Machar, by which the SPLM/A released some political prisoners and both factions committed themselves to democracy. Their mediation also resulted in the SPLM/A Mainstream and Nasir factions sending a joint delegation to the Abuja talks in 1992. This was a collaboration that proved short-lived.

The 1992 NSCC General Assembly confirmed that peace work was a fundamental part of the churches' pastoral responsibilities. But ethnic division among their Southern congregations left member churches riven by schisms, which prevented them from speaking with a common voice. The NSCC established a Peace Desk and turned its attention to grassroots peacemaking and conflict prevention (NSCC 2002b: 47). The NSCC bought in the experience of churches from other conflicts. The Secretary General of the

¹⁶ The NSCC is supported by a group of international church organisations chaired by the national Council of Churches of Kenya, and including the Sudan Catholic Bishop's Office, Norwegian Church Aid, DanChurch Aid, Christian Aid, the Mennonite Central Committee and the All African Council of Churches (Jenner 2000 {92}).

NSCC, Roger Schrock, drew on ideas of his church and other pacifist churches in the US, about “inter-positioning” and “accompaniment” in an attempt to prevent conflict in Upper Nile. NSCC peace teams held meetings in Panyagor, Kongor, Ayod and Akobo to spread ideas of peacemaking. The Diocese of Torit later set up a programme of ‘peace scouts’ to monitor and prevent community conflicts. However, the interventions were largely the product of the efforts of individual churches rather than a collective endeavour.

From the early 1990s onwards the churches also became involved in relief operations. This was to the neglect, some have argued, of their spiritual role (NSCC 2000a; African Rights 1995b). As indigenous organisations with extensive networks throughout the South, the churches were drawn into the expanded operations of OLS and others in response to the escalation of war and famine, but the NSCC was accused of having been corrupted by it (Flint 2001). During this period, for the most part, the resolution of local disputes and conflicts was left to the chiefs and SPLM/A’s judicial system (Kuol 1997; Johnson 1998).

The Akobo Lou-Jikany Nuer peace conference

The first significant conflict intervention by an NSCC member church took place in September 1994, when the PCOS was invited by Riek Machar to facilitate a meeting in Akobo to address the conflict between the Nuer Jikany and Nuer Lou. The Akobo conference took place six months after the SPLM/A-Mainstream’s convention at Chukudum and was followed immediately by the SPLM/A-United’s own convention, at which it was renamed the SSIM/A.

The 1994 Akobo conference was documented by two of its facilitators, the American Presbyterian pastor William Lowrey and the Nuer academic Dr Michael Wal Duany (Lowrey 1995; Lowrey 1996). It was to become a celebrated example of the utility of indigenous approaches of conflict resolution in managing local conflicts (Lowrey 1996; Smock 1997). Lowrey and Duany used lessons from Akobo to design the Wunlit meeting, where they were part of the NSCC facilitation team.

The Lou-Jikany conflict had arisen in 1993 from a minor dispute over access to fishing grounds. By the time of the Akobo conference in 1994, 1,300 people had been killed, including many women and children, and 75,000 head of cattle stolen. The Government had armed both sides in the dispute and raiding had spilled over into Ethiopia. The traditional institutions for maintaining order, restitution and healing had broken down (Lowrey 1995). Five hundred delegates attended the conference, which ended with the signing of a Peace Agreement on 15 September 1994. Some 9,000 people were reported to have travelled by foot to Liech State to learn about the agreement (Lowrey 1995: 2).

Lowrey believed that the response of the Nuer and neighbouring peoples in attending the Akobo conference illustrated not only its political significance, but also its cultural importance for the peoples of Upper Nile. There was, he argued, a collective desire for cultural revitalisation. As a result of the war moral codes that regulated violence have been violated and the Nuer feared that their culture was under threat. Lowrey describes how one chief warned the conference that “if they could not correct their ways, end their conflict and reconcile, then they could no longer be Nuer.” (ibid.: 6). The Jikany-Lou conflict itself was seen as a result of the deterioration in Nuer culture underway since the days of the Condominium (ibid.: 7). The conference was thus steeped in a sense of history and tradition. By one account, the war between the Lou and Jikany had been foretold in Nuer prophecy. The intervention in March 1994 by Riek Machar (himself from a lineage of Nuer spiritual leaders) to halt the conflict and initiate a peace process, and the peace agreement itself, were therefore deemed to have been divinely sanctioned, and marked by

the sacrifice of a bull. Nuer spiritual leaders announced that violators of the agreement would be cursed. The subsequent failure of a Lou raid on Jikany cattle was seen as proof of this (ibid.: 5).

Comparisons were drawn between the Akobo conference and the Fangak conferences that had been held in Western Upper Nile in the 1940s, under the Condominium Government. The Fangak conference, in which all four major sections of the Nuer participated, holds a special status among learned Nuer. It was convened every five years to review and modify customary law. The last meeting was held in 1971, just before the system of Native Administration was abolished by President Nimeiri in 1973. In acknowledgment of that tradition, Nuer from Western Upper Nile (considered the guardians of Nuer law and tradition) were invited to chair the Akobo conference and act as judges in the civil court (ibid: 8). The conference resolved that everyone had responsibility to maintain social values, that the role of chiefs in the judiciary should be restored, and that the Fangak conference should be re-established to regularly review and renew customary law. In light of the war, it was deemed that some customs might need to change. One decision taken in Akobo, repeated in subsequent conferences, was that there should be an amnesty for actions that took place prior to the peace agreement. This issue proved to be contentious.

The lessons of Akobo

William Lowrey, who recorded and analysed the proceedings, identified various lessons that he would later transfer to Wunlit (Lowrey 1995: 10)

- Those invested with moral authority within their community should be at the heart of the process: including chiefs, traditional spiritual leaders, women leaders, church leaders, administrators and military.
- Timing and preparation. The conference lasted two weeks and took four to prepare.
- The role of women as “guardians of truthful communication and instruments of accountability”.
- Methods of conflict resolution drawn from traditional culture, including the following: communication styles, leadership choices, methods of negotiation, participation of antagonists and third parties, decision-making styles, compensation patterns, timelines, determination of crimes and appropriate punishments, processes for confession, forgiveness and reconciliation and rituals of closure and new beginnings.
- Educated members of the community provide bridge to modernity, to be selected by communities.
- Minimal external support.
- The establishment of institutions to implement the agreement.

One of the trickier lessons of Akobo was the difficulty of conceiving of grassroots resolution processes separately from the military and political context (Nyanath and Huggins 2003). The Akobo peace process had been initiated, after all, by a military leader, Riek Machar, head of the SSIA, and, in the political convention that followed immediately afterwards, Riek used the gathering of many Nuer leaders to reassert his leadership and to chart the future of his political group. At this meeting SPLM/A-United became the SSIM/A and Lam Akol split to assume the chair of the rump of SPLM/A-United. The immediate beneficiary of

the Akobo Conference was thus Riek Machar's faction. This raises a key question about the political impact of external support to such processes.

Akobo failed to resolve the leadership struggle among the Nuer. Over the following two years the SSIM/A leadership fell apart and conflict continued in Upper Nile. Lowrey has argued, however, that there was evidence of a powerful and growing grassroots peace movement that had been given voice by the Akobo conference. This included discussion of an Akobo-type conference along the border of Lakes and Bahr el Ghazal. In 1995 he asserted that "The grassroots peace movement in southern Sudan has gained a momentum that shows the potential of changing the whole dynamics of the war" (Lowrey 1995:11) a view that was to be repeated four years later at Wunlit. Considerable effort was made to disseminate news of the Akobo peace accord and it did have discernable influence elsewhere in the South. Thus the Gawaar Nuer and Lou Nuer reached similar agreements with the Bor Dinka on access to grazing as had been concluded between Nuer groups at Akobo. Nyanath and Huggins (2003: 9) conclude: "Building trust between the various actors, and the will to maintain peace, was more important than the nuts-and-bolts of the agreement."

Other peace initiatives

While the evidence of a "grassroots peace movement" may have been bolstered by elements of wishful thinking, various peace initiatives and forms of interaction between civilians from different sides of the conflict took place. Since 1991, Nairobi-based women's organisations, such as the Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace (SWVP) and the Sudanese Women's Association in Nairobi (SWAN), have supported peace work and dialogue (Jenner 2000: 16)¹⁷.

In April 1995 an initiative of junior officers in Eastern Equatoria resulted in the Lafon Declaration, signed by William Nyuon and John Garang. This declared a ceasefire and freedom of movement of people and supplies between SSIM/A- and SPLM/A-controlled areas. In November 1995, in South Kordofan, Hawazma Arabs agreed to a non-aggression pact with the SPLA in the Nuba Mountains and reopened markets there (see Nuba case study in this report). Other "peace markets", where Arab traders brought goods for sale into SPLA areas, were established in Rup Nyagai in Upper Nile in 1993, and Warawar and Abindau in Northern Bahr el Ghazal in 1994 (see Abyei case study). These seem to have been the result of initiatives by local traders, with the agreement of SPLA military commanders. Their success was the result of a confluence of interests between traders, local people long deprived of manufactured commodities and a rebel military administration seeking a source of taxable revenue. Peace markets, it may be argued, though limited in effect, were more spontaneous, more of a grassroots movement than the people-to-people meetings.

There were also numerous local-level agreements on particular issues involving communal well-being, though these were sometimes short-lived. On the West Bank of the Nile, while conflict continued between them, the Misseriya and Dinka managed to make annual agreements on grazing in the *toic*. In Yirol, Dinka and Nuer reached an agreement on freedom of trade. On the East Bank, Nuer Lou and Jikany made accords on grazing and fishing rights. Similar agreements were reached between the Gawaar Nuer and the Lou Nuer and the Bor Dinka (NSCC 2002b: 47-48).

¹⁷ SWVP and SWAN have been supported through the project "Engendering Peace", funded by the Dutch Government.

There was one other precursor of the Wunlit meeting. In January 1999, just prior to Wunlit, the Sudanese NGO SUPRAID organised a meeting in Twic County of leaders of the Kuac section of the Bul Nuer and Dinka Twic. In order to arrange the meeting, Acuil Malith, the Director of SUPRAID, talked with the local commanders of Paulino Matip's and Riek Machar's factions, with the local SPLM/A leadership and with the spiritual leaders of the Dinka and Nuer. As a result of the meeting, agreement was reached on sharing grazing and fishing grounds, guaranteeing safe travel, teacher training and opening joint schools. The commanders opened the meeting, but then left the civilians to talk among themselves. According to Acuil Malith, "We knew the local people would just exploit peace for their own benefit, and it happened." (Interview with Acuil Malith Banggol, January 2004).

Rapprochement with the SPLM/A: the Yei Dialogue

Over a period of eight years, between 1991 and 1998, there were numerous interventions to reconcile the Southern factions. All failed. By the late 1990s, however, there seems to have been an overwhelming pressure for reconciliation in the south. Among SPLM/A commanders there was recognition that significant military gains against the Government were not feasible while the South remained divided. There was also a growing reluctance on the part of representatives of the civilian population to endorse the demands of the rebel commanders. As all factions needed the cooperation of the chiefs to sustain the recruitment of soldiers their relationship with civilians had to improve.

The political reforms enacted by the SPLM/A at Chukudum had, in theory, restored powers to chiefs. The SPLM/A's greater acceptance of civil society organisations, and US and European donor investment in civil governance had enabled organisations such as the South Sudan Law Society (SSLS), formed in 1995, to become more influential in shaping opinion locally and among donors. The interest of such organisations in grassroots peace and reconciliation coincided with those of the NSCC (NSCC 2002b). It was the SSLS, in fact, who first proposed, in 1997, what was to become the central feature of the people-to-people process: a Nuer-Dinka reconciliation under the aegis of the chiefs (Flint 2001: 53).

Throughout much of the 1990s, the NSCC maintained a critical stance towards all factions in the war, publicly calling on them to end their abuses of civilians. In a famous public letter in 1993, "To Our Flock", they charged that "some of our liberators have become oppressors" (Flint 2001: 8). The NSCC in turn was criticised by the SPLM/A for failing to provide spiritual leadership, for failing to assist in the liberation struggle and for sheltering SPLM/A deserters. But the acceleration of conversion to Christianity in the South, particularly among the Dinka (Jenner 2000: 6), enhanced the Christian churches' moral leadership and provided spiritual and material aid to Southerners. For the SPLM/A, the continuing rift with the NSCC did nothing to help it win the hearts and minds of the people in liberated areas. And the NSCC recognised that the endorsement from the SPLA was necessary in order for the churches to work effectively. From this convergence of perceived interests, the work of reconciliation was to emerge.

In July 1997, a few months after other Southern movements signed the Khartoum Peace Agreement, the NSCC and the SPLM/A met in Kejiko in Yei county, which had recently been captured by the SPLM/A. It is not clear whether peacemaking and reconciliation were on the agenda. The meeting is reported to have involved heated exchanges (Flint 2001: 8), but ended with agreement to collaborate "in a search for a just and lasting peace and freedom for the peoples of New Sudan" (NSCC 1998). The NSCC was given the lead in "promoting understanding and tolerance and in encouraging negotiation [between] ethnic, political and military groupings within Sudan" (Flint 2001: 53). In the light of the then recent Khartoum peace agreement, this was significant. Collaboration with PCOS through

its membership of the NSCC was important given that the Presbyterian Church was strongest in Nuer areas. The meeting also resolved to establish a chaplaincy in the SPLM/A, as well as joint initiatives on capacity building and training.

The gathering in Yei was a key event in developing the People-to-People Initiative, (although the Yei declaration says nothing directly about grassroots processes of reconciliation). The NSCC's previous disappointing experience of trying to reconciling the faction leaders in the 1990s, was one of the factors that persuaded them to pursue this track. The idea was to convene a conference on the West Bank between the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal and the Nuer of Western Upper Nile, and one on the East Bank between Bor Dinka and Lou and Gaawar Nuer. As a result of the Yei dialogue, there was a consensus that the NSCC was the institution that would be most able to stand up to any political pressure from the SPLM/A. (Telar Deng of the South Sudan Law Society, one of the originators of the proposal, later became head of the NSCC peace desk and led the people-to-people initiative.) Plans were drawn up for a series of local reconciliation conferences, the first to be on the West Bank of the Nile between the Dinka of Western Bahr el Ghazal and the Nuer of Western Upper Nile.

The team chosen by the NSCC to organise this comprised Telar Deng of the SSLS, one of the originators of the idea, and William Lowrey of the Presbyterian Church. The choice was crucial for addressing the complexities inherent in the project. Both Deng and Lowrey had the confidence of the Nuer, which was important for the NSCC, which was now increasingly seen to be aligned with the SPLM/A. Deng, a West Bank Dinka and member of the SSLS, had previously worked among the Nuer as a judge and had initially supported Riek Machar in Nasir in 1991. Lowrey had a close relationship with the NSCC, his church the PCOS, was one of the founders of the NSCC, and he had worked among the Nuer for several years, facilitating the 1994 Akobo meeting. As a result of the latter he was able to travel to Khartoum to meet with Riek Machar.

Dinka-Nuer Relations

The relationship between the Dinka and Nuer was considered to be the key to reconciliation in the South. And because the Western Nuer area is the heart of Sudan's oil zone it was tactically important for restraining the Government's unhindered exploitation of Sudan's oil reserves.

The Dinka and Nuer have a common ancestry and share a similar habitat and seasonally transhumant way of life, with the raising of livestock, particularly cattle, as the central economic and cultural feature of their community life. Among contiguous Dinka and Nuer groups there is much intermarriage and bilingualism. But the 1991 split within the SPLM/A led to rapid polarisation and militarisation of Nuer and Dinka ethnic identities (Hutchinson 1999). The Bor Massacre, when Nuer soldiers of the SSIA attacked John Garang's home area, became a historical marker that consolidated the alliance between the Dinka of Bor and the Dinka of Bahr el Ghazal against the challenge to the SPLA leadership mounted by Riek Machar and the Nuer.

Conflict over resources between sections of Dinka and Nuer was nothing new. Feuding and raiding between neighbouring tribal sections is a consistent feature of these and other pastoral societies in North-Eastern Africa. Such conflicts, however, were constrained, historically, by a number of factors: intermarriage, customary codes of warfare, religious sanctions, limits on the spread of modern weaponry and the institution of chieftaincy (with its variable relation to governmental authority). In the course of the war in the South such bonds were weakened. The spread of small arms and the militarization of society reduced

the authority of elders, and other ethical constraints (ibid.). Cattle byres (*Iuaak*) were no longer considered places of sanctuary. Without such restraints, women, children, the elderly, the sick, the maimed and uninitiated young men who were traditionally protected, were subject to an unprecedented degree of violence. It is commonly stated that more Southerners died during inter-factional South-South fighting in the civil war than were killed in fighting with Government forces.

Economically, the conflict was also damaging for many communities on both sides of the ethnic divide. The Nuer and Dinka withdrew from common lands, preventing some groups from accessing some of the richest grazing and fishing resources in the South. Trade systems stagnated as inter-tribal and intra-tribal conflicts blocked supply routes, towns were cut-off, and relief and development activities were interrupted or stalled due to insecurity. West of the Nile, systematic attacks on civilian populations by the forces of Kerubino Kuanyin Bol from 1994 onwards created the conditions for the Bahr el Ghazal famine of 1998.

The Dinka and Nuer chiefs' peace workshop in Lokichokio

In June 1998, almost a year after the Yei Dialogue, the NSCC held the first people-to-people event. Eight Dinka and Nuer chiefs from border areas on the east and west banks of the Nile were flown to Lokichokio, in Kenya, for a peace workshop. The conference was the first time in seven years that these community leaders had been able to meet and discuss the conflict between their people. Through lengthy story telling about the impact of the war and how conflicts in the past had been resolved, the chiefs reached a consensus that this was a "soldiers war" started by "the educated", rather than a tribal or ethnic conflict (Flint 2001: 16).

The conference ended on June 10th with the signing of a Nuer-Dinka accord, the Loki Accord, agreeing to end hostilities and to hold a series of meetings throughout all communities on both banks of the Nile and "to pursue all possible means towards a just and lasting peace in the land of Nuer and Dinka" (Flint 2001: 53). The conference proposed, in line with other discussions, that a series of Dinka-Nuer peace conferences should be held on the west and east banks of the Nile. It demanded that:

- commanders on both sides should refrain from hostile acts;
- local agreements be respected and honoured;
- cattle raiding be halted;
- killing and abduction of women and children be halted;
- recently abducted women and children be returned to their homes;
- burning of homesteads cease;
- free movement be permitted between Nuer and Dinka areas.

This is reported to have brought immediate results, with one Dinka chief declaring that the Nuer were free to use the grazing areas in his area on the West bank.

At the time of the Lokichokio meeting, security in Dinka areas of the West Bank, in Western Bahr el Ghazal was improved by other factors, in particular the fact that Kerubino Kuanyin Bol had defected back from the government to the SPLM/A. Among the Western Nuer, however, there was intense fighting between the forces of Riek Machar and Paulino Matip. The latter, with government support, were advancing deep into Western Upper Nile

to clear the area for oil exploration. The NSCC therefore decided to start with a conference on the West Bank.

Mobilising support

Preparations for the conference took place over a period of eight months. Having obtained the endorsement of the chiefs, the NSCC sought the support of the SPLM/A military commanders. When they met with them in December 1998, opinion within the SPLM/A was divided. However, the process won the approval of the Deputy Chairman, Salva Kiir Mayardit (later, after the death of John Garang in 2005, to become the leader of the SPLM/A). The people of his area in Bahr el Ghazal, who had experienced famine in 1998, were fighting Government-backed Baggara militias from the north. Other Dinka groups to the south of them were subject to raiding by Riek Machar's forces. They were keen to reconcile. Just before the conference Salva Kiir took action against Dinka who raided Nuer cattle, thus preventing a revenge attack. He also gave soldiers and military equipment to provide security for the meeting. John Garang was ambiguous. While expressing support, he was commonly perceived as being less enthusiastic, perhaps concerned that West Bank unity would strengthen the position of the Bahr el Ghazal Dinka. Garang later accused the NSCC of hijacking the reconciliation process.

Riek Machar and the Nuer also had to be persuaded of the value of supporting the meeting. On the Nuer side, Taban Deng Gai is credited as being the strongest proponent of the meeting. Riek Machar possibly saw it as a way of pressurising the government into honouring the Khartoum Peace Agreement. Surprisingly, at this stage, President Beshir is also reported to have accepted the idea of the meeting, even offering to fund it, though the Khartoum Government subsequently sought to undermine its results.

The NSCC spent several months prior to the conference mobilising support among communities, leaders, women and youth across the West Bank, in the SPLM/A and the UDSF and the Southern Sudanese diaspora (Flint 2001: 19; SSFI 1999). An indigenous NGO, the Bahr el Ghazal Youth and Development Association (BYDA), organised 300 people to build an entire village that could accommodate a temporary community of 1200-1500 people, including international observers and journalists.

On 11-16 February 1999, two weeks prior to the conference, the NSCC arranged exchange visits between Dinka and Nuer chiefs in order to establish an atmosphere of confidence. Five Nuer chiefs and a woman leader were flown to Thiet in Bahr el Ghazal, and five Dinka chiefs and a woman representative reciprocated by visiting Leer.

The Wunlit¹⁸ conference

The *Wunlit Peace and Reconciliation Conference* took place between 27 February and 8 March 1999. Some 360 delegates were invited from six counties either side of the Nuer-Dinka border of Bahr el Ghazal and Western Upper Nile (see table below)¹⁹, including chiefs and women, youth and intellectuals. Additional observers were invited from SPLM/A areas, including the SPLM/A county Commissioner and Executive Director from each county, six Nuer chiefs, and two Murle chiefs from east of the Nile. The meeting was facilitated by six rapporteurs from Nuer and Dinka, who were not associated with any of the political

¹⁸ For a detailed description of the Wunlit conference and the transcription of discussions see the website of South Sudan Friends International (SSFI) founded in 1994 by Wal and Julia Duany (<http://www.southsudanfriends.org/wunlit/>)

¹⁹ The study has not found a complete list of these delegates. The SSFI site provides a list of delegates from five of the six counties.

factions. The only invited group that did not participate were the Bul Nuer, Paulino Matip's section of the western Nuer.

Counties and Districts Represented at Wunlit

Dinka (Bahr el Ghazal)	Nuer (Western Upper Nile)
Gogrial County	Jagei District (Koch)
Rumbek County	Jikany Guet District
Tonj County	Leek District (Kaljaak)
Twic County	District (Dok)
Yirol County	Panyijar District (Nyong)

Lowrey was able to travel to Khartoum and speak with Riek Machar and persuade him to support Wunlit (Interview with Telar Deng, January 2004). He returned with the Nuer academic Dr Michael Wal Duany, as Riek's special envoy. Riek Machar misinterpreted the nature of the Wunlit meeting, however, and sent an eighteen-person SSIM delegation to the meeting. They were not allowed to participate in the proceedings, but were permitted to remain as observers. Salva Kiir addressed the opening of the meeting on behalf of the SPLM/A, but then withdrew, leaving only the SPLA security detail.

Much has been made of the way in which the Wunlit conference was designed, and how it established a model for subsequent local peace conferences in the south. The key features, according to William Lowrey were:

- adequate preparation;
- community investment in the conference and community mobilisation;
- a secure venue;
- pre-conference confidence building;
- the use of traditional ritual practices;
- the legitimacy of the conference delegates;
- a commitment to peace through truth telling;
- the dissemination of the meetings' outcomes and follow up;
- the support if not presence of the SPLM/A.

Having failed to resolve the Dinka-Nuer hostilities by dialogue between the politicians and military leaders, the approach at Wunlit was to work through the civil leadership. Wunlit was therefore a forum for dialogue between civilians, rather than politicians. It avoided the political and military domination of the 1994 Akobo meeting, but replicated its

approach of addressing grievances through dialogue and amalgamating recommendations into a peace covenant signed by all parties.

Lowrey was convinced of the efficacy of marrying traditional methods of conflict resolution with Western approaches. Thus the conference drew on a combination of indigenous and Christian religious rituals, traditional methods of reconciliation and contemporary Western methods of conflict resolution. Sacrifices of the white bull *mabior* occurred alongside Christian prayers. Emphasis was placed on reconciliation through forgiveness, and, where necessary, recompense for injury. Confidence-building through exchange visits by Dinka and Nuer chiefs prior to the conference was considered a crucial ingredient in the success of Wunlit. Drawing on the tradition of discussion between chiefs to resolve matters, emphasis was placed on the power of dialogue and public story-telling. Each county was given a set period of ninety minutes to recount their grievances. As the organisers remarked:

In Nilotic tradition, peace can only be achieved when it is known clearly by all [what] the wrongs were in their entirety. (NSCC 2002b: 64).

One effect of the conference was to enhance the moral authority of Dinka and Nuer religious leaders - the spearmasters (*baany bith*) and earth priests (*kuar muon*).

The conference addressed substantive grievances that had been identified by the conference organisers: abductions, the regulation of marriage, the sharing of grazing land, the resumption of trade and border villages. The military leadership was frequently blamed for the war, but it was agreed that there would be an amnesty for crimes committed prior to January 1999. Participants appealed for unity to stop the Arabs from "looting" the oil in Upper Nile.

Participants recalled how, in the past, the two peoples shared grazing in the *toic* and regulated their disputes with border courts that met in the dry season. The conference therefore sought to revive this system of local courts and inter-tribal conferences. As one NSCC peace activist explained it:

They [the chiefs] had just lost power, but it is the only structure that still stands in South Sudan. People-to-people peace is just a resumption of this system. The people know it very well... We have to get our powers back from whoever has stolen them from us... The SPLA is willing to give back the powers.' (Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004).

The extent to which the SPLM/A intended to devolve power through such meetings can be questioned. However, the conference was able to put forward proposals for joint border police and courts as well as joint schools, markets, agricultural co-ops and veterinary centres, and a Nuer-Dinka peace council to monitor implementation of their resolutions. The conference also recommended there should be a series of other people-to-people meetings with the Nuer, Bor Dinka, Murle, Shilluk, Anyuak of the East Bank, and smaller-scale meeting for the Lou and Gawaar Nuer, before a final conference was held that would involve all the peoples of the South.

On the 8 March 1999, the delegates signed a Covenant. Having the parties enact such an event – that is to say, not a legal agreement, but an agreement between them and God – with the blessing of the churches and the sacrifice of another white bull *mabior*, was intended to demonstrate that the meeting and agreement were divinely sanctioned, and that any violators would be defying divine will.

The immediate impact of Wunlit

At the end of the Wunlit conference, the Nuer Chief Isaac Magok remarked:

We have tasted how bad war is. Now we have slaughtered a bull and washed our hands in the same calabash. All these things are over by the law of Wunlit. We will not return to fighting. (Flint 2001: 25).

The local impact of Wunlit on the West Bank was immediate. Inter-group violence between those who participated in Wunlit ceased. To demonstrate this, Nuer participants walked home across Dinka territory. Abducted women, children and cattle were returned to their families or bride price was negotiated to legitimize unions between abductors and abductees. Prior to the conference, Dr Haruun Ruun of the NSCC commented:

If the Conference is successful, one of the first evidences will be the immediate sharing of the *toic* (grazing lands along the rivers) and fishing ponds during the current dry season. (Ruun 1999)

Areas of the *toic* on the Dinka-Nuer borderlands were successfully reopened for grazing and fishing by both groups and cross-border cattle rustling was reported to have ceased (ibid.: 25). Trading routes reopened. Some border courts were re-established and violations of the Covenant were punished.

A guarantee of security enabled displaced people to return to the border areas. These also became a safe haven for newly war-displaced. A few months after Wunlit, Nuer from the oil fields of Bentiu were pushed out of Western Upper Nile by the Government-backed SSUA forces of Paulino Matip. Some 6,000 found shelter in the Dinka areas of Pagarau in Yirol, while another 20,000 were given sanctuary near Makuac and Maper. Due to the Wunlit Covenant they were accommodated without incident (Jenner 2000).

At the national level, John Garang verbally endorsed the outcome of the meeting, while Riek Machar gave his written approval. The Government, however, sought to undermine the meeting and Southern unity by increasing support for the militia forces of Paulino Matip, a non-participant in the conference, and to other pro-Government militia leaders elsewhere in the South. Displaced Nuer from the oil zone asserted that the Government had escalated the war after the Wunlit accord was signed (ibid.; Flint 2001: 25). The Government also sought to combat accusations that Government-backed Arab militias were engaged in slave-raiding in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. The settlement of cases of abduction at Wunlit, they claimed, revealed that the mass abductions by Government militia in Bahr el Ghazal were an established institution practised by all sides (Jenner 2000: 24).

Considerable energy was expended by the NSCC on following up meetings to Wunlit. In May 1999, an OLS Conference was held in Mapel at which assurances were made by UN Agencies and NGOs of support for the Wunlit process. In June 1999 a Conference of Nuer and Dinka women in Loki declared their support for the Wunlit agreement with a proposal to extend peace initiatives to Kakuma in Kenya, where a large refugee camp had seen a great deal of inter-communal animosity.

New institutional arrangements were created. A Dinka-Nuer West Bank Peace Council was established, and agreement reached on certain civil authorities and laws to be put into place. The first meeting of the Peace Council was held in Yirol in September 1999, some six months after the Wunlit Covenant was signed. It took place ahead of schedule to address the displacement of Nuer by renewed fighting in oilfields in Western Upper Nile

(SSFI 1999). The Peace Council reviewed what had been achieved since Wunlit: a halt to cattle raiding and inter-factional fighting, the return of abductees, the opening of extensive trading routes, the shelter of displaced Nuer, and the sharing of grazing areas and fishing grounds. The members then designated new sites for the resettlement of displaced Nuer and nine border communications posts. To speed the return of abductees, Nuer and Dinka chiefs were asked to make exchange visits to identify missing people. To ensure transparency, it was decided that dowries for abducted women should be paid collectively to relatives rather than a single person. It stressed the importance of establishing joint institutions to sustain the peace process, especially schools, courts and police, and appealed for assistance for new boreholes and medical and veterinary services to support resettlement in the border areas.

On the first anniversary of Wunlit, in April 2000, there was also a review of the impact of the Covenant on the communities represented at the meeting. The fragility of the agreement, it was reported, had been exposed in one instance by the lack of support from the SPLA Commissioner of Rumbek. The report also expressed concern at the lack of a peace dividend – that is of practical assistance for reconstruction – to support the return and integration of displaced and to reinforce the agreement. Local officials had been encouraging Dinka to give food to the displaced Nuer in order to prevent the looting of cattle. They were also encouraged to intermarry with each other.

In 2000, the NSCC commissioned a strategic review of the People to People programme (NSCC 2000a). The review identified areas where the NSCC could strengthen its work. This included institutionalising local peace agreements through the creation of peace councils and ecumenical centres, supporting further reconciliation conferences, developing strategic linkages with the military factions and international fora, and building the NSCC's own institutional capacity. The report made much of the potential impact of the People to People initiative on the wider civil war in Sudan.

The extension of the Wunlit idea

The NSCC followed the internal review with a meeting of strategists in Sudan to evaluate the achievements and failures of the Wunlit, Waat and Liliir peace agreements (see below), and to identify ways to engage with the political leadership of the rebel movements in order to broaden the impact of the people-to-people initiative (NSCC 2000b). The evaluation meeting took place in Wulu, a village in Rumbek County, Bahr el Ghazal. It was attended by elders, chiefs, intellectuals, representatives of civil society groups, women, church and community leaders from Upper Nile (Anyuak, Murle and Nuer), Bahr el Ghazal and the Nuba Mountains. There was consensus that the peace covenants sealed at Wunlit, Waat and Liliir had brought new hope and endorsed the NSCC's view that a grassroots peace process was emerging that included all the peoples of southern Sudan. The meeting noted that the Government's exploitation of oil was a threat to peace and, by extension, Southern unity and the liberation struggle.

This meeting furnished the People to People initiative with an explicit political agenda, one that had hitherto been more indirectly stated. The collective support of the traditional, religious and political Southern leadership was needed, it said, in order to promote unity, reconciliation, and the institution of good governance systems throughout the regions. "Unless there is greater commitment to unity, and genuine attempts to institute the rule of law," the report stated "those seeking reconciliation and peace will be undermined and the liberation struggle threatened with defeat." (ibid.: 2). To strengthen the peace process, the chiefs called for various measures: strengthening the Peace Councils; improving security along the tribal borders with the provision radios,

strengthening local courts with para-legal training, building new roads to link communities; and consolidating peace through trade. The conference asked the NSCC to organise a series of Nuer-Nuer dialogues. They also proposed direct talks with the faction leaders, to extend the message of Wunlit. This led to a new stage of the people-to-people process, a civil society conference, called Strategic Linkages I & II, held in Kenya (see below).

Problems in the Wunlit process

The West Bank Peace Council met for a second time on April 5 2001, in an attempt to defuse the threat of renewed war between the Dinka and Nuer. This new outbreak of conflict was provoked by SPLA military support for the Bul Nuer Commander Peter Gatdet, formerly Paulino Matip's Deputy, against the Government-backed forces of another Nuer Commander, Peter Paar. An attack by Gatdet on Nyal in early in 2001, with logistical support from the SPLA, was viewed by many Nuer as a Dinka attack on Nuer territory. The Council criticised the SPLM/A and called for a meeting of factional leaders and chiefs. But the SPLM/A refused to cooperate. The Paar-Gatdet hostilities continued for several months until reconciliation efforts began between the military commanders themselves. For some, the ineffectiveness of the West Bank Peace Council in the face of armed conflict was an indication that the people-to-people initiative was losing its way. A second Wunlit conference was held in 2003 to address violations of the Covenant, and a third Wunlit meeting was held to monitor the implementation of the Wunlit II agreements and develop a stakeholder action plan.

Chukudum, Equatoria

In January 1999 tensions between Didinga and the SPLM/A military in the Didinga area round Chukudum in Eastern Equatoria, one of the SPLA's main bases, erupted in fighting after the killing of a Didinga traditional leader and an SPLA commander. Most SPLA troops in Chukudum were Bor Dinka and many Dinka civilians displaced from Bor had also settled there. A joint NSCC and SPLM/A team went to investigate the situation in August. The investigation concluded that the problem was not between civilians, but between disgruntled elements in the SPLM/A on the one hand and government-supported Didinga militia on the other. In this case, rather than recommending a peace conference, the team produced a form of covenant calling for a cessation of hostilities, the restoration of a civilian administration, the integration of SPLM/A with local people and the repatriation of displaced Bor Dinka to Bor. A request was made for assistance from the international community. Despite the agreement, unrest in the Didinga area continued and several of the recommendations of the investigation were not implemented. Two years later, in August 2002, a peace conference was held in Chukudum.

Bringing peace to the East Bank

In the Lokichokio chiefs' meeting, it had been proposed to promote reconciliation among the Dinka and Nuer on both the west and east banks of the Nile. The problems on the West Bank, the chiefs argued, had their origins in the Nasir coup and the dispute between the Bor Dinka and Lou Nuer, so events in both areas were connected from the beginning. The Nuer-Nuer reconciliation, it was proposed, would be followed by reconciliation with other, neighbouring, peoples. However, reconciliation on the East Bank was to prove more difficult than on the west. This was in part due to the larger number of ethnic groups involved. Rather than just Nuer and Dinka, the East Bank groups included, just to name those intermittently in conflict with one another, Nuer, Dinka, Shilluk, Anyiak, Murle, Kachipo, Didinga, Jie and Burun. The peoples of the East Bank have long histories of

cooperation and conflict, often extending across the border into Ethiopia, or Kenya or Uganda.

In 1999, by the time of the Wunlit conference, Riek Machar's relationship with the Government in Khartoum had become strained. The alliance of Southern parties that had signed the Khartoum Agreement had split over the appointment of seats to the Southern States Coordinating Council and over the distribution of income from oil. This had left the East Bank prey to at least six other Government-backed Nuer militias, including those of Gabriel Tan-Ginya in Fangak, Simon Gatwich Dual in Akobo, Garkoth Gatkwoth and Gordon Kong in the Nasir area, and Mabor Dhol in Doleib Hill. The activities of these militias constituted a major obstacle to reconciliation among the Nuer and between the Nuer and their neighbours. In 1999 it had also led to the suspension of relief efforts, denying relief supplies to displaced populations.

The priorities to address were considered to be hostilities within Lou, the largest Nuer section in the East. Eastern Nuerland was divided between the SPLA, the Government and Machar's forces, and between the Lou, Gawaar and Jikany over land and fishing and grazing rights. The intention was to apply the Wunlit model to intra-Nuer disputes, but also to hold a series of mini-conferences to gain the acceptance of the commanders and the communities. The first of these peace conferences took place in Waat.

The Waat Convention

In August 1999, there was a realignment of forces in Upper Nile reflecting the growing disillusion among the Nuer with the Khartoum Peace Agreement. On August 18 in Akobo, a number of Lou Nuer military commanders and political leaders from the SSDF, the SPLA and Simon Gatwec's militia and three districts Waat, Yuai and Lankien, signed a ceasefire agreement. A ceasefire agreement was signed covering Lou Nuer territory and announcing the formation of an Upper Nile Military Command Council (UMCC). Leadership positions in the UMCC were given to members of the SSDF, SPLA and SSUA, and the Government-supported militia of Simon Gatwic. The UMCC declared that the UDSF had deposed Riek Machar from its leadership, rejected the Khartoum agreement and resumed the armed struggle (NSCC 2000a). It was also agreed to hold a Lou Governance Conference in October 1999. The August agreement was followed in September by a ceasefire among rival Nuer military leaders.

The Lou Peace and Governance Convention was convened in Waat in November 1999, with the support of PCOS and NSCC. The purpose of the Waat convention was to reconcile the Lou Nuer, build upon the Akobo military agreement, and create a common system of governance by rebuilding the civil administration, establishing a police force and re-empowering the traditional system of chiefs' courts.

The convention concluded on 6 November 1999 with the signing of the Waat Lou Nuer Covenant, which decreed an end to hostilities, and an amnesty for offences committed before that date (NSCC (ed.) 1999a). The convention called for a number of measures designed to restore good government: the separation of civil and military powers, independent of the Khartoum government and its proxies; the establishment of a police force independent of the military; and the demobilisation of all children under 15. A Lou Nuer Peace and Governance Council was elected to rebuild the civil administration, re-empower chiefs' courts and to establish a police force to protect court decisions. There was an appeal for external aid to assist with this.

Like Wunlit, Waat attracted a large number of participants, with over 3,000 people in attendance, and similar procedures and rituals were followed. The convention did, for a time, end hostilities among the Lou and rights to grazing and water were re-established. Unlike Wunlit, however, the main delegates were military leaders and the meeting became focussed on Lou leadership and military issues, with all the factions trying to gain political capital from the event. It precipitated a split between Riek Machar and Dr Michael Wal Duany which further fragmented the politics of Eastern Upper Nile.

At the Waat Convention Wal Duany, who had worked with PCOS as a facilitator at the 1994 Akobo conference and had been a rapporteur at the Wunlit conference, received the support of the UMCC to create a new political organisation that would pursue Southern self-determination through the IGAD peace process separately from Khartoum and its proxies. On 31 January 2000 Wal Duany duly formed the South Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM), with the intention to support community reconciliation and initiate dialogue with other political and military groups in South Sudan. After some time, though, the SSLM became politically isolated. It co-operated with Ethiopian insurgency groups, which led to Ethiopian strikes against targets within Sudan's border. It benefited from taxing cross-border trade, before linking with a pro-government militia, taking arms from the Government and supporting the kidnapping of several aid agency staff, and the murder of another.

Two weeks after the Waat conference, Riek Machar, concerned not to lose his leadership position amongst the Lou, declared the Khartoum Peace Agreement a failure, rallied his troops and announced the formation of a rival Nuer grouping, the SPDF (Sudan People's Defence Forces), thus ending the unity negotiated at Waat. The agreements that had been reached at Waat allowing Lou Nuer access to dry season grazing areas also faltered in 2001 due to conflicts between the Jikany Nuer and Gawaar Nuer.

The fall-out from these political machinations had an impact on the NSCC. Wal Duany's transformation from a peacemaker to a factional leader brought their neutrality into question. William Lowrey and the NSCC were accused by some in the SPLM/A of siding with Wal Duany and of facilitating the formation of a military bloc in the East Bank. Lowrey was accused of having his own political agenda and was advised to leave the NSCC. As a result there was little follow-up by the NSCC and no external material assistance was forthcoming to consolidate the agreements.

The failure of the Waat Convention revealed a weakness in the people-to-people process, one that was the concomitant of its success. The People to People meetings were genuine community-level events, and their success was dependent on initiatives from particular institutions and individuals who were part of, or close to, these communities. By the same token, given the multi-levelled complexity of the conflict in Sudan (and competition over access to external material resources), these institutions and individuals were liable to be drawn into the disputes they were trying to resolve. What was lacking, according to some analyses, was a broad political framework, standing above the process that the people-to-people processes could be subordinated to. The IGAD Planning for Peace assessment sought provide such a framework (IGAD Partners Forum 2002a & 2002b), but the People to People meetings were not under IGAD control. And the politicisation of the process was something neither the participants nor the facilitators were powerful enough to prevent.

The Liliir Conference

Faced with continuing insecurity on the East Bank, the NSCC decided to proceed with an East Bank-wide conference, instead of mini-conferences. As no secure location could be

found in Nuerland, and with pressure from donors to show results, Liliir was chosen as the location, a site in Dinka Bor territory away from Government forces. With no time for preparation or confidence-building, the Liliir meeting became a political football, with John Garang supportive of the meeting that would bring peace to the East Bank and bring people back to Bor, and Riek Machar who objected to the choice of Liliir as the site of the meeting.

The Liliir East Bank conference of May 2000, was the first multi-ethnic meeting to take place on the East Bank. It demonstrated the difficulties with broadening the people-to-people process without the support of the military factions. As a result of bad weather, poor mobilisation and Riek Machar's opposition to the meeting, only half of the 200 anticipated delegates participated. These came from sections of six ethnic groups; the Dinka Bor and Padang, the Anyuak, Jie, Kachipo and the Boma section of the Murle. Only one of four Dinka Padang districts was present. There was only partial representation of the Lou Nuer (from Akobo town), and there was only one Gawaar delegate. The Jikany Nuer of Nasir District and the Gawaar of Fangak and Ayod did not participate. The Shilluk and the Pibor Murle were not invited (Flint 2001: 33-34). Consequently, the delegates assembled in Liliir represented largely the southern part of the East Bank and there was no representation from some of the most troubled front-line areas in the north.

At Liliir, unlike Wunlit, military commanders were full participants rather than observers. Distrust between members of the movements and those who had joined the Government affected the meeting. On 15 May a Covenant was signed, but the working groups had little time to draw up their recommendations and work out the modalities for their implementation. Thorny issues to do with borders and resources were deferred to a Commissioners' conference. The general feeling was that the process had been rushed through under donor pressure (ibid: 35).

Nevertheless, Liliir did expand the process of local reconciliation on the East Bank between the Bor Dinka and some Nuer sections. Communications between groups, movement and trade all improved. The Gawaar and Lou were able to move their livestock into Bor County once again and people could travel safely to the West Bank. Abducted women and children were returned to their families through the offices of the chiefs. Within a year thirteen new primary schools had been built by Bor Dinka and some 5,000 Dinka had repatriated to Bor, indicating a growing confidence in security. Although raiding and abduction did not stop completely, there was hope that the limited peace agreement would assume a momentum of its own. There was evidence for this in the return of some abducted Dinka children to their families by Pibor Murle, themselves regaining access to grazing cattle in Bor County (Flint 2001: 40). At Waat smaller tribes like the Anyuak had been able to raise their concerns publicly. The conference put pressure on the Nuer to reconcile and to challenged the church leadership to unite around a common agenda for unity and peace. (NSCC 2000a: 5). As with Wunlit, however, no additional aid to consolidate the peace was immediately forthcoming.

The Strategic Linkages meetings

The NSCC responded to the request by participants in the Wulu evaluation to engage the political leadership in dialogue, by organising a "Strategic Linkages" meeting between Southern tribal leaders, civil society organisations, the diaspora and the SPLM/A. The meeting, which took the NSCC in a new and more political direction, was arranged in a neutral venue at Kisumu, Kenya. The meeting, however, was boycotted by John Garang who also prevented many delegates from SPLM/A-controlled areas from attending²⁰.

²⁰ For further documentation see SSFI 2003.

Consequently the “strategic” element of the meeting was lost. Garang was reportedly concerned that the meeting would give a platform to his critics and articulate a demand for self-determination that would undermine the SPLM/A’s support for a united Sudan.

The Strategic Linkages II meeting opened on 18 June 2001 with over 200 participants from a range of backgrounds, regions, and organisations in Sudan and the diaspora (NSCC 2001b). The nature of the meeting reinforced the concern among some donor governments that people-to-people peace was promoting an agenda for south Sudan independence (Flint 2001). The Kisumu Declaration, of 22 June, did not dispel this impression. It reaffirmed the twin goals of liberation and self-determination, stating that “liberation is the common and prime agenda for people of southern Sudan (including Abyei), Nuba Mountains, and South Blue Nile”. “Self determination,” it continued, “is the central objective of the people’s liberation struggle.” (NSCC 2001a). The declaration also asked the SPLM/A to “clarify” its position regarding freedom of assembly and freedom of movement and directed the Nuer to unite. Several of the conference resolutions were directed at the NSCC, urging it to strengthen the people-to-people peace process through a number of measures including improved field-based monitoring, reporting and evaluation; the establishment of early-warning mechanisms; the sensitization of local populations; and the establishment of common services at the borders. It also urged the NSCC to hold the promised Nuer-Nuer mini-conferences.

The Nuer Peace Committee

The presence of many Nuer in Kisumu provided an opportunity for intra-Nuer dialogue. This produced, on 23 June, the Kisumu Declaration for Nuer Unity and Peace, which called upon the SPDF and SSLM to unite “without delay”, cease all hostilities and enter into dialogue with other liberation movements (NSCC 2001c). A fifteen-person Nuer Peace Committee was formed in Nairobi in December 2000, under the chairmanship of John Luk Jok. The Peace Committee drew up a plan for five mini-conferences to be held before mid 2002 among and between a number of groups and sections: Jikany; Lou and Gawaar; Lou and Jikany; Lou and Anyuak. There were also plans for conferences on the West Bank involving Nuer groups there, namely Adok, Nyong, Bul, Jagei, Lek and Western Jikany. The NSCC began to prepare the groundwork for the conferences, but progress was halted when Riek Machar and other Nuer intellectuals began disputing their location and timing.

The People to People process after Kisumu

The NSCC has described the people-to-people peace programme from its genesis up to 2001 in its book *Inside Sudan: The story of People-to-People Peacemaking in Southern Sudan* (NSCC 2002b). Since its publication the NSCC has continued to organise People to People conferences (see the tables below). There has been some extension into new areas, such as Equatoria. However, the NSCC-supported peace conferences have been mostly concentrated in eastern and western Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal. In these areas it has concentrated on the consolidation of existing peace agreements through dialogue and the provision of material “peace dividends”, such as bore wells, schools, and veterinary services. It has also moved beyond reconciliation to support good governance, by training para-legals, and clarifying Dinka and Nuer customary law, as mandated at Wunlit (Interview with Telar Deng, January 2004). To this extent people-to-people meetings have become routinised, part of the wider field of aid programmes in the South.

Since late 2002, the NSCC has been coordinating its peace work with other agencies in the Pact-managed consortium of agencies²¹, funded by the USAID SPF (PACT 2002b). Within the consortium the NSCC continues to support “grassroots peace dialogue” and reconciliation (PACT 2002a). The work of Pact and the USAID SPF is a direct legacy of the NSCC’s People to People initiative and was inspired by it; USAID was one of the donors for Wunlit, and has acknowledged that “Wunlit was a demonstration about what was possible without a real formal sanction by the [SPLA] Leadership Council”. Before assuming his present role, Pact’s Chief of Party, Paul Murphy led the internal review of the NSCC’s People to People initiative in 2000 (NSCC 2000a), and was a team leader in the IGAD Partner’s Forum grassroots consultation. The overall vision of Pact is to build a common platform for peace building in the SPLM/A-held areas of South Sudan (Interview with Paul Murphy, December 2003). And Pact’s work has taken forward some of the recommendations of the NSCC review, including the need for collaboration with other agencies. Whereas the NSCC focuses on mediation and reconciliation, the Pact-led consortium offers a broader peace-building framework that includes peace dividend projects. Pact has also actively sought to create linkages between the national peace talks in Machakos and the grassroots reconciliation. One example was the Dinka-Rizeigat-Misseriya talks covering Bahr el Ghazal, South Darfur and West Kordofan, which was an outcome of the Machakos talks between the Government and the SPLM/A.

The longer term impacts of Wunlit and the people-to-people process

The Wunlit conference has generally been judged a success because the peaceful relations it established between the West Bank communities of Dinka and Nuer have stood the test of time (NSCC 2000a). Nuer raiding into Bahr el Ghazal did not resume. But Wunlit remains a unique achievement and its successors did not have a comparable effect. The ambitious timetable set by the NSCC for the wider People to People peace initiative was difficult to sustain. Today, in the altered political terrain after the CPA, with the new leadership of the SPLM/A energetically pursuing reconciliation among Southern groups, one of the original purposes of the Wunlit process – the establishment of unity among Southerners – may be said to be being fulfilled by other means. It is fair to say that the idea of the People to People initiative had the effect of promoting the idea of unity, and the importance of the participation of civilians in government, even where it did not result in practical successes. In the words of one NSCC activist before the CPA was signed:

It has resulted in benefits to ordinary people in terms of the sharing of common resources. It has contributed to leadership issues in the Movement; people persist in saying the leaders must be united. It is a very inclusive process, involving women youth, elders, traditional leaders, church leaders, local administration, judiciary, even the army. Most importantly it is sustained by the people. It has laid strong foundations in Southern Sudan and given people hope. It has brought about a change of attitude and language. (Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004).

Influencing the national conflict

This case study concludes by examining the claims made on behalf of the people-to-people process and some of the counter-arguments.

Can the People to People initiative be given credit for any more ambitious achievement? One of the most ambitious claims made for it has been that it carried “the potential to transform the dynamics of the macro Sudan conflict.” (NSCC and others 1999: 1). Having

²¹ The consortium comprises Pact, AU-IBAR, Christian Aid, NSCC, CEAS, FOSCO:

failed to reconcile the leadership of the factions, the NSCC turned instead to grassroots reconciliation. The review of the NSCC peace programme in 2000 claimed that this had the potential to bring political change and unity to the South. The assumption that local peacemaking can influence national level conflict was not restricted to the NSCC. Lowrey (1995) also concluded this after the 1994 Akobo meeting. The 2001 IGAD planning for peace grassroots assessment similarly argued that, "Peacemaking at the political level will be influenced once exposed to the insights and perspectives from the grassroots." (IGAD Partners' Forum 2002b). And one of the objectives of the SPF is to expand the zones of stability and, more vaguely, to "support an improved environment for peace" (PACT 2002a: 5).

There are three ways in which the People to People initiative can claim to have had an impact on the national conflict. First is the claim that it has fostered Southern unity; second the claim that it has created a peace movement; and third, the claim that it promotes good governance.

The people-to-people process and Southern unity.

As described earlier, in its own depiction of the People to People initiative, the NSCC is clear that the objective of the Wunlit conference and the wider process was more ambitious than ending hostilities between the Dinka and Nuer of the West Bank. Rather, it aimed to unify the South by ending conflict among Southern peoples (NSCC 2002b). In its analysis of the war, the NSCC highlighted the historical inequalities between the North and the South, the cultural differences and lack of common consensus, history and values. It located the war in the "painful history of oppression, terrorism, exploitation and aggression experienced by many Southern and marginalised Sudanese people" (ibid.: 20). It saw the Southern struggle as one for self-determination, the protection of diversity and rights and justice (ibid.: 21). Furthermore, it is claimed that "only through unity will Southerners be able to protect themselves from exploitation and oppression." (NSCC 2000a:7).

The notion that Southern unity is a necessary condition for peace in Sudan is also found in the analysis of various international agencies. In 2002 PACT asserted that if a national peace agreement was reached there would be a "need for southern Sudanese to attain reconciliation and unity in society at the grassroots." (PACT 2002a: 1). ICG argued that the "People-to People Peace Initiative is the most likely vehicle for promoting southern unity and ending the bitter legacy of division and warlordism." (PACT 2002a: 137-138). A UNICEF-commissioned study on the causes of war in Southern Sudan also stated that its aim was "to help in the development of policies and strategies to promote the unity of Southern Sudanese peoples as a critical step towards a comprehensive and lasting peace" (Deng 2003a: 3).

For the NSCC and its donors, there was a potential problem in fostering unity. If unity served to strengthen the authority of the SPLM/A the churches could be accused of aiding its war aims. However, while it was criticized for being too close to the SPLM/A, unity for the NSCC was not purely about supporting a single political organization. Indeed, unity leading to independence went against the SPLM/A's stated political objectives. The NSCC's concern was with a deeper political transformation that would enable the people of the South to participate in political decisions about the future of the country. In NSCC publications it was argued that impoverishment and lack of participation in decision-making had caused violence, disunity and fragmentation in the South. Rectifying this required a change in the way in which politics was practiced: "A just and lasting peace will

only be achieved once the people are united and given genuine opportunities to make informed decisions about their own destiny" (ibid.: 6-7).

The people-to-people process as a peace movement

A second, related claim for the People to People initiative is that it fostered the formation of a peace movement in South Sudan.

This indeed is how the people-to-people process has sometimes been described: a peace movement *tout court* (NSCC 2000a:3). Its strongest advocates have described it as a "social movement" and a "cleansing experience" for Dinka and Nuer that could transcend political barriers and enable processes of recovery to be effective (Interview with Paul Murphy, 12 January 2004). It has been described as a movement that "has come from the people themselves" (Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004). "It is the will of the people alone that is upholding the agreements", claims one NSCC document (NSCC 2000a: 6). The label "people-to-people" was confirmation that it was an initiative driven by local communities and the role of the church was simply to protect the grassroots nature of that process.

In this account the People to People initiative is something that, by its very nature, empowers and conscientises Southerners as they re-evaluate their experience of subjugation and exploitation by the Northern state and start to question their identity and the future of their people. As paraphrased by one observer: "By achieving peace and unity among ourselves we liberate ourselves" (Jenner 2000: 6).

However, the people-to-people process was not strictly-speaking a grassroots movement. It was instigated by Churches and southern intellectuals and funded by external parties. Furthermore, as the NSCC (NSCC 2002b: 50-53) also recognised, it relied on the military powers in the South for security: "there can be no peace without the full support of the military and militia factions in the area... grassroots peace will not stand if factions continue to fight". The success of Wunlit was dependent on this support from the SPLM/A. The Liliir and other East Bank initiatives were less successful because of its absence.

The people-to-people process and good governance

The third claim made for the people-to-people process is that it has promoted good governance and wider participation in the national political process.

In 2002 the IGAD Planning for Peace assessment reported there was a "grassroots anxiety" that the parties prosecuting the war would make an "elite settlement" and share power among themselves (IGAD Partners' Forum 2002b). It has been argued that one of the main achievements of the People to People initiative has been to promote a form of participatory governance, by providing forums in which opinions could be voiced (NSCC 2000a). Furthermore, public mobilisation, the participation of tribal chiefs and the creation of structures like the peace councils have served to strengthen the role of civil society in South Sudan and increase public participation in politics. The inclusive way in which the Wunlit Dinka-Nuer peace covenants were developed contrasts with the exclusive drafting of the SPLM/A constitution by the leadership (Jenner 2000: 34) and the drafting of CPA by the two parties, the Government and the SPLA, without reference to other political groups.

It is argued that the participation of chiefs in the people-to-people process helped to revive consultative mechanisms that traditionally regulated inter-communal conflict (International Crisis Group 2002: 138). The invigoration of traditional authority is seen by some as a step towards the revival of a form of Native Administration, something they consider necessary for the restoration of representative local government.

[T]here is no way of direct rule in South Sudan, where you have cases that involve long distance movement of cattle, and things like fishing and hunting rights. People have their own mechanisms for settling such cases. There are unwritten laws. It used to be that if there were quarrels between people in different areas like Yiról, Bentiu, Ganyiel, then local government administrators would call a meeting. But the government would hold it as a trial, not as reconciliation. The government is not interested in that. Like any other government, its interest is to maintain law and order (Interview with Telar Deng, January 2004).

Others suggest that the People to People initiative has been most successful where it has built upon ideas that find their counterpart in indigenous moral discourse, in the norms and expectations of “communities whose relations are marked by obligations of reciprocity among its members, who recognize that they must accept mediation and exchange compensation between themselves in order to overcome disputes and live in peace” (Johnson 2003: 167). Among some Dinka and Nuer groups, conflict resolution has been possible because they belong to such a moral community. Methods of mediation and accommodation that were threatened by the breakdown of relations during the war were reinvigorated by the people-to-people approach.

The involvement of chiefs in the People to People meetings is frequently stressed in the literature. Information is not always available, though, on which sections they represent and what the source of their authority is. To understand the long-term effect of the people-to-people process it may be necessary to know more about the fate of chieftainship during the war. The institution has simultaneously been strengthened by the absence of other authority and weakened through manipulation by the SPLM/A and other Southern forces. Wunlit made the chiefs more visible, but it did not necessarily enhance their power.

The relative success of Wunlit and the less-than-successful Waat conference demonstrated the importance of public trust in a legitimate local leadership. In addressing inter-communal conflict, it is important to acknowledge that local conceptions of governance are more important than foreign notions of ‘democracy’ or ‘participation’. The Wunlit conference and other meetings created a forum for the expression of public opinion that brought pressure to bear on local commanders and politicians. They were able to do this because of external support given to such meetings, but at the same time this support was only effective because of the local authority invested in such meetings. The SPLM/A had to acknowledge the rising power of the chiefs, especially if they were to continue to depend on them for recruitment into the military.

The political reforms made in the SPLM/A after the Chukudum convention created a permissive environment for the People to People conferences to take place. But some conferences, such as those at Waat and Kisumu, exposed an on-going discontinuity between the political leaders and the public. The Kisumu conference showed the SPLM/A to still be intolerant of public criticism, while the Waat conference illustrated how local peace agreements remain vulnerable to the political and military objectives of the warring parties. The lack of follow up and investment in local governance institutions to consolidate the peace accords illustrated the difficulties of constructing governance institutions from the bottom up.

African renaissance?

With the emphasis on reconciliation through the offices of chiefs rather than politicians and warlords, the Wunlit conference and the people-to-people peacemaking has been used to illustrate the efficacy of traditional indigenous approaches to conflict resolution. Commenting on the people-to-people peacemaking Lowrey (1999) explains:

This is not a peace that is forged primarily on a piece of paper, although that will happen by the time the Conference is over. It is not a peace constructed in meetings and negotiated as a set of ideas, although that too is likely in the coming couple of weeks. This is a peace and reconciliation process between peoples with oral traditions. They draw from rich resources of traditional life and see themselves as rooted in a common family. Dinka and Nuer know that peace comes when people are reconciled, wrongs are forgiven, covenants are established, rituals provide visible signs of inner commitments, and new paths are created for interactive relationships along their borders and within each others' lands.

Those who promote the efficacy of indigenous forms of conflict resolution suggest that there is a need to understand the structure of social institutions and the principles guiding interaction; the system of governance and leadership; and the traditions of conflict resolution themselves (Smock 1997).

In the People to People programme, the churches sought to cultivate a strong sense of identity which opened them up to collaboration with African religions and cultural traditions and rituals. Some commentators therefore see the Wunlit conference and the people-to-people process as having an Africa-wide significance, as an example of people not only liberating themselves, but reclaiming an "authentic African cosmology" and an "authentic African way of working through various problems", as opposed to an Arab or European one (Jenner 2000: 7).

However, the use of the terms "traditional" and "indigenous" may not be appropriate. The "tradition" of chiefs in Nilotic areas of Sudan goes back only to the colonial period, when the system of indirect rule and native administration altered local structures of authority and made chiefs out of war leaders and spear masters. Furthermore, the approach employed at Wunlit was a mixture of local and Western approaches to conflict resolution. And, while traditional leaders can be a force for reconciliation, this is not always the case. Their role and political agendas can only be understood through situational analysis, rather than assumptions about the intrinsic nature of such social actors. Finally, while the traditional and indigenous are celebrated in the discourse of peacemaking, there is also an acceptance that peace will involve a "natural and inevitable process of cultural change" (Deng 2003a:3).

Addressing local conflicts

The evidence that local conflict resolution can influence a national peace process is limited. But there is a strong argument for supporting local-level reconciliation as an end in itself, rather than as a step in state building. Local peace accords can provide immediate tangible benefits, reducing violence, opening grazing areas, roads, communication and trade, and local reconciliation appears more effective where it reflects local communal interests. Local level peacemaking may also help mitigate local conflict once a national peace deal is struck. As Telar Deng (Interview with Telar Deng, January 2004) explains, after an overall peace agreement is signed and Sudan enters the 'Interim Period' before a referendum on Southern self-determination:

There will be issues involving land and gardens which were taken over after the original owners went away, especially in West Bank Equatoria. There are cases of bitterness of local populations with the SPLM about what might have been done in the last 21 years. With the return of the diaspora there will be issues about how to integrate people who have got different cultures back into the communities, and the treatment of people who have been allied to the Government of Sudan and betrayed the Southern cause.

The nature of local peacemaking, however, is that it is concerned with managing rather than resolving conflict. Arguably, the resolution of conflicts will be in the hands of a future government and its institutions.

Criticisms of the People to People peace initiative

While there has been general consensus that the Wunlit conference was successful, the broader People to People programme has not been without criticism. Perceptions differ over how effective various initiatives have been. The Didinga-Dinka conflict is a case in point. The NSCC believe the Chukudum 2002 conference was effective in resolving the conflict between the SPLM/A and the Didinga.

After 2002 the situation has been resolved. There have been no more incidents.' The displaced people are less of a problem, and some are going back. (Interview with Telar Deng, January 2004)

Pax Christi saw it differently.

It may have settled the internal SPLA problem, but not the problem between the communities in the area. There are traders in the displaced population that have privileges from the SPLA that local people don't like. (Interview with Simon Simonse, January 2004)

The NSCC and Pact are criticised by some for being too close to the SPLM/A and for favouring the West Bank, and the NSCC for being too religious in orientation. While Wunlit was a revelation for people, showing the potential of grassroots peacemaking, by the time of Liliir, some people felt the initiative had lost its direction, by trying to be all inclusive and accomplishing too much too soon, instead of giving more attention to matching the adversaries (Interview with Simon Simonse, January 2004).

Some also argue that the NSCC became too trapped into funding conferences which raised the money, but failed to engage in longer-term peace building. Some worried that the NSCC was placing too much emphasis on ritual, shortcutting the process of agreement on the issues that lay at the heart of the conflict. Very little was done in the rehabilitation and development of services, policing, courts, and border stations and the NSCC was criticized for being slow in developing proposals to attract funding for these. One activist expressed his frustration when he commented:

The idea of the NSCC is to make as many peaces as possible without a plan of sustaining these peace agreements. It is easier to get money for peacemaking, but an agreement is not an end in itself. (Mario Muor cited in Flint 2001)

A further criticism levelled at the People to People initiative has been the lack of enforcement mechanisms to sustain the agreements. The traditional institutions that

partake in reconciliation do not have the authority to control the commanders, the youth or to reinforce peace. "Peace is to be talked of, but when they disperse nothing happens", explained one participant (Interview with John Luk Jok, 13 January 2004). After Wunlit, other People to People conferences have been criticised for being a series of events, with little follow up, rather than a process.

Furthermore, in the absence of international intervention to address the issue of oil exploration, the People to People peace initiative was potentially futile. Even united, the Southern movements would not be able to resist the renewed strength of the Government army and its proxy militias.

The role of external actors

Non-Sudanese external actors played an important role in the Wunlit conference and the People to People peace initiative. The initiative depended on external funding to meet the high logistics costs; the Liliir conference cost some \$400,000 (Flint 2001: 35). The NSCC was able to raise funds for Wunlit and subsequent meetings from within the church network and faith-based agencies, such as Christian Aid and CAFOD and World Vision. The NSCC also found support from some government donors, such as USAID, who rationalised their support on the basis that development was only possible with peace (USAID/REDSO/ESA 2000). The response of secular INGOs in Southern Sudan was more ambivalent.

A willingness to fund conferences was not matched by aid to finance the implementation of the recommendations in the peace accords, such as assistance with the resettlement of displaced, the rehabilitation of services or the funding of institutions to monitor and police the accords, such as border courts. The NSCC was frustrated by the reluctance to fund what, they argued, were locally defined priorities or to sustain peace through development. In other words, while there was a readiness to support reconciliation, there appears to have been a reluctance to engage in peace building.

There were some extenuating reasons for this. Immediately following Wunlit new population displacements consumed agencies' available resources (Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004). The insecurity caused by Government-sponsored militia and bombings also restricted access to the areas that Wunlit covered. Some agencies were engaged in their own peace-building activities, or were unaffected by the People to People initiative which focussed on Dinka-Nuer relations. Some who wanted to support Wunlit and its outcomes struggled to raise donor funds. And for many humanitarian agencies peace building was completely outside of their remit. The timing of the People to People initiative unfortunately coincided with a dispute between some aid agencies and the SPLM/A over a Memorandum of Understanding on the terms of their engagement in South Sudan. In March 2000, 11 large aid agencies withdrew from Southern Sudan as a result. The dispute reportedly caused a 40% drop in the volume of aid in South Sudan and as much as 76% in some regions, hitting long-term work especially hard (Flint 2001: 48). Technical assistance in some sectors, including water supply and veterinary medicine, halted completely.

Some NGOs also assert that the NSCC failed to prioritise needs and mobilise support after Wunlit, and have not encouraged international NGOs to engage. However, the NSCC did arrange for a meeting of donors some eighteen months after Wunlit in September 2001. At that point USAID regional office "started actively going after a certain pot of money" (Interview with Paul McDermott, December 2003). It took two years to secure the US \$10 million Sudan Peace Fund (SPF), now managed by Pact, to provide resources for peace

building. The SPLM/A, however, wanted to have control over the funds, as the USAID regional office explained:

There was a constant assumption by the SPLM that they would somehow take over control of the fund. It was the active role of our diplomats to tell them to stop that; not to try to identify themselves with these grassroots things, or the U.S. Government will shut off the funds. (ibid)

This highlighted the politics of local peace processes, which has made donor governments and aid agencies cautious in their support. The attitude of continuing resistance, liberation through unity and the demand for independence gave People to People meetings a political agenda that aid agencies and donors were unable to subscribe to. The Government, for its part, viewed the people-to-people meetings as political (Interview with Paul McDermott, December 2003). As became apparent at the Strategic Linkages meetings, the SPLM/A were ambivalent about a people-to-people process that was not directly under their control. While some within the SPLM/A saw the People to People initiative as strengthening support for the Movement, others were concerned that it would generate new leaders - like Wal Duany (ibid.). Indeed, Garang accused the NSCC of using church resources to promote a political agenda. Among some donor governments there was a concern that the people-to-people process was realigning the warring parties in the South, and that the 'grassroots movement' envisaged by some could presage not a drive for national peace, but more serious fighting with the North.

Ceasefire and local dialogue in the Nuba Mountains

Background to the conflict

The Nuba Mountains, in South Kordofan and Lagowa Province of West Kordofan, were a front line in the war between the government and the SPLM/A from 1985 until 2002. Situated in the area referred to in aid literature as the “transitional zone” between Northern and Southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains are one of the three “marginalised” areas that are subject to separate provisions in the CPA of 2005. The Nuba people comprise more than fifty distinct ethnolinguistic groups, but a common history of slavery²², marginalisation, war and life in the Diaspora has served to forge a political consciousness and sense of shared Nuba ethnicity that belies their heterogeneous origins. The South and West Kordofan area is also the range for transhumant cattle herders, the Hawazma and the Misseriya Humr and Zurug (collectively referred to as Baggara). Arab traders from the central riverain zone of Sudan and Fellata agriculturalists have also settled there. In the past decade Shanabla Arab camel herders have moved into the area as a result of deteriorating environmental conditions further north.

South Kordofan is a fertile rain-fed area and since the late 1960s it has been a focus for the expansion of mechanised agriculture. This economic development has been part of Sudan's drive towards export-oriented production, supported by international financial institutions and donor governments²³ (Bradbury 1998). A prerequisite for the expansion of capital-intensive mechanised farming has been the progressive dismantling of the rural subsistence economy of South Kordofan. This has involved measures to modernise indigenous farming practices, and the systematic expropriation of Nuba land by the Northern merchant class and military-controlled commercial enterprises established by President Nimeiri in the 1980s. This process has been facilitated by changes to the land tenure law²⁴. The discovery of commercial oil deposits in Heglig in South Kordofan has further fuelled Government economic and security interests in the Nuba Mountains.

Although the Nuba Mountains are not historically part of the South, many Nuba were sympathetic with the proclaimed aims of SPLM/A and joined the Movement when war broke out in 1993. For those Nuba fighting with the SPLM/A, the war became a struggle for political representation at the centre, for cultural and religious freedom, and against racial discrimination, economic marginalisation, and an exploitative development process. The question of ownership and access to land was and is a crucial factor. In this the war in the Nuba Mountains had greater similarity with the current conflict in Darfur than it did with the rest of the South. As the war persisted, demands by the Nuba for greater political autonomy and self-determination increased.

For successive governments in Khartoum, the war in the Nuba Mountains was about containing the Southern insurgency, and controlling South Kordofan's agrarian and mineral

²² The Nuba have commonly been treated as second class citizens and a slave class (*abid*) within their own territory. The word “Nuba” - denoting “black people” to Arabs and Egyptians - has derogatory, racially-tinged overtones.

²³ Financial conditions imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund influenced the restructuring of Sudan's resource use away from local needs and the local market toward the international market (Prendergast 1989).

²⁴ Amendments to the 1925 Land Registration Act in 1961 and 1990 removed all customary title to land, thus enabling the mass expropriation of land from Nuba farmers, and peasant farmers elsewhere in the Sudan (African Rights 1995: 51).

assets. The expropriation of Nuba land for mechanised farming was justified in Government discourse as part of the progress towards national self-reliance, while oil exploitation and the protection of the Heglig pipeline made control of the territory and its people an important military objective.

During the course of the war Nuba communities were subject to the same Government military tactics as were visited on the South, and as are being used today in Darfur. These included the arming of irregular tribal militia and Popular Defence Forces, the targeting of local leaders and, in a pattern of ethnic cleansing repeated in Darfur, the forcible relocation of communities to displaced camps and “peace villages”. The purpose, in the Nuba Mountains, as elsewhere, was to deny the SPLM/A a civilian base. Displacement reached a peak in 1992, when the Government sought a final solution to the Nuba problem by launching a *jihad* against the insurgents²⁵. At that time this created one of the largest displaced populations in the country, second only to that of Bahr el Ghazal²⁶. With agrarian and pastoral livelihoods disrupted, and aid to SPLA areas subject to a Government blockade, parts of this fertile agricultural region experienced chronic food insecurity.

The war created a dislocated and divided population in the Nuba Mountains. It provoked internecine conflict between Nuba communities, who fought on both sides: in the Government army and the Popular Defence Forces and in the SPLA²⁷. It has left legacies of distrust between Nuba and Baggara, Nuba and *jellaba* (Northern traders and businesspeople), and between Baggara and Baggara. The pattern of conflict between communities has in places been a manifestation of tensions over resources, land, territory, and water that existed prior to the war. However, the reciprocal agreements between agriculturalists and pastoralists that would have managed these tensions have been undermined by the war.

Peace building: From dialogue to service provision

From the mid-1990s onwards there were a range of peacemaking and peace-building interventions in the Nuba Mountains, some locally initiated and others internationally driven and sponsored. These included people-to-people dialogue, peace building through development, capacity-building, humanitarian diplomacy and international diplomacy, which resulted in the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) of January 2002. This agreement was brokered by the US and Swiss governments and became a precursor of the CPA of 2005 between the Government and the SPLM/A.

Until the 2002 CFA, there was very little international support for local inter-community dialogue in the Nuba Mountains; lack of access was a major constraint. Consequently there are few documented examples of grassroots or people-to-people dialogue from that time. One example that was documented, however, is a series of agreements between the Nuba and Baggara.

In the early days of the war the Government had mobilised the Misseriya and Hawazma to support its offensive against the SPLM/A and Nuba with grants of arms and promises of land. But by 1993 losses of territory and livestock to the SPLA and the need for secure access to grazing persuaded the Misseriya to enter talks with the Nuba SPLA Commander, Yusuf Kuwa. Three accords were signed in Buram (1993), Regifi (1995) and Kain (1996).

²⁵ The ferocity of these attacks occurred at a time when the SPLM/A was distracted by the split with the Nasir faction, leaving the SPLM/A in the Nuba Mountains isolated.

²⁶ In 2004 there were estimated to be some 626,000 Nuba IDPs residing in the GoS areas of Sudan.

²⁷ One of the biggest offensives against the Nuba in 1997 was under the command of a Nuba officer, Brigadier Mohamed Ismail Kakum.

These prescribed the cessation of military action, freedom of movement, the establishment of a committee to settle future disputes, and – remarkably – the sharing of military information (Mohamed Suliman 1999). The agreements led to the opening of trade routes and the establishment of markets. But the Khartoum Government sought to sabotage the agreements by suborning or imprisoning and sometimes killing community leaders on both sides. It also managed to rally some Baggara behind its programme of Islamization and Arabization. Difficulties in communication between troops scattered throughout the region, the isolation of the SPLM/A forces, and an enduring legacy of mistrust between the Nuba and Baggara prevented these agreements from being more widely adopted.

Throughout much of the 1990s, international efforts to lift the humanitarian blockade and establish space for humanitarian operations in the Nuba Mountains were largely left to a handful of international NGOs working in defiance of the Government in SPLM/A held areas of the mountains. An innovative move was the creation of a human rights monitoring regime in SPLA-held areas of the Mountains by African Rights (African Rights 1995a). It seems likely that the awareness of international standards and the discipline this instilled in the SPLM/A forces helped avoid the kind of retribution seen between tribal-based militias in the South.

On the Government side, in the second half of the 1990s, UNDP embarked upon a rather different kind of programme, one that also claimed to be promoting peace, but that cleaved to an older model of development. It proposed a “developmental solution to Sudan’s war” through poverty alleviation (Bradbury 1998). The centrepiece of UNDP’s strategy was the creation of Area Rehabilitation Schemes (ARS) in war-affected areas in the North. These were adaptations of Area Development Schemes (ADS) that had been established and supported by UNDP outside Sudan’s war zones. The immediate objective of the ARS, with their focus on agricultural development and food security, was to “reduce dependence on emergency assistance in areas affected by civil strife” (UNDP 1996).

In South Kordofan, Kadugli district was the site of one such ARS. The ARS proposed to settle displaced Nuba in “peace villages”, with mechanised agriculture a core component of the project. Given the history of mechanised farming in the Nuba Mountains and the role “peace villages” have played elsewhere in the war, and in other countries where governments have sought to control civilian populations, the project at best appeared misconceived. The developmentalist rhetoric disguises the political nature of such projects. In “peace through development” poverty is identified as the cause of conflict. Conflict resolution is reduced to a technical issue, something to be dealt with by the management of land and water and productive activities. The political dimensions of resource allocation are not dealt with. In terms of natural resources, the Nuba Mountains is one of the richer areas of Sudan. The cause of conflict has not been poverty and lack of resources, but the state policy of securing for itself access to and control of agrarian and mineral wealth. Development and poverty-alleviation programmes like the ARS that ignore the issues of unequal land tenure, lack of political entitlements and lack of legal protection leave the population exposed to what has been termed “structural violence” (Galtung 1990). In this way such programmes are actually complicit in the dynamics of the war.

Another dimension of this approach has been capacity building of Sudanese in conflict management skills. UNDP, for example, in partnership with the German Development Services (DED) contracted the UK organisation Responding to Conflict in 1998, to train staff working in the Kadugli ARS in conflict-handling skills (Fisher 2001). The aim was to ensure that the ARS work was conflict-sensitive, by adopting a “Do No Harm” approach, as promoted by the work of Mary Anderson (Anderson 1999). The impact of this particular

project is unclear, but training by Responding to Conflict and others has produced a cadre of Sudanese trained in conflict analysis and mediation. These newly acquired skills have been applied in the Nuba Mountains in various ways. UNDP, for example, is trying to incorporate such skills training into conventional development projects, such as through water committees to improve resource management (Interview with Mariam A. Ibrahim Ali, 18 January 2004). Another example of where these new learned skills have been exercised is in the mediation of the conflict between the Dar Bakhota and the Birgid and Awlad Hillal clans of the Hawazma (see below).

In the late 1990s, political changes in the North created an environment which was more conducive for agencies to pursue peace-building activities. The 1998 US bombing of the el-Shifa factory in Khartoum illustrated the weakness of the Government in the face of external military threat and it began a process of accommodation with donors. Oil exports, starting in 1999, enabled the partial payment of loans, reinstatement by the IMF and a resumption of EU aid that had been suspended since 1990. Diplomatic relations with neighbouring Eritrea and Uganda were restored. At the same time the NIF's grip on power was weakened by an internal power struggle during which Hassan al-Turabi tried to amend the constitution and restrict the powers of the President. In the South the Wunlit agreement between the Dinka and Nuer indicated a renewed drive for Southern unity, and by the end of 1999 the SSDF had defected from the government coalition.

Against this background, the IGAD Partners Forum commissioned a "Planning for Peace" (PfP) study (IGAD Partners' Forum 2002b). This involved a broad-based consultation in the North and South that revealed, unsurprisingly, a desire for peace, and proposed a multi-level peace-building strategy for Sudan. The PfP process was influential in defining the approach that UNDP took towards peace building and development, particularly in the Nuba Mountains through the Nuba Mountains Programme (NMP) (see below). The long term aim of this was to create conditions for return of displaced populations.

Another actor that became involved in peace building in the Nuba Mountains was UNICEF. It took a slightly different approach, being more concerned with the delivery of services to war affected children and women. However, like UNDP, the framework remained a developmental one. Data produced by UNICEF's 2000 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey showed that poverty was worst in those states affected by war (Federal Ministry of Health and others 2000). Its concern was to protect the delivery of services in war affected areas. Its approach was to recognise that there are many conflicts in Sudan which have their origins in local issues (such as access to resources, mechanised agriculture, administrative reorganisation) and that addressing these conflicts would protect the delivery of services. In the Nuba Mountains UNICEF used this approach in supporting the resolution of conflicts in Lagowa and in Dilling.

The Lagowa agreements

In 1989, in Lagowa, in Western Kordofan, a large group of Nuba civilians was massacred by a group of Misseriya Zurug who had been armed by the Government (African Rights 1995a). The circumstances behind the massacre are unclear, but it may have been fuelled by local administrative changes that would have impacted on the boundaries of Dar Nuba and Dar Misseriya. In 2001 UNICEF supported two reconciliation meetings: in Lagowa between the Misseriya and the Nuba Tullushi, Kamda, Tima, and the Dajo; and in Keilak between the Jubarat, Matanin and Salamat clans of Misseriya Humr and the Kanga, Korongo and Lima Nuba. This was followed a year later by a peace festival in Keilak (Wassara 2002b). UNICEF justified their involvement there by the fact that Keilak is a remote area, and one of the

poorest localities in Kordofan. Tullishi was a stronghold of the SPLM/A for the duration of the war.

UNICEF worked with the local government Peace and Resettlement Administration office in el Fula to persuade the West Kordofan State Government to allow the meetings to happen. The main obstacle came from the military, reportedly out of concern for the security of oil exploration in the area. (Interview with Samson Wassara, 23 January 2004)

In 2001, as a result of these meetings, a compact was signed between Nuba and Misseriya. This was followed in 2002 by a meeting in Tullushi. During the reconciliation talks, emphasis was placed on the renewal of old alliances or covenants (*suerenei*) between the Nuba and Misseriya, and the granting of powers to local leaders of the kind they had enjoyed in the days of Native Administration. The erosion of the power of community leaders was blamed on the proliferation of firearms and militarization of youth. The meeting agreed to a number of measures:

- The formation of a court to deal with cross-border disputes;
- Periodic conferences in appropriate seasons;
- The creation of a youth committee;
- Disarmament;
- Peace building through provision of services.

In Tullushi an agreement was made to open up nomad migration routes (*marahel*), to establish a market in Ras el Fil, and to rehabilitate water and educational facilities. The reconciliation process was strengthened at the same time with a meeting of women from ten villages in the Lagowa locality. Few details of these meetings are available, but it is recorded that there was discussion of the varied interests existing within government and the different positions taken by the local Peace Advisory Council and the military. There is no recorded reference to the Lagowa massacre in the talks or to issues of justice and impunity.

Dar Bakhota and Birgid/ Awlad Hillal reconciliation conference, March 2002

UNICEF's second initiative took place in Dilling. In 2002, UNICEF supported a Sudanese NGO, BADYA (Centre for Integrated Development Services) that is attached to the peace studies department of the University of Dilling, to facilitate the reconciliation of two clans of the Hawazma. The dispute threatened to escalate into violence at a sensitive time in the Nuba Mountains and which would have threatened UNICEF's ability to deliver services. The dispute involved a number of issues including land ownership, administrative reorganization, competition between agriculturalists and nomads and political interference by central government.

The dispute between the Dar Bakhota and Birgid/Awlad Hilal concerned the right of the latter to form a new *omodiya*. An *omodiya* is a geographical area over which a clan (or group of clans) exercises jurisdiction through the offices of its chief, the *omda*, who has administrative and judicial responsibilities, including the collection of taxes for local government and supervising the payment of *diya*. In the new structure of administration instituted by GoS since 1989, a number of *omodiyas* make up an *amara*. The Dar Bakhota and Birgid/Awlad Hillal both came under the same *amir*. The Birgid/ Awlad Hilal are agriculturalists and the Dar Bakhota are mostly pastoralists.

In 1990, the Birgid/Awlad Hillal proposed to form their own *omodiya*, claiming rights to land in twenty villages. The Dar Bakhota argued that the land belonged to them historically. The proposal lay unresolved until 2001, when a new state governor (*wali*) approved the creation of a Birgid/Awlad Hilal *omodiya* under the *Amir* of the Ajang Nuba. The Dar Bakhota objected to what they viewed as a political decision and a way for the ruling party to cultivate political support in a traditional Umma party's constituency, rather than one based on customary law of the Hawazma, and threatened to forcibly evict the Birgid from their land. It is said that the Ajang *Amir* also had an interest in strengthening his *omodiya*, which was affected by the dwindling Nuba population. All of this would have placed the Bakhota in direct confrontation with the Nuba and, given the spread of small arms, might have escalated into violent conflict.

Mediation was undertaken by a committee comprising a paramount chief, *Amir* Osman Bilal, who was also president of the State Conflict Resolution Committee, (also known as the Popular Forum Committee for Conflict Resolution of South Kordofan State) based in Kadugli, and was supported by members of Dilling authorities and Badya. The mediation process combined for the first time, it was reported, modern "scientific" conflict transformation methods and "traditional" methods for conflict resolution (BCIDS 2002a; BCIDS 2002b; BCIDS 2002c). The mediation was largely successful with the Birgid/Awlad agreeing to drop their proposal.

The mediation had two striking features. First, although the local administration was involved, the facilitator was a private NGO collaborating with traditional leaders. This is a role that previously would have been discharged by government officials. However, the Government was perhaps no longer able to do this, not just because of the lack of skills, but also because it was politically compromised by favouring one side.

Second, it is recorded that the dispute revealed tensions between native administration and Government, between Government and the Umma party, and within Government, a reminder that even under the current regime, the Government is not monolithic. Reportedly the "most aggressive" people came from the ruling party and that the chief of internal security had to warn the Secretary General of the Congress Party to desist from obstructive behaviour.

The dispute between the Dar Bakhota and Birgid/Awlad Hillal is an example of a local political dispute that is not directly related to the civil war; most other conflicts in the Nuba Mountains became progressively entwined with the wider war. UNICEF's ability to engage with this local dispute was possible because it was tangential to the war, and because the political environment in the Nuba Mountains was changing, leading to an internationally brokered ceasefire to the war in 2002.

Humanitarian Diplomacy and the Ceasefire Agreement

In 1999, after a decade in which the Government had denied humanitarian access to the Nuba Mountains, high-level negotiations between the UN and the GoS resulted in an Inter-agency assessment mission to GoS and SPLM/A controlled areas of the Mountains. The outcome was a recommendation for a multi-sectoral, multi-agency rehabilitation programme outside of the OLS framework. This led to the creation in early 2000 of the Nuba Mountains Programme (NMP), an initiative of the then UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator under whose office and leadership it fell. Although the NMP was endorsed by both warring parties, it perpetuated UNDP's approach of peace through poverty alleviation and its implementation was hindered by the stalemate over the issue of access to SPLM/A-controlled areas. Consequently it was resisted by the SPLM/A Nuba and international

organisations working on their side of the lines. It therefore did not take off and agencies refocused their efforts on advocacy directed at Western diplomats, to lift the humanitarian blockade, in the context of a growing food security crisis in SPLM/A-controlled areas. This helped to catalyse diplomatic interest, but it took a change in US foreign policy to bring about a cease-fire between the GoS and the SPLM/A.

The ceasefire agreement in the Nuba Mountains, which was proposed by US Special Envoy Senator John Danforth in 2001, had a dual humanitarian and political purpose; first as a response to a deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Nuba Mountains²⁸, and second as one of four confidence-building measures proposed by Danforth to test whether the GoS and the SPLM/A were serious about negotiating a settlement to the war (Danforth 2002). The ceasefire was also a test of the international community's commitment.

Part of this commitment involved funding the Joint Military Commission/Joint Monitoring Mission (JMC/JMM) established to monitor the ceasefire, and to assist in the disengagement and redeployment of combatants and the provision of humanitarian aid to the Nuba Mountains. The JMC was a civilian-military operation staffed and resourced by an informal group of nations, known as the Friends of Nuba²⁹. The monitoring of the ceasefire was undertaken through a participatory monitoring mechanism, which comprised unarmed observer teams with three members: one from the international community, one from the GoS and one from the SPLM/A.

The CFA brought a reduction of violence, a lifting of the humanitarian blockade and an improvement in the food security situation. Since the ceasefire was signed, no serious violations have been registered. According to one report, "the sheer presence of the JMC in the field has limited the once systematic human rights violations by government authorities." (NMPACT 2002a) Better security facilitated people's access to land, and increased food production and trade. The same report asserted that increased security had weakened the authority of government-appointed leaders (*sheikhs, omdas and amirs or mekks*), who were responsible for, among other things, supporting government military operations and helping to regroup rural populations into Peace Villages (ibid.).

The longer term impact of the ceasefire was more equivocal. First, it appeared that the parties had different perceptions of its significance (Jenatsch 2003). While the GoS referred to it as a peace agreement, the SPLM/A considered it a ceasefire only. The ceasefire was agreed on humanitarian grounds and, as specified in the Danforth report, as a confidence building measure, not as a political solution.

In fact the CFA was poorly negotiated by the SPLM/A Nuba. It brought them a reprieve from the war, but few guarantees. Initial plans to upgrade the ceasefire into a local peace agreement did not enjoy the support of the parties, who deferred political dialogue to the Machakos talks. This meant that the process defining the political future of the Nuba Mountains was formally disconnected from the CFA. The benefits of the ceasefire were also uneven. The administrative centres of Kadugli and Kauda, where most NGOs and skilled returnees have settled, enjoyed more economic benefits of the ceasefire than the border areas. The normalisation process tended to benefit the strategic interests of the Government, by integrating and absorbing the territories lost to the SPLM/A. Crucially, the main humanitarian consequence of the war — displacement — still prevails. People remain displaced, especially within the Nuba Mountains, often a few hours' walk away from their settlements of origin (NMPACT 2002b:_9). The poorest displaced are generally on the SPLM/A side — being people who have been directly affected by the war and have not been

²⁸ Report of the Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to the SPLM Areas of the Nuba Mountains, 19th September, 2001.

²⁹ The "*Friends of Nuba*" comprises the governments of Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA.

able to return to their pre-war farms, and are still farming in and near the hills – and those people living in Peace Villages in GoS areas, who do not have access to farmland (ibid.). The ceasefire, as such, has reinforced a negative situation.

The increased security that came with the ceasefire paradoxically risked exacerbating new occasions of conflict. Such risks involved: pastoral groups resuming their migrations through the mountains; mechanised farming schemes resuming on the plains, and communal tensions over land as displaced returned home in large numbers.

Cross-line dialogue

But, although the ceasefire did not lead directly to a political dispensation, it did at least create space for other local peace processes. NMPACT, UNDP and the JMC all describe interventions to encourage and facilitate cross-line dialogue³⁰, though it is not always clear how successful these were. Markets, which are important venues for the interaction of populations from GoS and SPLM/A controlled areas, were a particular focus, and cultural activities like wrestling matches (a traditional Nuba pastime) were encouraged between people living across the political divide. Formal dialogue between Nuba and Baggara and Shanabla was limited (see below). It would appear that the SPLM/A did not encourage this to happen, perhaps because the normalisation of relations would have weakened their leverage at the negotiation table. In the words of a member of the NRRDO³¹:

The JMC thought the Nuba would just get on together. Their approach is always to bring people together as one entity. But to do this is political. ...The Nuba can't easily come together again, because we cannot agree with the NIF through the JMC. Tomorrow we will face genocide again. We appreciate the need to solve community problems but cannot solve the problems at the government level.

The Kauda All Nuba Conference

One impact of the CFA was the holding of an all-Nuba conference, which had been under discussion among the Nuba for several years. Called by the SPLM/A, and permitted by the GoS, the All Nuba Conference of 2-5 December 2002, brought Nuba together from both sides of the conflict, including representatives of the three Nuba political parties.

Although the conference included Nuba from both sides of the political divide, it was not a peace meeting per se, but a political meeting that aimed to generate agreement on a united political platform for the Nuba. It proposed a common approach to the IGAD peace talks, and delegated the SPLM/A to negotiate the future status of the Nuba, as the only means by which the Nuba could gain self-determination. Although it was described by its organisers as a "people-led political process" and the large number of people involved lent it popular legitimacy, the meeting was shaped by the conference organisers to a greater extent than a typical people-to-people conference (All Nuba Conference Chairing Committee 2002b).

³⁰ Interviews, Khartoum & Kadugli, 2004, January.

³¹ Interviewed in Nairobi 2004, January.

The conference resolutions included, among others:

- Acknowledgement of the uniqueness of the Nuba;
- A demand for self-determination and an autonomous representative government in the Nuba Mountains;
- The right to religious freedom, regional autonomy and control of economic concessions and land rights;
- The revival of dialogue between Nuba and Baggara.

The proceedings of the Kauda meeting were not just more structured than people-to-people meetings in the South, they were also more explicitly linked to the political negotiations in Kenya. Senior SPLM/A leaders attended the Conference, including John Garang, and fundamental issue of self-determination, human rights and land rights were discussed. The conference resolutions proclaimed that there can never be a comprehensive peace settlement in Sudan without recognition that the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Abyei are integral parts of the SPLM/A-held territory. They also assert the right to self-determination, multi-party democracy and respect for human rights as being conditions for any sustainable comprehensive peace settlement." (ibid.: 9)

The All Nuba Conference was followed a year later by the All Nuba Women Conference also held in Kauda. With participants from different women's political and humanitarian organizations on both sides and Diaspora the agenda was largely the same.

Nuba-Baggara dialogue

One resolution of the All Nuba Conference was for dialogue between the Nuba and Baggara. In 2003, Baggara and Nuba representatives met twice in Nairobi during the IGAD negotiations on the three contested areas. The representatives openly expressed their grievances and views on the root causes of the conflict. There was an agreement to hold further meetings to develop a strategy for peaceful coexistence (NRRDO 2004). These have not yet happened.

NMPACT: Peace through development

Following the ceasefire the UNDP Nuba Mountains Programme was replaced by the Nuba Mountains Programme Advancing Conflict Transformation (NMPACT). Although still administered by UNDP, NMPACT was very different to the NMP. It was the product of lengthy discussions between several international agencies and the humanitarian wings of the warring parties, and comprised a collection of integrated cross-line projects, implemented by organisations subscribing to agreed principles of engagement within a structured coordination framework (UNDP 2002c). The principles included the sustainability of programmes, national ownership, the equitability of interventions across the political divide, and minimizing harm. NMPACT, which was endorsed by GoS's Humanitarian Assistance Commission (HAC) and by the SRRA, was the only joint programme ever agreed between the two warring parties in the Sudan, while hostilities continued between them.

NMPACT sought to exploit the ceasefire, and the period before the CPA was signed, by deepening the analysis of the war in the Nuba Mountains and maximising the opportunity for a Nuba 'voice'. Southern-based agencies emphasised greater equality of humanitarian access and doing least harm, in an effort to rectify what they perceived as a bias in the

approach of northern based agencies in the Nuba Mountains. Northern agencies, which tended to take the government line on the Nuba Mountains, remained ambivalent about NMPACT.

NMPACT incorporated elements of the concept of “peace through development”. But, it also appeared to endorse the political aspirations of those Nuba demanding greater autonomy. The programme proposal notes that “conflict transformation”³² and “grassroots peace building”³³ will underpin the approach of NMPACT. This will be achieved through efforts to “reduce disparities, alleviate poverty and develop the opportunities for all sections of Nuba society to engage in a genuine process of open dialogue concerning their political future” (ibid.: 4). In the goals of NMPACT, peace building is linked to self reliance. One aim is

[t]o enhance the Nuba people’s capacity for self reliance within a sustained process of conflict transformation guided by the aspirations, priorities and analyses of the Nuba people themselves (ibid.: 2).

NMPACT created a cross-line framework that enabled Nuba and Nuba and Nuba and non-Nuba dialogue to happen, and used aid to foster dialogue between the warring parties. A key early initiative was a cross-line baseline survey. This produced a useful document that included an inventory of needs, a preliminary assessment of the impact of the CFA and identified key structural issues that needed to be addressed, including the matter of land tenure. (NMPACT 2002b). This baseline was followed by two NMPACT Partners’ Forum meetings organised, at Um Sirdiba in July 2002 and at Elbati in November 2002. The fora were attended by representatives from HAC, SRRRA, Friends of the Nuba Mountains, UN agencies, NGOs (both international and northern Sudanese) and the JMM. The Forum in Um Sirdiba was the first occasion for representatives of HAC and SRRRA to meet on Sudanese territory. It provided an opportunity to initiate dialogue between the two parties around issues of common concern for the implementation of the NMPACT framework.

Both the NMPACT proposal and cross-line survey identify the need for grassroots peace building and conflict transformation. However, just as in the South, it is apparent from the analysis that the authors do not think that the grassroots is where the violence is generated. While local social tensions were undoubtedly contributory factors in local fighting, these were instrumentalised by the warring parties in pursuit of their broader military goals. The NMPACT project document also recognises that the conflict requires a political solution: “A significant proportion of the [Nuba] people would not accept peace without unambiguous commitments for a negotiated settlement to secure political representation, equitable access to resources, and opportunities and the right to freedom of identity and self-expression. Otherwise the causes of the war would remain and any cessation of conflict would be short lived.” (ibid.: 6).

The NMPACT reached two other important conclusions. First, that the main thrust of the international community in the region should be to assist in the return of locally displaced people to their home areas, by creating a safe environment. In other words, security rather than services was the real need. (This corresponds with UNDP’s and the UN Country Team’s interest in the sustainable return of IDPs and the stabilisation of populations.) The second conclusion involved the need to address land tenure issues through the revision of local laws and national legislation. As a consequence of the cross-line survey, UNDP, USAID and others sponsored a study on land tenure in the Nuba Mountains.

³² Conflict transformation is described as the negative to positive trend in situations of conflict.

³³ Peace building is described as a set of activities or interventions intended to restore relationships disturbed by conflict.

Land and natural resources

The All Nuba Conference concluded that, "Land rights for the Nuba people are a key to any sustainable peace agreement." (All Nuba Conference Chairing Committee 2002a). This is perhaps the clearest statement to emerge from a local peace meeting of the limitations that such meetings labour under. The basic issue is one that can only be resolved at the level of a national agreement. The land issue both unites and divides the Nuba. Some Nuba were more affected than others by the appropriation of land for mechanised farming. The Koalib areas near to the Habila scheme, for example, were more affected and became a stronghold of the SPLM/A. As one Nuba explained:

Some Nuba, especially around Koalib, took up arms because of the land issue. Other Nuba became more aware of the land issue since they took up arms.

The study of land and natural resources funded by USAID and UNDP is among the most relevant piece of research to emerge from the field of peace-building programmes in Sudan, in that it comprehensively addresses the local "underlying cause of the war" (Harragin and Gullick 2003).

The study argues that arbitrary expropriation of land for mechanised farming before the war progressively confined Nuba to the most infertile areas of the Mountains and that this had been, "one of the main factors that encouraged the Nuba to take up arms". "Without a recognition of and resolution of this grievance," it argues, "it will be impossible to find lasting peace in the Nuba Mountains." (ibid.: 5) It also concludes that the CFA map "should not be used as the basis for dividing up agricultural resources in South Kordofan in an equitable way" (ibid.: 8), as none of the SPLA areas included fertile land. Like the later report of the Abyei Boundaries Commission, the Nuba land and resource study recognises that local detail is the key to a national agreement.

Oil

As in other parts of Sudan, the impact of oil appears to have been largely unrecognised or underestimated by aid agencies working in the Nuba Mountains, even by the Nuba themselves. The discovery of commercial reserves of oil in Heglig in the 1990s gave the Nuba Mountains significantly greater strategic importance to the government. The impact of further oil strikes in the Nuba Mountains themselves would make oil potentially of greater importance than agricultural production. Yet in the record of aid programmes in the Nuba Mountains there is only one mention made of the potential impact of oil. This is in a UNICEF report on the peace meetings in Lagowa. Oil, it is suggested, is an issue that may yet eclipse land as a *casus belli*. A government official likens it to the story of the tree of the hyena, *shegera marafaheen* (Wassara 2002d). This was a tree which humans took over as a resting place, leaving no shade for its original owner, the hyena. If the oil issue comes into play, he suggested, rightly or wrongly, the Nuba might once again rebel and go back to the bush.

Abyei and the North-South peace process

Background to the conflict

Abyei, in the southern part of West Kordofan State, is one of three areas, referred to as “marginalised areas” that were the subject of separate negotiations by the parties to the IGAD talks. The three areas – Abyei, the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile – all lie in what has become known as the transitional zone, an area extending several degrees of latitude each side of the frontier between North and South Sudan. Abyei was the subject of a different protocol to that agreed for the other two regions. A boundaries commission mandated under the CPA to delineate the boundaries of Abyei in July 2005, but leaders of one of the ethnic groups dwelling in the area, the Misseriya Arabs have rejected the ruling, as, apparently, has President Beshir.

Located to the north of the River Kiir or Bahr el Arab, Abyei is a Ngok Dinka area also used for grazing by the cattle-herding Misseriya Arabs. The area is rich in natural resources. A major tributary of the Nile, known to the Dinka as Kiir and to Northerners as the Bahr el Arab flows through it; there is extensive grazing land and, most recently, the beginnings of oilfield development. Traditional Dinka lands stretch northwards from Abyei³⁴, while the annual transhumant routes (*murhaal*) of the Misseriya pass through this area to the *toic* (grassland) south of the river Kiir, where the territory of the Ngok marches with that of the Twic Dinka. Historically the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya have lived in a relationship of dynamic tension, characterised by competition over water and pasture and recurrent episodes of abduction and enslavement. In the past these groups developed institutions and mechanisms for the mediation and the prevention of conflicts, including annual meetings of tribal leaders held under the authority of the government.

Prior to the war, the Chevron oil company sunk test wells around Abyei, but these were not developed. The Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) consortium now holds the concessions to the area and since the presence of oil was confirmed in 2002 it has been rapidly developing the infrastructure for its extraction and export.

While the Nuba and people of Southern Blue Nile have historically been part of the North and, arguably, have stronger religious and cultural ties to the North, the Ngok Dinka of Abyei are ethnically and culturally part of the Nilotic complex of the South. However, in 1905, for administrative and security reasons³⁵, the Condominium administration placed Abyei in Kordofan rather than Bahr el Ghazal. At independence, the Ngok Dinka leadership declined the option of being incorporated back into Bahr el Ghazal and the South, arguing that their collective interests would be better protected by remaining in the North. That decision proved costly. In 1965, during the first civil war, when Dinka joined the Southern insurgency, the Ngok of Abyei were subject to military raids and forced displacement. In the two decades that followed raids on villages and cattle rustling became frequent practice. Peace conferences held under government auspices failed to tackle the root causes.

The 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, which ended the first war, provided the people of Abyei with the right to choose by a referendum whether to remain in the North or to join the South. There was also an attempt to address the problem of resource scarcity by building

³⁴ Some Dinka tradition holds that their land stretched north of Muglad.

³⁵ Ostensibly to protect the Dinka people from slave raiding.

of a chain of water yards between Muglad and Abyei, along the migratory routes of the Misseriya. The failure to honour the Agreement led to a resumption of guerrilla activities in the late 1970s, a portent of the emergence of the SPLM/A.

The conflict around Abyei escalated after 1985, when the SPLA attacked Gardud in West Kordofan. The government responded by arming tribal militias drawn from two Baggara Arab groups; the Misseriya Humr of West Kordofan and the Rizeigat of South Darfur. These became known as *murahaleen*. At this time the interests of the Baggara, who had suffered heavy losses of livestock during the 1984/85 Sahelian drought and whose grazing lands were squeezed by state-sponsored mechanized farming schemes, coincided with the Government's military interests. The *murahaleen* raids on Dinka villages in Bahr el Ghazal and South Kordofan, were intended to deny the SPLM/A a civilian support base, who at the time were unable to provide protection for the Dinka populations in Bahr el Ghazal and southern Kordofan. Consequently Abyei became a focus for war and famine-afflicted Twic Dinka from the South. In 1988, as a result of displacement and drought, an estimated 30,000 people died in Abyei and other garrison towns in southern Kordofan, out of perhaps 250,000 in Bahr el Ghazal and Kordofan (Keen 1994). The repercussions from this famine led to the formation of Operation Lifeline Sudan.

By the late 1980s the SPLM/A had gained sufficient control of areas south of the River Kiir to be able establish a *cordon sanitaire* along the river to control the raiding. Limited trading relations between the Dinka and some of the Misseriya and Rizeigat were re-established. The Misseriya regained access to dry season pasture along the Bahr el Arab, while Dinka civilians were able to move in and out of South Kordofan and South Darfur. However, the 1991 split within the SPLM/A weakened its military capacity in Bahr el Ghazal and the region was again subject to intermittent raiding by the *murahaleen* and the Government-backed forces of former SPLA commander Kerubino Kuanyin Bol. It took until the late 1990s for the SPLM/A to restore a measure of control in the area and to pose a significant threat to the government garrison in Abyei and the Misseriya's southern migrations.

The consequences of the war for the Ngok Dinka have been severe. By the late 1980s, rural Abyei north of the river Kiir was virtually deserted. The Dinka villages around Abyei had been destroyed and most of the Ngok population had moved away. The Ngok appear to have made a tactical retreat, a large proportion of the civilian population having moved out of the area further into the North. (Educated Dinka from Abyei occupy positions both in the Government administration and in the SPLM/A.) The remaining Ngok herds, meanwhile, were moved south of the Kiir River to the SPLA-controlled Twic Dinka areas of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, where migrant Ngok still coexist with Twic communities. The Dinka population of Abyei town today consists of Ngok Dinka, the remnants of the Twic Dinka population displaced from Northern Bahr el Ghazal in the famine of the late 1980s, and Ruweng Dinka displaced from oil areas in Upper Nile. With so few people remaining in the rural areas of Abyei the Ngok were in danger of completely losing access to their land.

People-to-people talks in Abyei

Throughout the 1990s there were a series of informal peace agreements between Dinka and Baggara communities in northern Bahr el Ghazal, which temporarily halted hostilities, re-opened migration routes and access to water and pasture. After 1999, agreements were reached to establish a number of markets across northern Bahr el Ghazal. Here Dinka, Misseriya and Rizeigat met and traded (see table below). Known as "peace markets" (*souk al-salama*) and overseen by peace committees that comprised traders from Dinka and Misseriya or Rizeigat communities, these markets increased the informal dialogue between

the Misseriya, the Dinka and the SPLM/A. During the year 2000 informal talks took place between the SPLM/A authorities, and Dinka and Misseriya leaders south of the river over access to grazing and the security of people and property. These talks gave some recognition to the growing authority of the SPLM/A in northern Bahr el Ghazal. It is arguable that the peace markets, which have now grown into substantial rural commercial centres, did as much to prepare the ground for normalisation of relations at the local level as did externally-sponsored peace talks.

Peace Markets in Northern Bahr-al-Ghazal and Abyei

Market	Location	Stakeholders
Abien Dau	Twic County	Misseriya, Twic and Ngok
Warawar	Aweil East	Dinka and Misseriya
Gok Machar	Aweil West	Dinka and Rizeigat
Turalei	Abyei	Ngok and Misseriya
Annet	Abyei	Twic, Ngok, Nuer and Misseriya

Source: Intermedia NCG (2003: 18)

Throughout the war, despite the conflict between Baggara tribal militias and the SPLA, Abyei remained a gateway for Dinka and Misseriya people to move north and south of the river. SPLM/A harassment of Misseriya migrations and attacks on Abyei had repercussions for Dinka in Abyei itself. In December 2000, the SPLM/A raided cattle from the surrounding area and briefly entered Abyei town. The SPLA subsequently changed their tactic of taking Misseriya cattle and, on one occasion at least, killed many of them. Reprisals by the Misseriya and GoS military disrupted the movement of civilians across the river. This prompted the Ngok and the Misseriya leadership in Abyei town to form a peace committee to initiate discussions with SPLM/A commanders and Dinka leadership south of the river. In January 2001, discussions with the SPLM/A secured the release of Misseriya cattle and an agreement on the free movement of civilians across the Kiir.

These talks came to wider attention after a meeting with the IGAD Partner's Forum Planning for Peace Grassroots Assessment team in February 2001 (Koop 2001). In April 2001 the peace committee, led by Ngok Paramount Chief, Kuol Deng Majok, held meetings with the SPLM/A in Akur south of the Kiir. The meeting, which included representatives of the Ngok and Twic Dinka and Misseriya, produced a signed agreement covering access to pasture and the protection of people and property (see table below).

From May to August 2001, a rainy period during which the Misseriya migrate northwards, there were signs that the agreement was holding. Various incidents were resolved without inciting hostilities, individuals causing disturbances were disciplined and women and children abducted, and missing cattle were returned. This encouraged the peace committee to extend the process further.

With support from UNDP and the Netherlands Embassy in Khartoum, the talks between the Ngok and the Misseriya, which, as the fame of the Wunlit conference spread, came to be

labelled as a “people-to-people” process, was widened with a series of meetings between the Abyei Peace Committee and Misseriya leaders in Muglad and other villages in West Kordofan. These meetings included Misseriya leaders closely involved with the *murahaleen*. Another written agreement was signed, with commitments by the Misseriya to end the activities of the *murahaleen*; reaffirmation of the rights of Dinka and Misseriya to grazing and water; encouragement to continue negotiations with the SPLM/A; and support for the resettlement of Ngok Dinka in and around Abyei.

Only certain sections of the Misseriya were involved in the Abyei process. The Misseriya, historically, are a congeries of various cattle-herding Arab groups. They comprise two main sections – the Humr and Zurug – which further divide into sections (see table of sections and subsections of Misseriya Humr, below). It is the ‘Ajaira, from around Babanusa, Muglad and El Meiram who were involved in the talks, and within the ‘Ajaira, the particular subsections of Awlad Kamil, Awlad Khimil, Awlad Umran, and Fayareen. The Felaita from El Fula, were not directly involved. The migrations of the ‘Ajaira pass east and west of the railway and through Abyei to and from the South, and the ‘Ajaira were, correspondingly, the main recruiting ground for the *murahaleen*. The Awlad Kamil subsection, which reportedly has the largest number of cattle, and controls the trade to Muglad, was particularly important in the negotiations, especially as the Misseriya *nazir* (equivalent of the Dinka paramount chief) comes from this section. For the Ngok and other Dinka from Bahr el Ghazal there was hope that the agreements with the ‘Ajaira would curb the activities of the *murahaleen*.

Sections and subsections of Misseriya Humr³⁶

<i>Felaita</i>					<i>‘Ajaira</i>					
Mataniin	Awlad Surur	Zyud Zailid	Jubernat	Salamaat	Fayareen	Awlad Kamil	Awlad Khimil	Awlad Umran	Fadaliya	Mazargna

International support for programmes of conflict transformation

By 2002, the apparent success of the peace process began to generate interest among international agencies. The Abyei dialogue served as an encouragement to wider talks between GoS and the SPLM/A. Coming soon after the 1999 Wunlit agreement, the Abyei process fitted closely the model for grassroots initiatives envisaged by the IGAD Planning for Peace framework (IGAD Partners' Forum 2002a; 2002b). In September 2001, high-ranking UN official Francis Mading Deng, himself from Abyei, encouraged multi-agency support to the Abyei process, by donating the money he had received as part of the Rome Peace and Humanitarian Award.

In January 2002, efforts were made to strengthen the process further with a well-publicized convention in Abyei, attended by the *Wali* (Governor) of Abyei Province and international observers from the UN and the EC. The meeting was also attended by

³⁶ Source: Duffield and others 2000: 158. The sections shaded are clans whose members were those principally involved in raiding in Bahr el Ghazal. These same sections have been involved in the peace markets and in the Abyei peace process.

members of the Misseriya Felaita, thus extending recognition of the process beyond the 'Ajaira section. The agreement signed in Abyei is short on detail, simply declaring the intention of the parties to cease hostilities, live together and cooperate in the rehabilitation of the region. Nevertheless by mid-20002, the Awlad Kamil were reporting that they had lost no cattle on their migration to and from the grazing grounds on the Bahr-el-Arab. The numbers of Dinka crossing the river from the north was also reported to be increasing. This encouraged international agencies to support what was now termed the "transformation" of the Abyei conflict, by assisting with the resettlement of displaced communities in Abyei.

The positive response to the Abyei process was also encouraged by the signing of the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Agreement in January 2002, which had ended hostilities and generated spontaneous cross-line movement in the Nuba Mountains. An Abyei Task Force, comprising UN agencies, NGOs and the GoS was established to respond to opportunities arising in Abyei. Formed at around the same time as NMPACT, another coordination framework, entitled Programme Advancing Conflict Transformation in Abyei (PACTA), was proposed to support the peace process in Abyei and to assist with the resettlement of displaced in rural villages (UNDP 2002d).

For UNDP, the resettlement of displaced populations is a key element to peace-building. Forced displacement has been a key characteristic of the war in Sudan. For international agencies, and the UNDP in particular, the possibility of resettling IDPs was therefore a good measure of a peaceful environment. The interests of UNDP clearly converged with those of the Ngok, who probably realized that to retain any ownership of the land and authority in the area they had to repopulate the area.

The PACTA framework was discussed with agencies operating from the South in Twic County and other parts of northern Bahr el Ghazal. They agreed to the principles of engagement. These were: a unitary programme; practices of Do No Harm (see Anderson 1999); the promotion of human rights; self-reliance; and flexibility (UNDP 2002d). Likewise, the approach adopted by PACTA specified peace-building through poverty alleviation and development and the promotion of dialogue between the Dinka and Misseriya. As a framework for coordination, based on an agreed set of principles, Pact and NMPACT had some similar elements. PACTA differed from NMPACT in not being in cross-line initiative, due to a lack of buy-in from the parties on both sides of the border. And, unlike in the Nuba Mountains, there was no ceasefire agreement on which to build such an effort.

It was also recognised that for the Abyei process to be sustained it needed to be linked to the wider peace process in Sudan, and civil society participation needed to be strengthened. UNDP's partners in the resettlement programme and peace building were two newly formed Sudanese NGOs, a Dinka organization called the National Development Organisation (NDO) and a Misseriya organization called Angato.

During the first part of 2002 international agencies collaborated to resettle some 600 Dinka households in three experimental "peace villages" around Abyei. The UNICEF Child Friendly Village Initiative was used as a coordinating mechanism. This involved the formation of village development committees that were selected to reflect ethnic and gender balance and representation of youth. It was assumed that these households would be self-reliant within 18 months (ibid.). Misseriya were encouraged to build shelters in the two of the villages, where they could access basic services. This was supported by WFP's provision of food for work. The Friendly Village Initiative exhorted the inhabitants of the villages to think in terms of the "shared ownership of resources" (Interview with Marv Koop, 22 January 2004). They became seen as test cases for the strength of the local

peace agreement. If they were able to pass through the rainy season without incident then the agreement would be shown to be sustainable.

However, many Dinka saw the peace villages as an encroachment on Dinka land, symbolized in the use of two place names in Arabic and Dinka for the same settlement. Another factor intervened in the delicate politics of Abyei. In mid-2002 GNPOC test wells located oil some 40km outside the town and the Government moved ahead with developing the infrastructure to exploit these deposits. This changed the dynamics of the area, and increased the stakes in the national negotiations.

A setback to the peace process

In September 2002 the fragility of the Abyei agreement became apparent when an SPLM/A force crossed the river and abducted some 60 people from one of the new villages. The Government response was immediate. The military in Abyei was purged of Southern soldiers and a number were executed. GoS helicopter gun ships attacked Warawar and Abien Dau markets, the peace villages were closed and people moved back to Abyei, the movement across the Kiir was curtailed and the activities of the Peace Committee were stopped.

The nature of the GoS response may have been connected to the SPLM/A capture of Torit, in Equatoria, in September 2002. It may also have been connected with the need to demonstrate control of the oil areas. The SPLM/A for their part appeared to acknowledge that the attack had been an error. The SPLA commander responsible was transferred, and a southern NGO, ACAD, facilitated the return of the abductees to the north. The river crossing was reopened within a month, and in February 2003 the restoration of cross-line relations was demonstrated by high-level USAID officials crossing the river (USAID 2003). This international presence highlighted the importance of the Abyei peace process to the national peace talks taking place in Kenya.

Ngok peoples' conference

Since 2002, it appears, there have been no peace meetings of significance in GoS controlled areas of Abyei. Instead, the emphasis has moved to the south of the river. In June 2003, a peoples conference of the Ngok Dinka of Abyei was held in Agok, a part of Abyei County under SPLA control (ACAD 2003). Although Misseriya were invited they were prevented from attending by the GoS, as were Government and international delegates. The conference therefore differed from the Dinka-Misseriya meetings in West Kordofan. The conference was funded by the USAID SPF through Pact, facilitated by the Southern NGO ACAD and chaired by the SPLM/A. It drew from the experiences of earlier conferences held in the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile and became, effectively, a meeting of the Ngok people, that was intended to assess the issues facing them, to establish a common position and strategy on their relations with the Misseriya, and with the SPLM/A and the national talks, and to foster "unity between the Ngok community and their neighbours in the rest of Southern Sudan" (ibid.). It made clear their desire for land and people to be restored to Bahr el Ghazal, while guaranteeing the Misseriya access to pasture and water.

Forming consensus on a coherent political agenda can be an important element in peace building. The SPLA was able to claim the outcome of the Ngok conference as confirmation of their role as representing the South in the national peace negotiations. Given the overt political nature of the conference, and the previous experience of the All Nuba Conference, it is perhaps unsurprising that the GoS did not allow representatives to attend

from the North. The Ngok conference served some of the same purposes as the Wunlit meeting and the All Nuba conference before it in uniting opinion in the South and the Transitional Zone, notably it mandated the SPLM/A to represent their Ngok interests in the national talks, as the Nuba conference had done. The Agok conference could have provided an opportunity to broaden the PACTA framework across the lines. But this did not develop because the government prevented northern Ngok participation.

Because of its special status as one of the three “marginalised areas” Abyei was a stumbling-block to the conclusion of a framework agreement for the talks. The other two areas – the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile – were negotiated on separately. The problem of Abyei, because of its special links to the South and to the core culture of the SPLA, was different. It posed a special difficulty to the negotiators in the national peace talks. From the Government perspective the matter of Abyei was considered non-negotiable for at least three reasons: the presence of oil, the implications that the secession of Abyei to the South would have for other areas of the North, and because of the impact the loss of Abyei would have on the Misseriya. For the SPLM/A, Abyei was also seemingly non-negotiable because of the historical connection to contiguous parts of the South, the enduring memory of a promised referendum and, significantly, the presence of high-ranking Ngok Dinka in the SPLM/A and among the negotiators in the national-level peace talks.

The apparent intractability of these positions was overcome in May 2004, when the Government and the SPLM/A signed a protocol on the resolution of the Abyei conflict (GoS and SPLM/A 2004), which was later incorporated into the CPA. The main provisions of this protocol accorded Abyei a special administrative status, with representation in the administration of Bahr el Ghazal and West Kordofan, and a referendum to be held on whether Abyei should retain a special administrative status in the North or be part of Bahr el Ghazal. This met the minimal demand of the Ngok Dinka to have their right to a referendum reinstated.

Impact of the Abyei people-to-people process

There has been, as yet, no attempt to evaluate the significance of the support given to the Abyei peace committee and the people-to-people process. And it will be difficult, in any case, to determine how far the process and the support for grassroots peace building by UNDP and others influenced the national talks and the substance of the Abyei Protocol of May 2004. In its own terms it did not succeed. The IDP resettlement programme of 2002 was short-lived. The objectives of poverty alleviation and creating what were intended to be self-reliant communities were not achieved. It is not possible to show whether the training of village development committees in conflict management had any impact on community relations. But the peace process in Abyei undoubtedly focused attention on its importance in the national peace process and set the stage for the special dispensation accorded to Abyei in the CPA. In this sense the ultimate significance of the earlier local agreements may have been different from what was envisaged by their participants at the time.

The original Abyei agreement has been described as a “neighbourhood agreement”³⁷. That is to say, it was a limited agreement of cooperation between the Ngok and Twic Dinka and the Misseriya ‘Ajaira, applying to certain locations and migration routes. The immediate purpose of the agreement was to facilitate the passage of people and livestock across the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab. But the existence of the Abyei Peace Committee influenced

³⁷ This description was used in the 2002 *Report of the Eminent Persons Group report on Abduction, Slavery and Forced Servitude in Sudan* (Kemble and others 2002), of which two of the authors of the present report were members.

relationships between the Dinka and Misseriya at a local and at a regional level. The vital movement back and forth across the river of Dinka and Misseriya pastoralists increased after 2000. The peace meetings convened by the Abyei peace committee in West Kordofan appear to have helped to curb the activities of *Murahaleen* raiding parties drawn from the 'Ajaira. As such, the people-to-people process may have prevented violence and associated human rights abuses between the Dinka and Misseriya, making the path to peace easier. It is arguable that popular pressure also helped mitigate hostilities between the SPLM/A and the Sudanese armed forces. The reaction of the SPLA to the September 2002 attack on villages in the Government-controlled areas – withdrawal of the SPLA commander responsible and placatory response to GoS reprisals – suggests as much.

The September 2002 incident highlighted certain weaknesses and potential obstacles to the local agreements made in Abyei. Historical grievances, such as the abduction of Dinka villagers by Misseriya raiders, are not formally addressed in the agreements and the jurisdiction and policing of agreements is somewhat ambivalent. The most crucial point, however, as in other local agreements, is that the sustainability of the agreements is dependent on the interest of the government and the SPLM/A in supporting them or at least not interfering. The agreements are vulnerable to changing priorities on either side which may have no relation to local interests. And the representation of local interests may itself be subject to manipulation by the warring parties and their representatives. At a time when Misseriya had reached an agreement in Abyei, Misseriya *Murahaleen* , alongside pro-Government Nuer militia, were pursuing the war against the SPLA in Western Upper Nile. In each case the Government priority is likely to have been access to oil. In one case stabilization served their purposes; in the other further exploitation of local grievances and support for proxy war.

Stakeholders in the Abyei peace process

The key to the success of the Abyei peace process lies in the interests of various stakeholders in a positive outcome, and the timing of the various events in the process. These are summarized below³⁸. The Wunlit Conference in 1999, the start of the Abyei process in late 2000, the Nuba Mountains ceasefire in early 2002 are indicators of a wider change in the dynamics of the civil war in the late 1990s and early 2000, an internationalisation of the issues that created a more conducive environment for such local peace processes to take place. The IGAD Planning for Peace assessment tapped into this, and correctly identified the Abyei process as a key area to support.

The summary of participants and their interests shown above should not be taken to represent all the factors in play in the negotiations. Between groups and individuals in the parties represented there is clearly diversity of opinion. Within the Government of Sudan, for example, there was – and still is – undoubtedly a range of different interests. These include the interests of the state security organs at a local and national level, and the alliance-building concerns of the political leadership.

The relationship between the parties is also ambiguous – and changeable. An example is that between the Misseriya and the central government. The GoS and SPLM/A have both been successful in manipulating and, in the case of the GoS, dismantling local leadership. Proponents of the people-to-people processes have asserted that they can re-empower local leadership and assert greater accountability in governance (Interview with Marv Koop, 22 January 2004). It seems likely, however, that other factors have to be in place to enable this to happen. The role of certain sections of the Misseriya in Government counter-

³⁸ There is no record of such an analysis being made by the international agencies supporting the peace process.

insurgency is an example. Historically, the Awlad Kamil section of the 'Ajaira Humr were supporters of the Umma Party. In the mid-1980s, under the government of Sadiq el Mahdi, the Minister of Defence was Mahdi Babu Nimir, brother of the *Nazir*, Mukhtar Babu Nimir. He armed the Misseriya against the SPLM/A and was responsible for the formation of the *murahaleen*. After taking power the NIF sought to dismantle the Misseriya leadership by appointing new leaders (*nazirs* or *amirs*) to the Fayareen, Fadaliya and Marzagana clans. These sections are National Congress supporters. The increasing disunity within the ruling party and internal power struggle between Hassan al-Turabi and President Beshir after 1999 gave the leadership of the Awlad Kamil section of the 'Ajaira confidence to chart a different path to that of the Government. When the 'Ajaira leadership sought to discourage raids by *murahaleen* drawn from their number, the Government supported the Felaita to take on that role. A similar pattern can be discerned in Darfur, where sections of another Baggara Arab group, the Rizeigat, performed a similar role to the 'Ajaira Humr as a pro-Government militia in the war in the South. But the Rizeigat have resisted taking this role in the current war in Darfur (see Darfur case study in this report).

Abyei peace process: participants and their interests

Party	Interests in the Abyei Peace Process
Ngok Dinka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining cross-line movement of people and goods across the Kiir/Bahr el-Arab important for economic well-being of populations on both sides of the river. ▪ Chance to regain access to land and have a stake in the benefits of oil production. ▪ Reincorporation into Bahr el Ghazal only possible through political agreement. ▪ Dialogue with the Misseriya might curb <i>murahaleen</i> raids.
Misseriya 'Ajaira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining freedom of movement, access to the grazing in the Dinka grazing grounds, protection of cattle and trade critical to their livelihoods. ▪ Misseriya 'Ajaira keen to distance themselves from the GoS and their former role as proxy force in GoS counter-insurgency against SPLA in Bahr el Ghazal.
Government of Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peace in Abyei may have encouraged Dinka south of the river to distance themselves from the SPLM/A. ▪ Peace in Abyei would facilitate oil exploration and production. ▪ Release military resources for use elsewhere.
SPLM/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintaining gateway to south important to encourage return of displaced. High-ranking Ngok in SPLM/A saw dialogue as way of regaining initiative in political dialogue over Abyei.

Strategic linkages

The international sponsors of the peace process in Abyei had aims that went beyond local issues. A key objective of PACTA and other international initiatives in support of the people-to-people process was to influence the national peace talks between the Government and the SPLM/A. In this respect international support to the Abyei process followed the grassroots peace building model proposed by the IGAD Planning for Peace

framework. It was guided, not simply by local needs, but by a national-level peace-building strategy. The resolution of local disputes and programmes of local-level “confidence building” were designed to reduce the potential for further conflict.

The interpretation of the IGAD framework varied, however. In the case of Abyei the implementing organizations saw that the ownership and management of natural resources – and access to them – were the key issues. For the Ngok Dinka, regaining secure access to land for agriculture was fundamental, and for the Misseriya, maintaining rights to access grazing and water. In looking beyond the local happenstance of the peace process, and examining more closely these key issues underlying the conflict, PACTA took external support for local peace processes to a deeper historical level.

To examine this issue PACTA commissioned a land use and natural resource mapping study of the Abyei area, examining the issue from the north and south of the Kiir (IntermediaNCG 2003). This report stands out in the literature concerning the Abyei issue, taking an unusually long-term view of the conflict. Read in conjunction with the report of the Abyei Boundaries Commission, it provides the most sophisticated analysis of the root causes and likely solutions to the conflict. The report recognises that most of its recommendations will be meaningless until there is a formal peace agreement. The violence affecting Abyei arose, it states, not from a conflict over natural resources, but a political conflict between the GoS and the SPLM/A. As elsewhere ethnic difference and resource disputes have been instrumentalised in pursuit of wider war aims. It notes that efforts to address resource scarcity after the 1972 Addis Ababa Accord by installing water yards in the region did nothing to prevent the recurrence of war.

The study acknowledges that another resource – the presence of oil within the territory of the Ngok and Misseriya – is “perhaps the greatest common threat to both peace and to the survival of [these] people.” [ibid.], suggesting that the study needs to be followed up with an assessment of the potential impact of oil, a recommendation that has yet to be acted on.

The role of capacity building

UNDP’s support to the peace process also involved the development of civil society organizations. In Abyei UNDP helped to develop three indigenous NGOs in the North and one in the South; NDO (the National Development Organisation), a Ngok Dinka organization in the North, Angato (Misseriya ‘Ajaira), Zam Zam (Misseriya Felaita) and ACAD (Abyei Community Action for Development, a Ngok organisation in the SPLA area).

UNDP’s support for the Sudanese NGOs in peace building follows an established practice of capacity building of Sudanese NGOs in relief and development pioneered by UNICEF in the 1990s (see for example: Murphy 1994, 1997; African Rights 1994; Karim and others 1996). Under the rubric of supporting civil society, capacity building has mainly involved creating indigenous organisations for the delivery of aid projects designed by international organisations. It is debatable whether much has changed in the switch from relief to peace building.

The involvement of international agencies in the grassroots peace building in Abyei has led to a proliferation of NGOs, peace committees and peace centres. It is possible to see this as a positive development, involving the growth and reformation of civil society and increasing the possibilities of public participation. Commenting on the Abyei peace process, Francis Deng noted: “The time has certainly gone when the decisions affecting their destiny were the monopoly of their leaders.” (Deng 2003b). A member of Angato

similarly commented: "In the past Deng Majok and Babur Nimir [Ngok Paramount Chief and *Nazir* of the Humr] made peace by themselves. Now it is more inclusive" (Interview with Mohana Mohamed Ali and others, 22 January 2004).

In support of the capacity-building programme it is argued that services in the area are bad and government cannot be relied upon, that this contributes to conflict, so it is necessary for local civil society organisations to take a lead. Thus "peace centres" have been established along the migration route of the 'Ajaira to address conflicts that arise between pastoralists and farmers (ibid.). As these peace committees include tribal chiefs, it has been argued that this is a means of strengthening native administration. The development role that has thus been added to the mandate of the peace committees becomes a means to access development aid.

But it is hard to show that support for peace committees actually supports peace. With the exception of the original Abyei committee the peace committees are tribally defined. The Muglad peace committee is composed of Misseriya, the Abyei/Agok peace committee of Dinka. What began as support to dialogue between parties has become a programme in which the control of development resources is at stake. Rather than empowering or fostering a civil society peace movement, these organisations appear to have become new sites for struggles between rival clans and individuals for access to land, political capital, and capital resources. The scale of these resources is small, but their local significance is apparent in reports of the heavily contested leadership of one of the organisations, Angato.

Peace through development

A common feature of the agreements and resolutions that are produced at grassroots peace meetings is an appeal for rehabilitation and development assistance. While this no doubt reflects the immiseration of war-affected areas of Sudan, it is noticeable how the language of developmentalism has infiltrated the peace talks. In this respect a comparison may be made between the UNDP proposal for PACTA (UNDP 2002d), the Abyei resettlement project (UNDP 2002b) and the report on the Ngok Peoples' Conference written by the southern Sudanese NGO ACAD (ACAD 2003). The UNDP proposals, both of which were supported by other UN agencies and NGOs, are littered with typical phrases on "community ownership", "participation" and "self-reliance". And the Ngok Peoples' conference resolved to:

Commit to building our local capacities, knowledge and skills for self-reliance and self-sufficiency as a means of development as a process of self-enhancement from within. (ACAD 2003)

The report of the Ngok People's Conference raises a number of issues. First, there may be a danger if repeated appeals for development aid go unanswered. This was a concern previously raised during the evaluation of the Wunlit conference. Donors and agencies supporting such conferences should consider whether they should do so without a serious commitment to following up with investment in development.

A final question is this: why is "self-reliance" so important to international agencies and, apparently, the Ngok people? It would seem to be antithetical to the aims of restoring relationships with neighbours (UNDP 2002b), encouraging interdependence (UNDP 2002d) or southern unity (ACAD 2003). The ACAD report, written in English, is clearly intended more for an international audience than the Ngok people, many of whom would be illiterate. While the conference also resolved to establish a system of governance that

builds on their cultural heritage – as opposed to the Islamic state proposed by the Khartoum government – the commitment to self-reliance as a means of development also suggests at best an interest by the community to ‘own’ an external model of development. In this sense, such meetings are not only ‘community owned’ affairs, but become forums for the promulgation of an international liberal model of development.

The crisis of the *judiyya* system in Darfur

Introduction

Darfur, a border region in the far west of the Sudan, is an area larger than Kenya, France or Texas, and displays a high degree of geographical and ethnic diversity. Darfur borders with the former province of Kordofan in the east and the Chadian regions of Wadai, Wadi Fira, and Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti in the west. It extends southward to Bahr el Ghazal and northward to the Libyan Desert. The far north of the region is primarily desert, the south is savannah land. The central region is dominated by the Jebel Marra massif; this region is one of the most fertile rain-fed areas in northern Sudan.

Before its incorporation into Sudan in 1917, Darfur was an independent polity with three successive dynastic traditions, culminating in the Fur Sultanate 1650s. In 1874 it was briefly incorporated into Mahdist Sudan. After the fall of the Mahdi, Darfur was once again recognized as an independent state (O'Fahey 2004: 1) and it was only in 1917, a year before the end of World War I, that the Sultanate finally lost its independence. Up to that point Darfur had been one of very few African territories that remained uncolonised, along with Ethiopia and the nominally sovereign states of Liberia and Egypt. This history of independence has conditioned relations between the region and the Sudanese nation-state. Darfur's history as an alternative centre of state power contributes to local understanding of its conflict with Khartoum.

The current rebellion in Darfur emerges from a history of small and medium-scale local conflict. Since the independence of Sudan there have been more than thirty-five small and large scale armed disputes (Mohammed 2002: 1). Many of these conflicts are clearly related to competition between pastoral and agricultural communities. They also bespeak of an array of issues that can be represented under the rubric of "greed and grievance" (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). These include, besides local rivalries, historical complaints against the central state, lack of services and a perceived absence of political representation.

Many of the conflicts in the region have been articulated along ethnic and linguistic lines, but such ready-made divisions often mask deeper societal fractures. This is illustrated by the conflict between the Fellata (a catch-all term for a number of groups of West African origin) and the Gimir in 1984. The initial spark for this was a murder; both groups were soon engaged in a series of raids and counter raids. But the blood feud was the occasion for a conflict that involved other important factors. Much of the hostility stemmed from local and national politics, in particular the proposed redivision of the Fellata and neighbouring Gimir rural districts (Morton 2004: 11). The aim of this administrative re-organization was to allow those Fellata who farmed traditionally Gimir lands to be incorporated into the Fellata district at Tullus rather than remain in the Gimir district at Katalia. Actors on both sides of the divide, while asserting that the occasion for violence was this murder, did not deny that local power rivalries also played a role. Ethnicity often forms a ready-made principle of mobilization (Fukui and Markakis 1994), thus battles for resources – and group survival – tend to be expressed in terms of ethnicity.

It must not be supposed that local conflict is the norm in Darfur. Even today, when large parts of the region are verging on anarchy, there are other areas where small-scale local mediation continues to be effective. For instance, during the later Condominium period, and, as far as it possible to tell from the record, much of the earlier era of the Sultanate, there was less violence and more cooperation along these boundary zones, featuring the exchange of goods and services and the rule-bound sharing of renewable resources, such as

water and grazing. Competition over resources has intensified in the last two decades because of a combination of environmental, social and economic pressures. And this has been exacerbated by administrative incompetence and malfeasance. Rules for the sharing of scarce resources that prevented rivalries from becoming full blown conflicts have increasingly broken down.

Even when violence could not be avoided the rules of engagement, disengagement and compensation have acted as checks on the level of conflict. In Islamic Northern Sudan in general this system of communal mediation and peace building is known as *judiyya* (mediation). A group of elders acting as *ajaweed* (mediators) preside over a *mutamarat al sulh* (reconciliation conference). Generations of intermarriage and coexistence between ethnic groups have led to a common understanding of these institutions. But only a few instances have been documented in detail. An examination of particular cases of *judiyya* and *mutamarat al sulh* is the central feature of this case study.

Ethnicity in history

The differences in mode of production among ethnic groups in Darfur are a reflection of its geography. In the north the seasonal grasses and general lack of arable land mean that nomadism is the only sustainable mode of life. As a result the north is dominated by nomadic or semi nomadic groups, of both Arab and African origin. The more mountainous and fertile central region is home to numerous African farming communities, interspersed with nomad camp sites and pastures. The southern region is dominated by Arab cattle herders, collectively known as Baggara, but here too there are pockets of African farmers and Fellata nomads.

The many ethnic communities in Darfur can be grouped under four higher-order categories (see table of ethno-linguistic groups in Darfur below). First, there are groups identified by themselves and others as being of indigenous African descent, known as *zurga* (a term that means "blue" and is used as a euphemism for "black" - see Glossary); second, sedentary Arab agrarian groups; third, camel nomads (Aballa); and, fourth, cattle nomads (Baggara). The latter two groups are predominantly, but not entirely, Arab. The customary mode of production of a particular group is as important a factor as racial perception in ethnic classification. Language is also a cross-cutting factor. The Fellata are an example of this: the term was originally applied strictly to speakers of F Fulfulde who originate from West Africa and Darfur is home to an estimated 150,000 F Fulfulde speakers. But the term "Fellata" is also used to include other West African groups; Kanuri/Borno, Bargo, Hausa and Takuri. Together this expanded sense of the term Fellata may include two or three times as many people, perhaps 10% of the population of the region. The majority of Fellata, broadly-defined, speak Arabic or Fur as their second (or in some cases first) language (Sansculotte-Greenidge 2001).

The term *zurga* designates members of sedentary African ethnic groups in Northern Sudan. They have two key characteristics: first, that they are cultivators and, second, that they speak a first language other than Arabic as (or that they or their neighbours have a memory of them speaking it). The importance attached to these two features will vary from place to place and over time, especially during times of conflict. In addition to the Fur, Daju and Tunjur, Darfur is home to many African groups of varying sizes, ranging from populations of hundreds of thousands to a few hundred. These include Gimir, Jabaal, Erenga, Sungur, Mararit, Tama (all of which are subgroups of the Tama ethnic group), Zaghawa (camel and cattle nomads), Masaalit, Sinyar, Fongoro, Formono, Kajarge, Kara, Runga, Binga, Begio, Berti, Birgid, Mimi, Fulani (cattle nomads) and Fertit. With the exception of the Fulani, Midob and Zaghawa, Darfur's Africans are primarily farmers.

Ethnolinguistic groups in Darfur

<i>Ethnic or Language Group</i>	<i>Wider Ethnic Group</i>	<i>Location</i>
Fur	Zurga	Central Darfur and Jebel Mara
Fellata (Ffulde, Barno/Kanuri, Bargo/Maba/Wadians, Hausa)		Scattered throughout the region, with concentrations at Tullus, South Darfur, and Fato Barno, North Darfur
Rizeigat (see also N. Rizeigat)	Baggara	S-E Darfur
Habbaniya	Baggara (but majority farmers)	Buram, S. Darfur
Beni Halba	Baggara	S-W Darfur, centred at Id al' Fursan, South Darfur.
Berti	Zurga (but mainly camel herders)	E. Darfur, at Mellit, Jebel Tagbayo, Umm Keddada, Tewaisha and around El Fasher in North Darfur
Zaghawa	Zurga (majority in Dar Zaghawa itself camel herders; but in diaspora, farmers and merchants)	Northwest Darfur but with communities throughout the region
Masaalit	Zurga	W. Darfur, al Geneina but with community at Kubbi in S. Darfur
Ta'aisha	Baggara	Southwest Darfur, centre at Rahad al Berdi south Darfur
Dagu	Zurga	One group located NE of Nyala in Jebel Dagu; one S. of Masaalit
Tungur	Zurga	North Darfur, centres at Kutum and Kobbe
Birgid	Zurga	Central Darfur, centre at Menawashei (north of Nyala) S. Darfur
Zeyadiya	Aballa	E. Darfur, centre at Abu Ku' in North Darfur
Maali	Aballa	S-W Darfur, north of the Rizeigat, centre at Adalia
Mimi	Zurga	Scattered, with communities at Fafa, Difa, Wada, Tulu in N. Darfur
Gimir (Tama)	Zurga/Agarian/Arab (Part of Tama cluster but claim Arab ancestry; monolingual in Arabic)	North of Tama speaking groups, centre at Kulbus in West Darfur
Sungur (Tama)/ Erenga (Tama)	Zurga	North of Masaalit, centre at Selia, West Darfur
Erenga (Tama)	Zurga / Agrarian Arab (Tama-speaking, self-defined as Misseriya)	South of the Gimir, Jabaal Mun and Melimel, also Kepkabia in W. Darfur
Mararit (Tama)	Zurga	
Beni Hussein	Aballa/Baggara	Centre at Sayef Omar, north-west of Kepkabia, W. Darfur
Fertit (Runga, Binga, Yulu, Foroge, Kreish, Banda)	Zurga	S. Darfur; populations at Kifa Kinga, Um Dafok, Efrat el Nafus
Sinyar	Zurga	South of Daju of Dar Sila ; Foraboranga on the Sudan-Chad border
Fongoro, Formono	Zurga	South of Sinyar; along the Sudan-Chad border
Beni Fadl	Agrarian Arab	West of Berti; at Hilla, North Darfur
Bazaa	Agrarian Arab	South of Zeyadiya; at Abyad, North Darfur
Giledat	Agrarian Arab	South of Zeyadiya; Abyad, North Darfur
Siamat	Agrarian Arab	South of Berti, NE of El Fasher
Mala	Agrarian Arab	NW of El Fasher
Hamra	Agrarian Arab	South of Kutum, North Darfur
Beni Mansur	Agrarian Arab	North of the Birgid; Mallam, South Darfur
Misseriya	Baggara	Scattered, concentrations at Nuteiqa South Darfur, and S of Kas
Khutiya	Baggara	South Darfur, south of the Birgid
Khuzam	Baggara	East of the Dagu, South Darfur
Northern Rizeigat	Aballa	Scattered; concentrations between Kutum and Kepkabia

The Arabs of the region can be divided into the Aballa (camel) Arabs in the North, the Baggara (cattle) Arabs in the South, and agrarian groups such as the Beni Fadl, Bazza, Giledat, Khunnun and Manasra. Aballa Arabs include the Maharia Mahamid, Iraqat, and Nowayba (these groups are collectively known as the northern or camel Rizeigat), the Beni Hussein and the Zeyadiya. The Baggara include the Rizeigat Ta'aisha, Habbaniya, Rizeigat, Beni Helba, Salamat, Maali, Misseriya, Taiben, Tarjama, Terjim, Hotiya, Otriya and Mahadi.

Judiyya

In Darfur customary mediation is known as *judiyya*. The *judiyya* system is based on third-party mediation, with the mediators known as *ajaweed* (sing. *ajwadi*). The Ajaweed are, by traditional practice, elderly people who are versed in communal customs and customary laws. They are not neutral in the Western sense of the term. Their practice is to exert pressure on the party resisting a settlement, until they accept the recommendations the Ajaweed have settled on (Mohamed and Badri 2005). According to Ali Dinar (Ali-Dinar 2004: 4), a scholar who is himself from the lineage of the sultans of the Fur, the Ajaweed formed part of a system for the regulation of group land rights and ethnic boundaries that was unquestioned until very recent times:

Disputes were resolved in traditional conferences (*ajaweed/mutamarat al sulh*) whose rulings were always respected and honored. Even at times when the government was involved, it served as a facilitator and not as an enforcer. Government neutrality contained ethnic conflicts not only in Darfur but also in Kordofan and in the south.

A distinction needs to be made between communally-sponsored *judiyya* and government-sponsored *judiyya*. The latter has its origins during the Condominium period. The first government-sponsored *judiyya* in Darfur was organised by the colonial government in 1932 under the name "The Protocol" (UNICEF 2003a: 48). During the Condominium period such tribal meetings were usually sponsored by the Government. It was the responsibility of the Government as the convener to arrange the location and time of the conference, as well as using the security apparatus at their disposal to prepare a list of deaths, injuries and other losses. The colonial government also selected and notified the Ajaweed, and determined the number of representatives each party in the dispute would put forward. A fairly senior public official would chair the entire proceeding (Egemi and Pantuliano 2003), thereby ensuring that the interests of the colonial government were served. The fact that government officials organised the conferences meant that they could select only those whom they felt they could trust or who they could manipulate into representing their interests, or at least not opposing them. This partial assimilation into the apparatus of government has endured, with variations, to the present. Thus in government-sponsored *judiyya* today, Ajaweed are selected by Khartoum or State governors in an attempt to impose their authority – and in some cases their will – on the conference.

In its traditional form, once a mediation conference has been convened it follows a set course. The moderator asks a ranking religious figure to recite a suitable verse from the Qur'an or Hadith, stressing the need for the nations of man to live in harmony. After the chairman has spoken, the parties lay out their cases, each usually accusing the other of starting hostilities. Each party then submits a list of complaints and demands, the satisfaction of which would, in their view, resolve the conflict. The Ajaweed then retire for discussion. Their role is to try to convince both parties to stand down from demands that would block a settlement. Once they have agreed on a solution they return to the

meeting and try to cajole the two sides towards an agreement. The Ajaweed may also ask the government to apply pressure on the party that is not willing to accept the settlement put before them (Egemi and Pantuliano 2003).

Communally-sponsored *judiyya* are similar in form to the government-sponsored mediations, but with some critical differences. In the case of communal *judiyya*, the Ajaweed may be religious leaders or others of high social standing within their respective communities. In this form of *judiyya* the Ajaweed decide on a place and time of meeting. Mediation usually takes place in the house of the one of the Ajaweed who comes from a group that is not party to the conflict. Like government sponsored *judiyya* the proceedings begin with a prayer (ibid.: 20).

Both kinds of mediation continue to take place in contemporary Darfur, and recorded instances have increased strikingly in number. Only one major government-sponsored mediation conference was held in Darfur under the Condominium (i.e. between 1917 and 1956), whereas between 1957 and 1997 twenty-nine such conferences were held in Darfur; with six taking place in 1991 alone (Mukhtar 1998). This does not mean that *judiyya* is becoming more effective, rather the opposite, since many of the peace meetings had to be repeated in subsequent years. Out of these conferences, five were between the same groups (the Kababish and camel-herding Berti, Midob and Zeyadiya of North Darfur). Conflict in Darfur is repetitive, occurring on the same social fault-lines. And peace conferences seldom bring lasting peace. But *judiyya* is still the institution that is turned to in a crisis.

The reasons for the failure of contemporary mediation are historically-rooted. Three issues are key to an understanding of the obstacles to local peace agreements. These are, firstly, the traditional system of land allocation; secondly, the Sahelian droughts of the 1970s and 1980s; and thirdly, disequilibrium and competition in the political relationship between Darfur and the regional centres of power, Khartoum, Tripoli and N'Djamena.

Traditional systems of land ownership: from *nahus* and *hakura* to *dar* and *amirate*

Integral to the understanding of the process of peacemaking is the traditional system of land allocation and ownership which operated almost uninterrupted from the 1600s to the late 1970s. The cornerstone of this system was the concept of the *dar* ("home", "homeland", or "abode"). An ethnic group's *dar* is its inviolable homeland, from which it cannot be removed. By the same token large numbers of outsiders from other *dars* cannot settle there without the expressed consent of the *dar*'s leaders. Small groups of pastoralists like the Camel Rizeigat, Tarjama, Terjim, Hotiya, Otriya, Mahadi or Darok who did not possess their own *dar* (and some larger pastoral groups that do) may have been granted rights allowing them access to water and pastures at certain times of the year. These rights are enjoyed on the basis of purely local agreements.

The system of communal *dars* was recognised by post-independence governments up until 1971. In that year, the new government of President Nimeiri proclaimed a Land Registration Ordinance, declaring all unregistered land to belong to the government. According to the new law all Sudanese citizens were entitled to equal access to government lands (Mohamed and Badri 2005). This *de jure* access to land clashed with the *de facto* communal ownership of land in Darfur. The situation of land ownership in Darfur has festered for decades, with successive governments neither implementing nor repealing the Land Registration Ordinance.

The term *dar* is now used to describe the cluster of rights in a particular area of land that is held by a community with an ethnic base. Formerly the term was used as a broader geographical category, for instance to describe each of the four provinces of the Darfur sultanate (Dar Takinnyawi, Dar Ummo, Dar Daali, Dar Dimmo). It was also used to describe tributary regions such as Dar Fia and Dar Kerne in Western Darfur. At the same time it was used, under the Sultanate, presaging its meaning today, to describe areas in which the Sultan had granted rights to an ethnically-based elite to administer justice and collect taxes, e.g. Dar Gimir, Dar Masaalit and Dar Rizeigat. In the early days of the Sultanate administrative units were headed by elders who were granted the title *abbo nahus* father/lord of the drum (La Rue 1989: 172)³⁹.

During this period in Darfur's history land and access to its resources was controlled by lineages (La Rue 1989: 4). Remnants of the system survive; Ahmed Diraiqe, Governor of Darfur in the 1970s, and more recently a protagonist in one of the attempts to bring peace to the region, was hereditary ruler of a large Fur subsection located in Zalenji and was entitled as such to collect taxes and allocate land in that region. In the nineteenth century, as the Sultanate took on a more Islamic character, elites – either local ethnic chiefs or court loyalist placed in positions of authority by the Sultan – were granted *hakura* (grants of land). All these terms were used concurrently. Today the idea of a *dar*, borrowing from the historic notion of *nahus* and *hakura*, combines the idea of an administrative unit, estate and ethnic homeland.

The long and complex history of the allocation of land in Darfur meant that when the British defeated Ali Dinar in 1917, they found an established and respected system of tribal governance. The British used this system as the blueprint for their own *idara ahalia* (native administration), starting in 1923. The *dars* fitted easily into the doctrine of indirect rule developed by the British elsewhere in Africa. The possession of a *dar* allowed its inhabitants to monopolise the use and allocation of natural resources in that *dar*. The rights of minorities in the *dars* varied, but by and large they were denied the right to claim ownership of land in another *dar* and were thus left without the means to play an active political role (UNICEF 2003a: 27).

During the Condominium the British upheld and legalized established land allotments, with some exceptions. Most of the changes made were justified in terms of administrative convenience. Thus the numerous clans of the Northern Rizeigat were at first made subordinate to the Madibu lineage⁴⁰, the *nazirs* of the historically-related but geographically distant Southern Rizeigat. Later the Northern Rizeigat were granted their own independent *sheikhdoms*. The British also moved the two subgroups of the Beni Hussein to their present *dar* north of Kebkapia and united the two sections of the Beni Halba, though these had been diverging both geographically and politically for some time. They also united the various groups north of the Masaalit in what is now Dar Erenga (Flint and de Waal 2005: 192-193) and the Hamar in El Nahud (Davies 1957).

Regardless of the Nimeiri reforms in 1971, land in Darfur is thus still considered to be communally owned by one ethnic group or another, and the possession of individual titles or deeds is rare (Tanner 2005: 9), except in the Kutum area. Pressure for changes in rights to land comes from groups that are outside the *dar* system. The Sahelian droughts of the 1970s produced an increase in immigration from one region of Darfur to another. According

³⁹ During the early Fur Sultanat, leaders were 'drummed' in the same way that European rulers were 'crowned' (La Rue 1989: 4).

⁴⁰ The Madibus are the ruling family of the Rizeigat. They helped overthrow the Fur Sultanate on two separate occasions, first by siding with the slave trader Zubeir Pasha then by siding with the British against the last Fur Sultan Ali Dinar in 1917. During the interim period they were first on the Mahdist side but when the tide turned against the Ansar forces they sided with the British.

to customary law, leadership and political power in a *dar* or *shartai*⁴¹ should be restricted to descendants of the original inhabitants of that *dar*; incomers can be settled and absorbed relatively easily as long as they submit themselves to the established leadership (UNICEF 2003a: 27). But incomers, as opposed to original settlers, have increasingly come to frame demands for access to resources and political position in terms of a more recent political dispensation, one that is potentially at odds with the *dar* system, i.e. their rights as Sudanese citizens. Similar disputes are found elsewhere in Northern Sudan (see the case of the Dar Bakhota and Birgid/Awlad Hillal in the Nuba Mountains case study).

In the late 1970s and 1980s hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of northern Darfur sought refuge and a new life in the more fertile central and southern regions. At first the traditional leadership and populace of the central and southern *dars* were welcoming and allocated vacant land to the newcomers. The migrants were expected to attach themselves politically to the owners of the *dar*, the advantage to the latter being that newcomers increased the numbers and political clout of the *Dar*'s original inhabitants. But the sheer numbers of drought refugees and the political aspirations of some meant that traditional systems could not always cope with the competing demands from the two groups. The fact that the new generations of migrants settled on vacant lands and lived in separate villages meant that their absorption was slower. In some areas, incomers came to outnumber the *dar*'s original inhabitants. They sought to gain control of their own rural councils and representation in the central government based on these demographic realities.

In February 1994, in a radical transformation of government structures, Sudan was divided into 26 federal states. Darfur was divided into three, North, West and South Darfur, with El Fasher, Geneina and Nyala as the respective capitals of the three new states. The Government also created a new office called *emir*, or *amir*, and an administrative division, smaller than a *dar*, called an *amirate*. The *amirate* was a term that was new to Darfur. The *amir* was, typically, interpolated between the *nazir*, the highest tribal authority, and the *omda*, before this the second-highest, but now relegated to third position (Young and others 2005a: 121).

The terminology of the native administration in Darfur is complex, as a result of having accommodated a number of variants of tribal authority. In the case of the Fur, each section had a *shartai*, except the Kepkabia Fur who had a *demangawi* and the Garsila and Nyala Fur who each had a *magdum*. The Masaalit were ruled by a paramount leader known as a *sultan*, who ruled over a number of *furshas*, who in turn commanded a number of *sheikhs*. The Zaghawa were led by a number of *sultans* corresponding to the various Zaghawa sections; under them were *maliks*, and finally *sheikhs*. The Arabs of Darfur had their own three tiers of authority; at the top of which is are *nazirs* as the heads of tribes, below them *omdas* who were the heads of a tribal subsections and at the bottom the *sheikhs*, village or camp heads (Young and others 2005b: 121). All had specific rights and duties towards the Government. Many of these offices survive; some have fallen into desuetude.

The redivision of the states and the administrative changes had one important and not unintended effect; the splitting of the Fur homeland. This made the largest single ethnic group in Darfur a minority in all three states. The new states were thus created at the expense of groups such as the Fur, while others that were deemed worthy received states or *amirates* of their own. The administrative divisions were manipulated to reward or punish particular groups. On the one hand the reorganization of local government can be seen as giving recognition to unrepresented communities. On the other, it can be seen as a divide-and-rule tactic, one that recurs in Sudanese history as the power at the centre

⁴¹ A *shartai* is the administrative unit below the *dar*.

struggles to control the periphery. Thus when Arab groups from other parts of Darfur and even Chad and Niger settled in Dar Masaalit they had been given a *fursha*⁴² subordinate to the Masaalit *sultan*. In 1995, however, Dar Masaalit was divided into thirteen *amirates*; five went to Arab groups and only eight to the Masaalit themselves (International Crisis Group 2004: 7). In some cases the new Arab *amirs* tried to evict Masaalit from their *amirates*. The Masaalit opposed the division of their traditional *sultanate*, first peacefully, then by violent means. The Government then claimed that Masaalit insurgents were in league with SPLA rebels in the South. There followed a coordinated attack on the Masaalit by the army and militiamen drawn from Arab groups in Darfur. The conflict, which ran from 1996-1999, forced a large number of Masaalit to flee to Chad. In the ensuing violence close to two thousand Masaalit were reported killed and many villages destroyed (Mohamed and others 1998)._This was one of the contributory causes of the current war in Darfur.

The Government established special courts to try those accused of instigating the violence in Dar Masaalit. Fourteen were sentenced to death. A Government-sponsored tribal reconciliation conference was also convened at which it was reported that 292 Masaalit and seven Arabs had been killed, 2,673 houses burnt, that large amounts of livestock had been looted, and that the Masaalit had borne the brunt of the violence and losses. Compensation was agreed, but the Arab tribes refused to pay, and were not forced to do so by the central Government (International Crisis Group 2005). This pattern of unenforced agreements was to recur in Darfur in subsequent years.

Pressure on natural resources

The attempt to understand conflict and conflict mitigation in Darfur must also include an analysis of the impact of ecological change. Mohamed Suliman argues that the violence that has racked the region since the mid 1980s can be interpreted as “a typical ecological conflict along distinctive ecological borders – in this case – the borders of the semi-arid plains roamed by 'Arab' pastoralist nomads and those of the 'wet oasis' of Jebel Marra of the settled Fur farmers” (Suliman 1997). The paramount importance of competition over natural resources may have seemed obvious to a writer in the early 1990s. But since that time the complicating effect of central government interference has become clearer. In Darfur successive demographic and political responses to ecological change and resource scarcity and Government responses to those responses have produced a complex layering of the causes of conflict.

There has also been an evolution in the collective response to insecurity in the region. In the pre-colonial period populations in the region utilized a number of strategies to deal with fluctuating rainfall, including shifting cultivation, nomadism, and large-scale migration to areas with adequate rainfall, along with the exchange of produce and people (Kassas 1970). During the wet periods of the late nineteenth century populations expanded rapidly. When rainfall patterns began to fluctuate in the late 1950s farmlands and forest were exploited more intensively and populations began to drift to permanent waterholes and towns (Tully 1988: 53). Population movement brought new pressure on natural resources. The burgeoning urban poor stripped trees for firewood; herders brought their herds closer to permanent wells, their livestock stripped the land of the shrubs that were keeping the sand at bay.

The ecologically fragile north of Darfur has never fully recovered from droughts that afflicted it from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. Numerous studies have looked at the effect of prolonged drought and mass migrations on the social and economic situation in

⁴² *Fursha* is the name given to the Masaalit official who acts as a tribal head equivalent to a Fur *Shartay*.

the region. but Suliman was the first to examine the effects of these forces on the prevalence of armed conflict. "On the one hand," he wrote "the implications of environmental degradation are confined to the economic and social spheres; on the other, the resulting conflicts are explained in terms of their ethnic and political manifestations" (Suliman 1997).

Of the groups affected by the drought, the Zaghawa of Northern Darfur reacted with greatest resilience. The drought caused a near total change in the way of life of most Zaghawa. Prior to these changes the majority were cattle nomads who also practiced some farming and camel herding (Gore and others 2003). By 1985 the Zaghawa had abandoned their cattle for camels. And most had had abandoned their villages in Dar Zaghawa and moved to more fertile regions of Darfur⁴³(Tobert 1985:213). The Zaghawa have also increasingly turned to trade. The trade networks they maintain reach westwards to Nigeria and north to Libya and enable them to rival the power of jellaba traders from the central riverain area of Sudan.

The dispute between the Rizeigat and Zaghawa

The Rizeigat and the Zaghawa came into conflict on at least two documented occasions before the current war; in 1986 and 1996. The cause of the conflicts was similar on each occasion. In the first case the *judiyya* was effectively used to avert violence; in the second, ten years later, it failed.

El Da'ein town is the centre of a province historically dominated by Rizeigat. Here, in 1986 – in the town itself and in some rural constituencies of El Da'ein where the Zaghawa population was increasing – tensions between the two groups caused an armed stand-off. At this point the Commissioner of Nyala, of which El Da'ein was then a part, intervened. A prominent Zaghawa named Hussein Dawsa was asked to act as *Ajwadi* and a *judiyya* meeting was convened. This mediation has been unusually well-documented. Below is a transcript from an interview with Hussein Dawsa (Mohamed and Badri 2005). Though its account of the events surrounding the 1986 standoff is highly stylised it highlights some of the ways in which *judiyya* is conducted.

When I reached Daein from Nyala, I demanded that each party be placed separately in a school building. I was accompanied by eight Ajawid.

I went to the Rezaigat camp first and rebuked them, "Do you want to betray your beloved late *Nazir*, who invited your Zaghawa brothers to come and live with you? Give me the names of those Zaghawa who cause trouble and I will take them with me, hand-cuffed, to Nyala!"

Then I went to the Zaghawa camp and started rebuking them, "Is this the way you behave to your hosts!" Then I asked them to write down on a piece of paper all that they demanded from the Rezaigat and to select twenty persons to represent them as spokesmen and grant them a mandate. Reading the list of demands, I tore the paper into pieces and threw them away.

Then I went back to the Rezaigat camp and demanded the same thing. First of all, the Rezaigat demanded that the Zaghawa representatives be reduced to fifteen and they wrote down twenty-five demands. When I read them, I commented, "I accept all your demands except two of them. Firstly, the demand for expelling the

⁴³ The majority moved to El Fasher, Kebkabia, the Goz Maalia area, El Daein, and Al Liat province where they are now a majority.

Zaghawa from your Dar because this is in contradiction of the constitution. Secondly, preventing Zaghawa from taking water from a water-yard is inhumane. You cannot cause your brothers to die of thirst."

They asked me, "before we give you an answer, tell us about the Zaghawa demands!" I told them, "the Zaghawa have no demands to make. All the demands that they made I rejected and tore their paper to pieces". Upon hearing this, they started shouting, "Give us back our paper! We have no demands as well".

I took the two delegates to the government authorities to document the reconciliation in writing and came back to enjoy the feast that the Rezaigat had prepared for us.

A number of factors allowed Dawsa to accomplish his task (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 30). First was his lineage: as the son of the Sultan of the Kobe Zaghawa Dawsa he was respected and well-versed in the role and skills of a good *ajwadi*. Dawsa had also served as a government officer among the Tuer section of the Zaghawa, so he enjoyed the respect of two of the most influential Zaghawa subsections and had the experience of many other conflict resolution conferences (ibid.). Finally, he had the support of a central government that wished to avoid escalation of the conflict, in a North-South border area that was strategically important for the war against the SPLA.

A decade later the conflict flared up again. The initial spark was the division of El Da'ain province into new constituencies. The Rizeigat candidates for local and parliamentary elections were assured victory in three of them; Abu Jabra, Abu Matariq and Firdos. However in the town of El Da'ain itself the Rizeigat were a minority⁴⁴. Another constituency, Asalaya, was a mixed constituency with a Zaghawa majority in the north and a Rizeigat majority in the south and west. And most of the inhabitants of the last constituency, Adalia, were Maali. The results of the 1996 election were not surprising. In El Da'ain town a Zaghawa-backed Barno candidate was elected, the same would have probably happened in Asalaya if the ballot boxes had not been burned by mobs of angry Rizeigat. Soon after this the Rizeigat began attacking Zaghawa villages. This was ostensibly as retaliation for a perceived increase in banditry by armed Zaghawa (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 31). The Zaghawa put up stiff resistance, sending non-combatants back to the safety of Nyala or Dar Zaghawa itself, and purchasing large quantities of weaponry which inflicted heavy losses on Rizeigat horseback raiders (ibid.: 32). The Government's position was that the violence was instigated by members of the opposition Umma party, then banned, which draws much of its support from the West (ibid.: 33).

It took government officials from Nyala some six months to get the situation in El Da'ain under control to the point where they could convince the warring parties of the need for mediation. The conference, which was held in El Da'ain in late March 1997, was aimed at the "practical coexistence between Rizeigat, Zaghawa and other communities in the area" (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 33).

Like most government-sponsored Judiyya, the twenty-six Ajaweed were selected by the government. The Ajaweed selected for the Judiyya included elders from various communities in Darfur and Kordofan, police officers, magistrates and representatives of the Attorney-General (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 33). The Government appointed an NIF cadre as chairman. A technical committee, headed by the provincial magistrate, was also created to investigate claims of deaths, injuries and damage reported by the parties. This

⁴⁴ The Zaghawa and Barno (Kanuri) combined probably made up a slight majority of the town's inhabitants (Mohammed & Badri 2002: 31).

committee examined police reports and toured the region to verify claims made by parties to the conflict. The subsequent document was used by the *Ajaweed* as the basis for their judgments regarding blood money and other forms of compensation (ibid.: 34).

Once the conference was convened it followed the usual pattern. The parties listed their grievances and demands. These betrayed a broad-based anxiety about the growing economic power of the Zaghawa and fear of their political ascendancy. According to Rizeigat delegates the problems were as follows (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 34):

- Armed robbery by the Zaghawa
- Over-representation of Zaghawa traders in local markets;
- The fact that the Zaghawa had secluded themselves and not taken part in communal (i.e. Rizeigat) customs
- Failure of the Zaghawa *omda* to act according to communal (i.e. Rizeigat) customs, though part of the Rizeigat *nazirate*
- The arrogant behaviour of the Zaghawa;
- Zaghawa accumulation of wealth and aspirations for leadership positions;
- Ascribed intention on the part of the Zaghawa as a whole to establish a "Zaghawa Greater Home" extending from Chad to central Sudan.

The Rizeigat representatives demanded repatriation of recent Zaghawa immigrants, registration of those who stayed, respect for Rizeigat suzerainty, the abolition of the Zaghawa *omodiyā* and the consolidation of scattered villages into larger ones (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 34).

The list points to a realization by the Rizeigat leadership that the Zaghawa were not being assimilated into the Rizeigat polity. By disbanding the Zaghawa *omodiyā* they hoped to make them easier to assimilate. Those Zaghawa who were under the guardianship of a Rizeigat village or camp and thus a dependant minority, would be allowed to stay. Those who had come on their own accord and establish villages in vacant land would have to leave.

According to the Zaghawa delegates on the other hand the problems were different

- The failure of the Rizeigat to accept the result of the 1986 elections
- The 1996 destruction of the Asalaya ballot boxes
- Rizeigat racism
- Jealousies of Zaghawa political and economic success
- Competition among the two groups for access to land
- Rizeigat double standards when dealing with Zaghawa and Rizeigat bandits
- The Rizeigat tendency to make every isolated incident a communal issue

For future peaceful coexistence the Zaghawa also demanded that the conference condemn the Rizeigat as aggressors, that *diyā* (blood money) and other compensation payments be accurately assessed and payment ensured and that looted animals be recovered and Rizeigat herders not be allowed to cross the railway line in their northward movements until the agreements were honoured and implemented.

The *Ajaweed* then made a determination of the actual causes of the conflict and announced a long list of recommendations. They argued that the effects of incidents of violence had been magnified by struggles over power, by the proliferation of firearms, by the tendency of the Rizeigat to monopolise economic resources and by the “absence of political, administrative and security capabilities in the area before and during the armed violence” (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 34):

The *Ajaweed* made twenty-two recommendations for the restoration of peace, including the following:

- The Zaghawa *Omda* should not set up a parallel administrative structure. After the conference, he would act as an ordinary *omda* within the Rizeigat *Nazirate*.
- The Government should equip the authorities in the area with the necessary equipment and manpower for the maintenance of peace and order
- Commissions should be formed to tour villages and camps, informing inhabitants about the terms of the reconciliation agreement.
- A mechanism for the implementation of conflict resolution should be established, headed by a high-status presidential appointee. (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 34)

It can be seen that the deliberations of the conference aired the grievances of the two groups in a controlled and systematic way and that the recommendations of the *Ajaweed* were a serious attempt to tackle them, at least at the immediate level. The only recommendations that were actually implemented, however, was the payment of *diya*, blood money. And the blood money payments that were agreed on were subsequently halved by central government. The Rizeigat paid half; the Government paid the rest. Although the full sum of compensation was received, the act was seen as a violation of neutrality on the part of the central Government⁴⁵. There was a further criticism of the conference; that it concentrated on immediate grievances and did not address the underlying demographic causes, namely the distress migration that had brought the Zaghawa from Northern Darfur and question of the political rights of such migrants dwelling in the communal *dars* of other ethnic groups. There was also scepticism about the likelihood of implementation of the recommendations of the *Ajaweed*, which they themselves were aware of, hence the stress in their judgment on the dissemination of information and the actual implementation of conference recommendations.

Darfur's relationship with regional centres of power

A number of wider issues are germane to local disputes in Darfur. These are the civil wars in Chad and Southern Sudan, Libyan interest in the central Sahara, and Khartoum's policy and policy changes in the region. Much of the weaponry in circulation in Darfur today is a by-product of Colonel Gaddafi's dream of extending the “Arab belt” into Africa (Harir 1994). The centrepiece of this plan was the Libyan invasion of Chad between 1987 and 1989. Both pro- and anti-Gaddafi Chadian factions used Darfur as a safe haven at various times, and the weapons they sold or abandoned have added to the region's volatility (Reyna 2003). The leaders of Gaddafi's expeditionary force were a well-trained division drawn from numerous Sahelian nations, known as the Arab Legion, but most notably from Sudanese *ansars*⁴⁶, the supporters of the descendants of the Mahdi. The latter were waging a low-intensity war against Numeri (de Waal 2004). After their defeat by Chadian forces

⁴⁵ There is a precedent in an 1970s settlement between the Rizeigat and the Aweil Dinka. On this occasion the entire sum was paid by the Government, though it never reached its intended beneficiaries.

⁴⁶ Umma party loyalist.

these heavily-indoctrinated and well-trained recruits returned to their home countries spreading a doctrine of Arab supremacy. In Darfur this was something new, an ideological strain in politics that had not been present before (International Crisis Group 2004: 8).

The Arab Gathering, the *murahaleen*, the *fursan* and the *janjaweed*

Prior to this, in 1965, intellectuals and activists from across Darfur's ethnic and political divide formed the *Jabhat Nahdat Darfur*, The Darfur Development Front (DDF). The objective of the DDF was to protect and lobby for the interests of the indigenous Darfuris in the struggle for power at the centre in Khartoum (Ali-Dinar 2003). In 1981 the DDF staged a popular and largely peaceful uprising that forced the Khartoum government to appoint its leader, Ahmed Diraige, as Governor of Darfur. It was the first time since the death of Ali Dinar in 1917 that a native Darfuri had held power in the region. It reunited the north and south of province, separated into North and South Darfur since 1974.

Some Arab intellectuals in Darfur, however, saw the DDF as a movement dominated by leaders from African ethnic groups, which had been able to gain influence because Darfur's Arab constituency was divided. The DDF did include a number of prominent intellectuals of Baggara and Zeyadiya origin, many of whom had high ranking positions in the organization, but it was indeed dominated by Fur and other African groups. An alternative political strategy was embraced by another group of Arab intellectuals who believed that they should form an alliance with the Fellata⁴⁷ and Zaghawa and thus take political control of the province. To this end the 'Gathering of the Arabs', or 'Arab Alliance', was created. This underground group began by distributing leaflets that called for the name of Darfur to be changed, on the grounds that Arabs in the province were more numerous than the Fur after whom it was named (Flint and de Waal 2005: 51).

The rise of the Arab Gathering can be seen as a milestone in the relationship between Khartoum and Darfur. Emboldened by the absence of government intervention following a series of small-scale robberies and attacks in their name, the Arab Gathering members wrote an open letter to President Sadiq al-Mahdi in 1987. The letter, which was published in a prominent regional newspaper and signed by some 27 Arab leaders from Darfur made various claims and demands: that Darfur was more than 70 per cent Arab and that as a result they should control the region politically, economically and socially (ibid.). The Sudanese president's response, though, was unsympathetic and he appointed Tijani Sese, a Fur, as the new Regional Governor.

The Arab Gathering began to take matters into their own hands. Directives known as *Qoreish 1* and *Qoreish 2*, released in 1988 and 1998 respectively, called for a covert war against the Zurga. The latter called for cells to infiltrate the Congress Party, an organization it claimed was dominated by "hybrid" Nubian-Arabs from the Nile region. The true Arabs, according to the directives, were the nomadic peoples of the West, the Juhayna nomads, whose homeland stretched from Kordofan to Lake Chad (ibid.: 52-53). Despite this divisive rhetoric, it is clear that the Arab Gathering had support even among members of the "hybrid tribes" of the Nile region.

The arming of Rizeigat and Misseriya tribal militias to fight the SPLA began in 1986, under the government of president Sadiq al-Mahdi (Ibrahim 2004: 3) and was continued by the NIF Government when it came to power in 1989 under the direction of the PDF (Mahmoud 2004: 2-4). The subsequent ascendancy of the military security cabal under the NIF led to the establishment of parallel institutions set up to execute central government directives without the interference of the regional government in El Fasher. The logic behind the

⁴⁷ Specifically the Ffulde speaking Fulani of Tullus.

creation of the militias however had changed. This change was manifested in the two recruitment drives that took place in Darfur, both of which had the effect of preferentially arming fighters from Arab tribes perceived by national military authorities as loyal to the central government. Many of the new *Murahaleen* militiamen were Darfuri, mainly Rizeigat fighters loyal to the Umma party and the al-Mahdi family. And many had served with the party in Gaddafi's Islamic Legion in Chad (de Waal 2004). Now they used their weapons during inter communal conflict such as that between the Rizeigat and Maali in 1999 and 2002. In 1992 the Government commissioned another militia force *al-Fursan*⁴⁸, made up mainly of Beni Halba fighters (Ali-Dinar 2003).

The role of Hassan al-Turabi

After the NIF came to power the Khartoum Government pursued two policies in Darfur. One was a conventional divide-and-rule strategy designed to shore up the authority of the centre. The other involved an attempt to construct a new, wider alliance for the Islamist project. The NIF project in its early years in power was to remould the Sudan into a state in which political Islam was the route to enfranchisement and citizenship (Flint and de Waal 2005: 191). Efforts were made to bring more Darfuris into the political fold (Tanner 2005: 17). The particular target was the Fellata inhabitants of the region, who prior to the 1989 coup were not citizens and could not vote and had no political representation. In the last analysis this Islamisation programme turned out not to be whole-hearted; a rallying call rather than a serious political project. Nevertheless the NIF, under the guidance of Hassan al-Turabi, did form links with influential elites from some ethnic groups in Darfur, mainly the Kobe Zaghawa and Berti from the north-west, who were already active in the Islamic Brotherhood and radical Islamic circles in Khartoum University. They formed part of the NIF's "alliance of the faithful", intended to unite Darfuri, Fellata and Arab Nile Valley Islamists.

When the ruling group split in 1999 and Hassan al-Turabi was driven from power, one of the casualties was this alliance. Out of the original Congress Party President Beshir formed *al-Mutamar al-Wattani* (the National Congress), while the Turabists formed *al-Mutamar al-Sha'bi* (the Popular Congress party). Most of the members of the formerly marginal groups in the new elite – those from drawn from the Fellata and other Darfuri groups – sided with Turabi, the architect of their inclusion in the power structures of the centre and joined his Popular Congress. Some later formed the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), one of the two main rebel groups in the present conflict in Darfur (de Waal 2004: 6-7).

After Turabi's fall from power, central government strategy reverted to the previous divide-and-rule pattern in Darfur. Militias drawn from Arab tribes were armed and given tacit licence to raid non-Arab settlements. Impartiality was progressively abandoned. Among non-Arab groups militias were also formed for self-defence, some of whom had military experience. Many Zaghawa militia men, for example, had fought alongside - and then against - the Libyans in Chad, or as mercenaries in Mauritania and Burkina Faso (Interview with JEM Official, February 2005), or against the SPLA on the Government side, in the Nuba mountains and against the Ugandan Army in Equatoria. It was these militias that later formed the core of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), the main rebel group in the current civil war.

The radical militarization of the non-Arabs in Darfur, however, can be traced back to a local conflict that occurred before the polarization of interests in the central government. In 1987, 27 Arab tribes, from Kordofan and Chad as well as Darfur, formed an alliance

⁴⁸ Horsemen. The term was used to designate the Beni Halba horse mounted militia men who fought against the SPLA incursion into Darfur.

against the Fur, declaring war on Zurga, and for the first time introducing an explicitly racial element into the discourse of local conflict. The objective of raids on Fur villages was to seize fertile Fur land permanently and warnings even be given in advance in the hope that the Fur would abandon their ancestral land without a fight (International Crisis Group 2004: 6). This was the time that the term *janjaweed*⁴⁹ entered common usage to describe the hordes that attacked villages and massacred inhabitants. In defence the Fur organized their own militias composed of retired army and police officers.

A Government-sponsored peace conference, organized in 1989 to resolve the conflict, provided only a brief respite as neither party disarmed or demobilized their militia forces, claiming that the central government was not in a position to guarantee their security. The agreement became one of a number that were never to be implemented (de Waal 2004: 195). This lack of follow-up from the Government became part of the wider slide towards impunity for Arab militias in Darfur and led to a growing perception among non-Arab groups that the Government itself was part of the problem.

In February 1990 Fur militiamen began attacking Arab camp grounds close to Zalingei. The army then closed off the area, declared it a military theatre and began attacking Fur civilians. "Truce committees" were dispatched to investigate why the 1989 agreement had not held (Morton 1992). A few months later a new Government-sponsored *judiyya* was convened. The committee produced a "Report of The Popular Committee for Salvation on the Conference to Secure the Tribal Peace Agreement". It outlined the factors involved in the outbreak of violence, noting the destabilizing presence of Fur militia and Arab *janjaweed* and the spread of light and heavy weapons in the region. It stressed the fact that the provisions of the earlier peace agreement had not been seen through, drawing attention, once again, to "a failure on the part of Government to enforce respect and to impose its authority in the areas of conflict." "This," the report concluded, "was a conspicuous factor leading to the violation of the Peace Agreement." (ibid.).

The report went on to make twenty-six detailed recommendations for improvement of security and administrative reorganization in the region (Morton 1992). The recommendations included

- A purge of individuals from the regular forces and officials and civil servants who were in the areas of tribal conflict at the time of the incidents.
- The redefinition of administrative units and re-registration of people in them, especially where refugee Sudanese tribes have settled in new areas. These to have their own units at the level of *sheikh* and *omda* but be attached to the tribe to which the land belongs at higher levels. Arabs in Fur areas to be counted and the non-Sudanese among them identified. New administrative units to be created where necessary.
- An increase in the membership of courts in the region to properly represent the tribes.
- Members of the Tribal Administration to treat all Sudanese citizens on an equal basis without regard to their tribal origin.
- Regular tribal shows and conferences to stimulate peaceful relations.
- A regional information service.
- A Peoples Defence force for the Region.

⁴⁹ The word *janjaweed* is a combination of *Jan* - Darfuri and Chadian Arabic for *jinn* or an evil spirit - and *jaweed/jawada* - Darfuri and Chadian Arabic for a horse. Thus the term in its simplest sense means *evil horsemen*. It is said to have been coined to describe the Bediyat Zaghawa and Gura'an (Teda) bandits that plagued the Chad/Darfur border during the last phase of the Chadian civil war. It is also said to have been used to describe the Arab militiamen that terrorized Fur villages during the 1997-1989 conflict. Whatever the exact origin, the term was used to describe both Arabs and non-Arabs before the current civil war.

The recommendations remained unimplemented (International Crisis Group 2004).

Of the factors in the conflict cited by the members of the reconciliation committee one of the most striking is their stress on the burgeoning of weaponry in the region. In the 1980s and 1990s the proliferation of firearms in the region gave rise to a level of lawlessness and banditry to which there was no comparison in Darfur's history. This in turn produced an amplification effect as the population of the region formed militias to protect their property and lives. The power of established tribal authorities over such militias became problematic. Many of their recruits were young men who had lived away from the reach of traditional leadership either in urban centres or as famine migrants. Confronted with this, traditional methods of conflict mediation struggled to maintain their effectiveness. Increasingly, it was a militia leader, not the *omda* or *nazir*, who took the decision when to take action in a conflict (Mohamed and Badri 2005: 23). In some cases, though, the forms of traditional authority were transformed in the new era: a new kind of *omda* began to emerge, one whose influence came primarily from leadership of an armed group. Musa Hilal, the pro-Government Rizeigat leader who has come to prominence during the current war in Darfur, is the best-known example⁵⁰. Distanced as they are from the old structures of native administration, many members of militias on both sides have little faith in *judiyya*, either the communal or Government-sponsored variety. Yet the traditional forms of reconciliation in Darfur have not yet run their course.

The current state of *judiyya* in Darfur

The current state of *judiyya* in the region is linked to the strategies adopted by the warring parties in Darfur. And these in turn are influenced by the patterns of recruitment in the rebel forces. The ethnic composition of the SLA and JEM differ.

The SLA forces incorporate most of Darfur's African ethnic groups (International Crisis Group 2004: 19). Its initial recruits were from two different sources with very different motives. The first were from Fur and Masaalit self-defence forces that had taken part in earlier conflicts. The second was comprised of mainly Zaghawa fighters who were unhappy with the Government's failure to enforce the terms of a peace agreement with an Arab group, Awlad Zeyd, in 2001. In 2002 Zaghawa attacked government installations in Karnoi, Um Burru and Ein Farah. By February the two groups had begun to coordinate with Zaghawa who had fought in Chad, and Zaghawa fighters were brought into Jebel Marra to train Fur and Masaalit recruits (Interview with JEM Official, February 2005). As a consequence there are divisions and tensions within the SLA. The southern command is mainly Fur and Masaalit, based in Jebel Marra and Southern and Western Darfur states, while the majority of the fighting force is Zaghawa or Midob, based in the north.

The JEM on the other hand is an almost entirely Zaghawa movement, with most of its leadership coming from the Kobe sub-group. Many of its fighters were initially members of the SLA who left in protest over the SLA's adherence to ceasefires when the Government was not observing them (ibid.: 20).

During the current armed insurrection in Darfur there have been numerous government- and communally-sponsored initiatives aimed at bringing about a peaceful settlement with competing attempts being made by the ruling party, the parliament and the federal government (International Crisis Group 2004: 13). More recently these have taken place in parallel with internationally-sponsored peace talks between the Government and the SLA

⁵⁰ A leader of Um Julul section of the Northern Rizeigat and a militia group linked to the Sudan Government armed forces.

and the JEM. Some of these processes partake both of the traditional style of *judiyya* and of international-style mediation. But most of them have, in the final analysis, been co-opted or blocked by the central government (ibid.:13) and it is doubtful whether the Government's own sponsorship of *judiyya* meetings is any more committed than in the run-up to the war in the 1990s.

In February 2003, for example, the GoS announced a "Mechanism for Extending the Authority of the State" (MEAS), and requested the regional traditional leaders and government appointees to come up with suggestions for the restoration of peace in the region. Hundreds of leaders were invited to a consultative forum on security in Darfur, which took place in El Fasher 24-25 February 2003. The result was a consensus that the government should open a dialogue with the rebels. The committee then went about setting up four subcommittees on an ethnic basis⁵¹ to meet with rebel leaders and civilian populations (International Crisis Group 2004: 13). The Fur and Zaghawa committees reported back with the grievances and demands of the rebels. Their only condition for attending was that Ajaweed should not be chosen on an ethnic basis. At this point the Sudanese army went on the offensive and the proposed talks never took place.

In another attempt in June/July 2003, the Minister of Education, Ahmed Babiker Nahar, a Zaghawa, and the Governor of the Nile State, Abdalla Ali Masar, a Rizeigat, both senior officials in one of the two factions of the divided Umma party⁵², launched their own initiative to negotiate a settlement with the rebels in Darfur. With President Beshir's approval a delegation of thirty traditional leaders and government officials entered an SLA stronghold (International Crisis Group 2004: 14). The SLA set three preconditions for entering the talks: that they should address the political roots causes of the rebellion; that the Government should not refer to them as bandits; and that the *janjaweed* be disarmed. On this occasion the Minister of Education went as far as to say that the rebel cause was "just and rational in some of its aspects, and was amenable to give and take", (International Crisis Group 2004: 13). The two government officials recommended that the Government open negotiations with the rebels. Once again these did not take place (ICG 2004: 14).

Another initiative was launched January 2004 in Nairobi by Vice President Taha and Ahmed Ibrahim Diraiqe, the former governor of Darfur, now an opposition leader in exile. Diraiqe used his influence to persuade the SLA and JEM to take part in talks to open up the region to humanitarian assistance. But the talks collapsed when the Government abruptly pulled out (International Crisis Group 2004: 13).

Around the same time Hassan Bargo, a Zaghawa government minister, launched a competing initiative. The meeting between Bargo and the Consultative Council of the Zaghawa resulted in a statement that promised an increased number of government positions to Zaghawa. Peace talks resulting from this were scheduled to take place in Chad but never materialised (ICG 2004: 13).

Various groups in Darfur have tried to initiate peace processes without Government participation. The *nazirs* of the Midob and Zeyadiya have made attempts at reconciliation (Flint and de Waal 2005: 122-126). In Dar Masaalit an agreement was reached between the *Sultan* of the Masaalit and the recently appointed Arab *amirs*. The agreement specified that the Arab groups would keep their *amirs*, but under the nominal authority of an elected Sultan (ibid.). This ensured that the numerically superior Masaalit would always be able to elect one of their own as *Sultan*.

⁵¹ Fur, Zaghawa, Arab, and non-specific

⁵² A splinter faction that broke off from the UMMA party and entered the Government.

Even the groups from which the *janjaweed* are recruited have, on occasion, sought to negotiate with their victims. The *amir* of the Awlad Zeyd of West Darfur approached the Masaalit *Sultan* and made an agreement by which they would vacate the Masaalit land that they occupied in exchange for access to pastures (International Crisis Group 2005: 11). The Awlad Zeyd, it has been suggested, are the victims of their success as raiders, much as the Rizeigat were in northern Bahr el Ghazal. Their looted herds need to move more frequently and farther for pastures and water and thus they have come to value security guarantees from their neighbours and erstwhile victims. When stock-keeping becomes more important than raiding and the search for safe pasture becomes a higher priority than further predation or rivalry for power, traditional reconciliation mechanisms may reassert themselves, as they have done, in some cases, between the Baggara tribes and the Dinka of northern Bahr el Ghazal.

The Sudanese government has done its best to derail these communally sponsored initiatives by playing off one group against another. When the Maali were given their own *nazirate* this served the function of maintaining tension between them and the Rizeigat. (Neither of the two groups has been drawn into the war in Darfur.) The Government has also replaced certain uncooperative leaders, such as the Magdume of Nyala, an action that may be understood as a warning to others who aspire to make peace independently (Flint and de Waal 2005: 122-126).

Of the various indigenous peace initiatives the most plausible has been that initiated by the *Nazir* of the Rizeigat, Saeed Mahmoud Ibrahim Musa Madibu (Flint and de Waal 2005: 122-126). The Madibu initiative is designed to extend the peace in South Darfur. The Southern Rizeigat have made agreements with the Birgid and Dagu and Begio (groups, it may be noted, that have already been disarmed by the Government). There has also been a recent rapprochement with the Maali to the north, a group with which the Rizeigat have had recurrent feuding relations (*ibid.*). In 2004 the Rizeigat *Nazir* took a leading part, along with other traditional leaders, in a Libyan-sponsored peace conference in Tripoli, with representatives of the JEM and SLA. This produced a Darfur Tribes Initiative which called for the reestablishment of effective Native Administration in Darfur.

The *Nazir* of the Rizeigat might be thought an unlikely candidate for the role of peacemaker. His predecessor as *Nazir* (the present *Nazir's* elder brother) was responsible for mobilising the Rizeigat in the war in the South on the Government side. In the 1980s and 1990s Rizeigat militias, with Government support, repeatedly raided SPLM/A controlled areas in northern Bahr el Ghazal. Although the raiding profited militia members, the price was that it restricted the access for Rizeigat herds to the dry-season grazing in the Dinka area. Despite pressure from the central government to become similarly involved in the war in Darfur, the present *Nazir* has stated that he will not raise a militia unless Dar Rizeigat itself is attacked (Tanner 2005: 23). The interests of the southern Rizeigat in Darfur are also rather different from their interest in the Dinka grazing grounds to the south. They have little to gain there. As a result the Rizeigat and their *Nazir* are an unexpected force for peace.

Conclusion

The system of native administration still haunts the current decayed administrative system of Darfur. *Idara ahalia* recognized and strengthened one of its most important aspects: the quasi-judicial authority of the *ajaweed* and their ability to mitigate conflict when supported by a government that is effective and even-handed. The restoration of native administration in its historical form is not a possibility in Darfur, even in a time of peace. Environmental deterioration, mass displacement and associated social transformation have

altered the political landscape. But the recognition and reincorporation of elements of traditional authority will need to be part of any solution to the current crisis. In Darfur, ethnicity has become an unprecedentedly fraught issue. Part of the solution must lie in the positive aspects of kin-based social networks that are exemplified in traditional mediation practices

The institution of *Mutamarat al Sulh* faces problems, however. Traditional leaders who acted as *ajaweed* are, with some exceptions such as the Rizeigat *Nazir*, seen as less powerful now than in the past. This is due, on the one hand to curtailment of their powers by central government, and on the other to the growing strength of militia commanders with different notions of accountability to the communities they hail from. Some groups in Darfur have begun to ask prominent officials, rather than elders and notables, to act as *ajaweed*. But the connections that officials are likely to have to the central government are problematic, laying them open to accusations of bias and inefficaciousness.

Even as it attempts to constrain and manipulate local leaders, the Government recognises the importance of the political language of traditional authority. The *amirate* system introduced in the 1990s is an example of this⁵³. The *amirate* is a political institution that has powerful reverberations elsewhere in the Arabic-speaking world, but *amirs* were unheard of in Darfur. That the central government should attempt to extend its control by creating new forms of traditional leadership indicates the endurance of an idea of legitimacy rooted in local hierarchies.

The wider problem of Darfur can only be resolved by international mediation, but the many local conflicts that are exacerbated by it and wrapped up in it can only be solved by a local process of mediation. The conditions for this do not currently exist, as the Government has shown itself unwilling to sponsor such proceedings in good faith, or enforce their recommendations

For *judiyya* to be effective there needs to be clarity in the relation between central government, local authority and indigenous leadership. This requires integrity in administrative officials and an understanding on their part of the history of indigenous political institutions, an understanding beyond what is necessary for a policy of divide and rule. It may be necessary to define the nature of *dars* more clearly, perhaps redefine them. Are they ethnic homelands or administrative units? What rights do minority groups within the *dar* have vis-à-vis the majority?

The institution of *judiyya* is by no means defunct in Darfur, even though it may have become less effective. There is no lack of peace negotiations. The problem is that the recommendations made as a result of *judiyya* processes are not implemented. It can be seen from the record of past conferences that if they were implemented conflicts are less likely to recur. The failure of central government to implement the conclusions of peace meetings, even those it has itself convened, may sometimes be unintentional. Although the state in Sudan has shown itself capable of projecting force to peripheral areas like Darfur, this does not mean it is capable, even if it wishes, of providing good government there.

⁵³ Amirs in Dar Masaalit and new Magdums, and Nazirs in Nyala and Dar Birgid.

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Acronyms

ACAD	Abyei Community Action for Development
ACHA	Africa Center for Human Advocacy (SSNGO)
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AMAC	Assistance to Mine-Affected Communities
ANCCC	All Nuba Conference Chairing Committee
ANGATO	A Misseriya development organisation in Muglad
ANV	Association of Napata Volunteers (SSNGO)
AU	African Union
BCIDS	Badya Centre for Integrated Development Services
BYDA	Bahr el Ghazal Youth Development Association (SSNGO)
CA or CAid	Christian Aid (INGO)
CAP	Consolidated Appeals (the annual UN funding appeal mechanism)
CAR	Central African Republic
CARE	INGO
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEAWC	Committee for the Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children (GoS)
CFA	Cease Fire Agreement (here refers to the Nuba Mountains)
CHAD	Coordinator for Humanitarian Assistance Department
CHARM	Centre for Humanitarian Affairs Resource Management
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency (GDO)
CMA	Christian Mission Aid (INGO)
COD	Commission of the Displaced (Government of Sudan)
Concern	INGO
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (the series of documents finalised and signed in January 2005, to end the war between the SPLM/A and the GoS)
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRS	Catholic Relief Services (INGO)
CSI	Christian Solidarity International (INGO)
CSIW	Centre for the Strategic Initiatives of Women (Ahfad University, Khartoum)
CUSH	Congress of Sudan Homeland (JEM - related)
DDF	Darfur Development Front
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development (UK government aid ministry)
DMR	Dinka, Misseria and Rizeigat
DOP	Declaration of Principles (negotiating framework for the IGAD peace process)
DoT	Diocese of Torit (Roman Catholic Church)

DUP	Democratic Unionist Party (one of the two political parties dominant in Sudan before the 1989 coup)
EAC	East Africa Community
ECOS	European Coalition on Oil in Sudan
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (Ethiopia' ruling party since 1991)
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office of UK Government
FIB	Faysal Islamic Bank
FOSCO	Federation of Civil Society Organisations
GAA	German Agro-Action (INGO)
GHOA	Greater Horn of Africa
GNPOC	Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company, a joint venture between Sudanese, Chinese, Malaysian and Indian firms
GOAL	GOAL (Irish INGO)
GNU	Government of National Unity (current, post CPA national government of Sudan)
GoS	Government of Sudan (up until CPA in 2005)
GoSS	Government of South Sudan (following CPA 2005)
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission (GoS)
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person/Population
IDPM	Institute for Development Policy and Management (University of Manchester)
IFAD	UN International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs	International Financial Institutions (notably IMF and World Bank)
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (in GHOA)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMRF	International Medical Relief Fund
INCORE	International Conflict Research (a joint programme of the United Nations University and the University of Ulster)
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organisation fo Migration
IPF	IGAD Partners' Forum
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks (news service of the UN)
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement (Islamist rebel group in Darfur)
JMC	Joint Military Commission (monitors of ceasefire in Nuba Mountains, 2002-2005)
Liech State	A name used by the SPLA for the area of Western Upper Nile corresponding to 'Wahda' or 'Unity' State in GoS terminology
MEAS	Mechanism for Extending the Authority of the State (a GoS initiative launched in February 2003 in relation to the Darfur conflict)

MFC	Mechanised Farming Corporation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid (INGO)
NCDS	Naath Community Development Services (SSNGO)
NDA	National Democratic Alliance (coalition of political groups including the SPLM/A and northern opposition parties)
NDO	National Development Organisation (SNGO working in Abyei)
NIF	National Islamic Front
NMP	Nuba Mountains Programme
NMPACT	Nuba Mountains Programme Advancing Conflict Transformation (a UN-led collaborative endeavour among many relief and development agencies)
NOVIB	INGO (Oxfam Netherlands)
NPG	Non-partisan group
NSCC	New Sudan Council of Churches (South Sudan)
NSIN	New Sudan Indigenous Network
NWC	National Water Corporation
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN body)
OLS	Operation Lifeline Sudan (UN-led relief and rehabilitation programme)
OMCT	World Organisation Against Torture
Pact	US-based INGO. The Sudan branch administers the SPF
PACTA	Programme for Advancing Conflict Transformation in Abyei (UN-led collaborative endeavour among relief and development agencies)
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PAT Africa	A private sector water drilling company in Nairobi
PBI	Peace Building Initiative
PCOS	Presbyterian Church of Sudan
PDC	Peace and Development Centre
PDF	Popular Defence Forces (grouping of GoS-backed militias)
People-to-people	A democratic approach to peace dialogue, or a movement using such an approach
People to People	A programme of the NSCC, that pioneered the people-to-people approach in South Sudan
PfP	Planning for Peace, an initiative by the IGAD Partner's Forum, to prepare for post-conflict reconstruction
PRIO	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
RASS	Relief Association of South Sudan (aid wing of southern rebel faction, now incorporated in SRRC)
RPPB	Return, Protection and Peace-Building (a UNICEF-sponsored programme in northern Sudan)
SAF	Sudan Alliance Forces (Northern armed anti-Government group)
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SC-UK, SCF-UK	Save the Children (UK)

SCBRC	Sudan Catholic Bishops Regional Conference (for southern Sudan)
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army (in Darfur)
SNGO	Sudanese Non-governmental organisation (based in GoS areas)
SNP	Sudanese National Party
SOAR	Social Organisation and Administration Rehabilitation (USAID programme)
SPCR	Sudanese Popular Committee for Relief
SPDF	Sudan People's Democratic Front
SPF	Sudan Peace Fund (USAID project implemented by a Pact-led consortium of NGOs)
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army
SRC	Sudanese Red Crescent
SRO	Southern Records Office
SRRA	Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (aid wing of SPLM/A, now incorporated in SRRC)
SRRC	Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (aid wing of SPLM/A)
SSDF	see UDSF
SSFI	South Sudan Friends International
SSIM/A	Southern Sudan Independence Movement /Army (armed faction 1994-97)
SSLM	South Sudan Liberation Movement (armed faction formed 1999)
SSNGO	Southern Sudanese NGO
SSOM	South Sudan Operation Mercy
SSUA	South Sudan United Army, faction formed in 1998 by Paulino Matip
STAR	Sudan Transitional Assistance for Rehabilitation, a USAID programme of funding aimed at improving governance while providing social services in South Sudan
SUPRAID	Sudan Production Aid, an indigenous NGO based in Nairobi and Northern Bahr el Ghazal
SUVAD	Sudanese Voluntary Agency for Development (SSNGO)
SuWep	Support to Sudanese Women's Empowerment for peace
SWAN	Sudanese Women's Association of Nairobi
SWC	State Water Corporation
SWVP	Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace (SSNGO)
Transitional Zone	Describes the border areas between the North and the South, such as the Nuba Mountains.
UDSF/SSDF	United Democratic Salvation Front/South Sudan Defence Forces, respectively the political and military wings of the combined group of former Southern rebels that signed a peace agreement with GoS in 1997.
UMCC	Upper Nile Military Command Council, a local coalition of forces that flourished briefly around Akobo from late 1999
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Family Planning Association

UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNIDPC	Upper Nile Inter-Denominational Peace Committee
UNOCHA	UN Office of the Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs
UNPDTF	Upper Nile Peace and Development Task Force (inter-agency group)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (GDO)
USCR	United States Committee for Refugees
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary of Indigenous Terms

<i>Aballa</i>	(Arabic) Camel herders (literally "camels")
<i>ajwadi</i> (sing) <i>ajaweed</i> (plur)	(Arabic) Mediator
<i>Al sulha al gabali</i>	(Arabic) tribal reconciliation.
<i>Amir</i>	A tribal chief in Northern Sudan with powers designated by the Government, higher than an <i>omda</i> or <i>sheikh</i> , but below a <i>nazir</i> .
<i>Amirate</i>	The geographical area of an <i>amir</i> 's authority
<i>Ansar</i>	Sudanese religious sect founded by the Mahdi. The Mahdi's great-grandson Sadiq al-Mahdi heads the Umma party, the political expression of the Ansar.
<i>Awlad</i>	(Arabic) tribal section or clan
<i>Baggara</i>	(Arabic for "cattle") A collective term used for cattle-owning nomadic Arab tribes in southern Darfur and southern Kordofan, including Rizeigat and Misseriya
<i>Collo</i>	Indigenous term for Shilluk people (territory on White Nile north of Malakal)
<i>Dar</i>	(Arabic) tribal homeland.
<i>Fallata / Fellata</i>	Refers specifically to the Ffulde-speaking cattle nomads spread throughout the Sahel from western Senegal to the Nile. In Sudan, though, it is used to refer to members of any group of West Africa origin ie Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri, Takuri.
<i>Fursan</i>	(Arabic) Horsemen or "knights", term first used for the Beni Halba horse-mounted militia men who fought against SPLA incursions into Darfur and subsequently other militias.
<i>Fursha</i>	Name given to the Masaalit official who acts as a tribal head equivalent to a Fur <i>Shartay</i> .
<i>Hakura</i>	(Arabic) A 'grant' or 'estate'. A grant of land in Darfur, historically administered and taxed on behalf of the Sultan of Darfur either by a local ethnic elite or an administrator (usually a Fallata holy man, or Nuba eunuch).
<i>Idara Ahalia</i>	(Arabic) Native Administration, established under Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule.

<i>janjaweed</i> (<i>janjawid, jingawid</i> etc)	Combination of the Darfuri or Chadian Arabic words <i>jan</i> or <i>jinn</i> (evil spirit) and <i>jaweed/jawada</i> (horse). Before the current civil war in Darfur, the term was used to describe bandits from ethnic groups of African and Arab origin. Today its use is largely confined to those from Arab groups
<i>Judiyya</i>	(Arabic) Mediation
<i>kalam al wataneen</i>	(Arabic) People's talk, colloquial term for tribal peace meetings.
Loki	Common abbreviation for Lokichokio on the Kenya-Sudan border, the base for aid operations for South Sudan.
<i>luak</i> (pl <i>luaak</i>)	(Dinka) cattle byre
Madibu	The ruling family of the Rizeigat
<i>Maraheel</i>	(Arabic) Nomad migration, or the routes used by it
<i>Murahleen</i>	(Arabic) Nomads. Commonly used to refer to government sponsored militias drawn from Rizeigat and Misseriya Humr.
<i>mutamarat al sulh</i>	(Arabic) Reconciliation conference
<i>Naath</i>	(Nuer) Nuer people
<i>Nahus</i>	Copper drums given to chiefs by the Fur Sultan in installation ceremony.
<i>Nazir</i>	In Northern Sudan, a tribal chief with powers designated by the Government, superior to an <i>amir, omda</i> or <i>sheikh</i> .
<i>Nazirate</i>	The geographical area of a <i>nazir's</i> authority.
<i>Omda</i>	A tribal chief in Northern Sudan with powers designated by the Government, usually higher than a Government-designated <i>sheikh</i> , but lower than a <i>nazir</i> or <i>amir</i>
<i>Omodiya</i>	The geographical area of omda's authority
<i>Salaam min al-dakhal</i>	(Arabic) meaning 'peace from within' a GoS strategy to encourage SPLM/A commanders to make peace with the government, linked to a nationalist ideology of self-reliance.
<i>Shartai</i>	(Dagu or Kanuri language) The name of the administrative unit below a Dar. The official who heads this unit is known as a Shartay
<i>Sheikh</i>	In Northern Sudan, a traditional social leader. In some areas <i>sheikhs</i> are designated with official powers by the Government, at an inferior level to <i>nazirs</i> and <i>omdas</i> . Some are regarded as religious men with religious influence.
<i>Toic</i>	(Dinka and Nuer languages) swampy regions used for grazing in the dry season.
<i>Zurga</i>	Literally 'blues'. In Darfuri and Chadian Arabic is used to mean 'black people'. The term <i>Aswad</i> 'black' in Arabic has negative connotations and is not normally used to describe those of the Muslim faith. In riverain areas of Sudan the corresponding term is <i>Kudra</i> , meaning, literally, "greens". In both regions Arabs are referred to as <i>Humra</i> "Reds".

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Local Peace Meetings (by Region and Date)

Equatoria

Place: Juba
Parties: Dinka; Bari; Mandari
Date: 1973
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore and others 2003

Place: Uma River
Parties: Madi; Acholi
Date: 1987
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Simonse 2004

Place: Ame
Parties: Madi; Acholi
Date: 1990
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Simonse 2004

Place: Ikotos, Isoke, Loguruny
Parties: Lotuho; neighbouring groups
Date: 1995 January
Convenors/supporters: DoT, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Simonse 2004

Place: Loming, Lalanga
Parties: Lotuho; neighbouring groups
Date: 1995 October
Convenors/supporters: DoT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Simonse 2004

Place: Calamini, Ilyeu
Parties: Lotuho; neighbouring groups
Date: 1996 December 26
Convenors/supporters: DoT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Simonse 2004

Place: Hiyala
Parties: Iliou, Loming and Chalamini villages
Date: 1996 December 31
Convenors/supporters: DoT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Otwari 1997

Place: Lobelbel, Lotome
Parties: Logir; Boya (people of Torit and Kapoeta counties)
Date: 1997 January 1, February 5
Convenors/supporters: DoT, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Longole and others 1997; Simonse 2004

Place: Lobelbel
Parties: Lotuho, Lopit
Date: 1998
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: PACT 2003c

Place: Lodwar
Parties: Toposa; Turkana
Date: 1999 March
Convenors/supporters: OAU-IBAR, SPLM, GoK
Political jurisdiction: Kenya
Outcomes:
Document references: Interview with George Achom, December 2003; Interview with Darlington Akaboy, January 2004

Place: Kikilai, Chukudum
Parties: Didinga; SPLA (Bor Dinka)
Date: 1999 August 20
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Mayo 1999; Kwaje 1999; NSCC 1999a; Jenner 2000; Phillippo 2000

Place: Kakuratom
Parties: SPLA; Didinga
Date: 2002 August
Convenors/supporters: ?SPLM
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: PACT 2003c

Place: Yei
Parties: Civilians; civil administration; military officers in Equatoria
Date: 2002 December
Convenors/supporters: SPF, SPLM
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: anon. 2002

Place: **Kidepo**
Parties: **Toposa; Boya; Lopit; Lotuko; Didinga; Logir**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **SPF, SPLM/A, Pax Christi, NCA, CRS**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Resolutions for cessation of hostilities; return of stolen property; provision of education facilities; strengthening of border security.**
Document references: **PACT 2003c; PACT 2003e**

Place: **Ramula (Ikotos)**
Parties: **Logir; Didinga; Boya**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **Manna Sudan**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Cessation of hostilities, compensation for killings, peace committees formed to monitor the situation**
Document references: **PACT 2003c**

Place: **Yei**
Parties: **SPLA (deserters); civil society**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Cessation of hostilities; mutual respect; unity, peace and forgiveness.**
Document references: **Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004; NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Tore**
Parties: **SPLM/A; civil society and churches in Western Equatoria**
Date: **2003 April 7-11**
Convenors/supporters: **SPF, SPLM/A, IPCS**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Agreement on: promotion of dialogue and reconciliation; the protection of cultural values.**
Document references: **PACT 2003d; Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004; NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Mundri**
Parties: **Moru; Bor Dinka, SPLA**
Date: **2004 June**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLM/A**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Dr Riek Machar (Deputy Chairman of the SPLM/A) ordered cattle camps to move from Mundri.**
Document references: **Gimba 2005**

Place: **Hiyala**
Parties: **Lotuho clans**
Date: **2004 October**
Convenors/supporters: **Spear of Hope**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLA/M**
Outcomes: **Community-led analysis of root causes of conflict; local authorities used analysis to resolve outstanding conflict; opening of isolated Lotuho communities.**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Tambura**
Parties: **Zande, SPLA, Dinka**
Date: **2004 December**
Convenors/supporters: **Sudan Peace Foundation**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLA/M**
Outcomes:

Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Tali
Parties: Moru; Bor Dinka, SPLA
Date: 2005 March
Convenors/supporters: PACT, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: SPLA was requested to provide forces to escort displaced people back to Bor.
Document references: Gimba 2005

Place: Kimatong
Parties: Lotuho, Buya, Lopit and Pari
Date: 2005 March
Convenors/supporters: Galcholo and CORDA
Political jurisdiction: SPLA/M
Outcomes: Resolutions to address cattle-raiding; opening of routes for trade of cattle and other goods.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Kamulach
Parties: Ketebo and Logir
Date: 2005 November
Convenors/supporters: Manna Sudan
Political jurisdiction: GOSS
Outcomes: Opening of road from Chukudum to Ikotos; restitution for Ketebo community after killing of 8 women in December 2004
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Lafon
Parties: Pari (GoS and SPLA aligned)
Date: 2005 December
Convenors/supporters: Spear of Hope and Lafon Community Youth Union
Political jurisdiction: GOSS
Outcomes: Reconciliation between Pari people divided by the two ruling systems in Sudan; agreement on re-alignment of army and absorption of SAF forces into the SPLA contingent; county leadership endorsed by community.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Kapoeta and Lauro
Parties: Toposa and Didinga
Date: 2005 May - December
Convenors/supporters: Losolia Relief and Development Agency and Christian Development Services
Political jurisdiction: GOSS
Outcomes: Return of abducted children to the Didinga community; cessation of hostilities between Toposa and Didinga; local authorities reviewed and upheld earlier agreements and apprehended violators.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Upper Nile

Place: Fangak
Parties: Nuer sections
Date: 1963
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:

Document references: Lowrey 1995

Place: **Fangak**
Parties: **Nuer sections**
Date: **1973**
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Lowrey 1995

Place: **Akobo**
Parties: **Lou Nuer; Jikany Nuer; other Nuer**
Date: **1994 September 15**
Convenors/supporters: PCOS, SSIM
Political jurisdiction: SSIM
Outcomes: Signed Peace Agreement to: end hostilities; share the use of water, grazing lands and fishing grounds; write off property lost in the conflict; apprehend violators of the agreement.
Document references: Lowrey 1995; Simonse and Nyaba 1996; Lowrey 1996; Lowrey 1998a; Jenner 2000; Nyanath and Huggins 2003

Place: **Liech State (3 locations)**
Parties: **Nuer in Liech State**
Date: **1995**
Convenors/supporters: SSIM/A state governor
Political jurisdiction: SSIM
Outcomes:
Document references: Lowrey 1995

Place: **Nasir**
Parties: **Jikany**
Date: **1995**
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: Babiker 2002

Place: **Nyibodo, near Tonga**
Parties: **Shilluk (SPLA-United); Padang Dinka (?SSIM)**
Date: **1995 February**
Convenors/supporters: SPLA-United
Political jurisdiction: SPLA-United
Outcomes: One of three grassroots agreements apparently orchestrated by Dr Lam Akol in order to stabilize his faction's position. It comprised understandings on non-aggression, military respect for civilians, freedom for trade, and the legitimacy of making peace with local murahaleen.
Document references: Akol 2003

Place: **Wilnyang**
Parties: **Shilluk (SPLA-United); Padang Dinka (?SSIM)**
Date: **1995 April**
Convenors/supporters: SPLA-United
Political jurisdiction: SPLA-United
Outcomes: One of three grassroots agreements apparently orchestrated by Dr Lam Akol in order to stabilize his faction's position. It comprised understandings on non-aggression, military respect for civilians, freedom for trade, and the legitimacy of making peace with local murahaleen.
Document references: Akol 2003

Place: **Abienyayo**
Parties: **Shilluk (SPLA-United); Padang Dinka (SSIM)**
Date: **1996 March**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLA-United**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLA-United**
Outcomes: **One of three grassroots agreements apparently orchestrated by Dr Lam Akol in order to stabilize his faction's position. It comprised understandings on non-aggression, military respect for civilians, freedom for trade, and access for relief supplies.**
Document references: **Akol 2003**

Place: **Mayom-Anyuon**
Parties: **SPLM/A;SSUM (Matip) forces; local population**
Date: **1998**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLM/A, SSUA**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Riing Lang 1998**

Place: **Lokichokio, Kenya**
Parties: **Nuer;Dinka (Eastern)**
Date: **1998 June**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, Lowrey**
Political jurisdiction: **Kenya**
Outcomes: **Loki Accord to hold a series of meetings "to pursue all possible means towards a just and lasting peace in the land other Nuer and Dinka." Accord demands: commanders on both sides refrain from hostile acts; local agreements be respected and honoured; cattle raiding be halted; killing and abduction of women and children be halted; recently abducted women and children be returned to their homes; burning of homesteads cease; free movement be permitted between Nuer and Dinka areas.**
Document references: **Wuol and others 1998; Jenner 2000; NSCC 2002b**

Place: **Akobo**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **1999**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Women agree to work for transformation of conflict, refrain from war songs.**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Lokichokio, Kenya**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka; Murle**
Date: **1999 June**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **Kenya**
Outcomes: **A signed resolution to show commitment and willingness to achieve peace in their communities; willingness to join the peace process; to conduct prayer meetings in Sudan calling for peace.**
Document references: **Jenner 2000**

Place: **Akobo**
Parties: **Nuer (SPLA; SSDF; GoS militia)**
Date: **1999 August 15-18**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Military agreement: for a ceasefire for Lou Nuer territory; to hold Lou Governance Conference in Oct 1999; unhindered access for NGOs.**
Document references: **Jenner 2000; Flint 2001; Phillippo 2004**

Place: **Waat**
Parties: **Lou Nuer soldiers; civilians**
Date: **1999** October-November
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, PCOS
Political jurisdiction: Other
Outcomes: Signed covenant decreed an end to all hostilities among the Lou Nuer, an amnesty for all offences, and called for: a separation of civil and military power independent of Khartoum and its proxies; the establishment of a police force independent of the military; and the demobilisation of all children under 15; the establishment of a Lou Nuer Peace and Governance Council to rebuild the civil administration. Later two new rival Nuer factions were created- Wal Duany's SSLM and RIEK Machar's SPDF.
Document references: Lowrey 1998b; Phillippo 1999; NSCC 1999b; Jenner 2000; Phillippo 2000; Flint 2001; Steiner 2002; Nyanath and Huggins 2003

Place: **Liliir**
Parties: **Some Dinka; Nuer; Murle; Jie; Anuak; Kachipo**
Date: **2000** May 9-15
Convenors/supporters: NSCC
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Signed a Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation, and resolved the following: to cease all hostilities and for all military groups to respect the civilian population; for communities and leaders to establish the conditions necessary to foster local peace and development and the provision of basic essential services; an amnesty for all offences against people and their property prior to the conference; the return of all abducted women and children to their places of origin, and where necessary, for marriage customs to be fulfilled; to uphold freedom of movement, trade and communication; respect for all cross border agreements and the authority of the border chiefs and police; the regulation and sharing of access to common areas for grazing, fishing and water points; good governance from the leadership and the observance of human rights; to advocate for the return of displaced, especially those from the Bor area. Communication and movement in the area improved. The Gawaar and Lou were able to move livestock into Bor Dinka areas. Within a year Bor Dinka had built 13 new primary schools and 5,000 had returned to Bor.
Document references: Flint 2001; NSCC 2002c; Jenner 2000; Phillippo 2000; NSCC 2000b; NSCC 2000c; NSCC 2004b

Place: **Pochalla**
Parties: **Church people (Anuak; Nuer; Murle)**
Date: **2000**
Convenors/supporters: NSCC
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Agreement to promote church unity, and community relations
Document references: NSCC (2004) NSCC Peace Conferences

Place: **Paluer**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer;**
Date: **2000**
Convenors/supporters: NSCC
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Women threaten to stop bearing children until their husbands stop fighting
Document references: NSCC 2004a

Place: **Pagak**
Parties: **Lou; Gawaar (Nuer)**
Date: **2001**
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, SPDF, civil society groups
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Outlaw interethnic fighting; share common resources; renew respect 1994 Akobo peace agreement.
Document references: Flint 2001; NSCC 2004a

Place: **Gurnyang**
Parties: **Jikany; Lou (Nuer)**
Date: **2001 July**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **Agreement on cessation of hostilities; freedom of movement; training of paralegals, civil society.**
Document references: **Flint 2001; Atem and Tut 2002; NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Boma**
Parties: **Toposa; Murle; Jie; Kachipo; Anuak**
Date: **2002 April**
Convenors/supporters: **Pax Christi**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Interview with Moses Gai Samuel, 14 December 2003; NCDS 2003b**

Place: **Ayod**
Parties: **Lou; Gawaar (Nuer)**
Date: **2002**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **Sharing of natural resources; return of stolen property; repatriation of IDPs**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Panyagor**
Parties: **Lou; Bor Dinka**
Date: **2002**
Convenors/supporters: **Locals**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Interview with Isaiah Diing, January 2004**

Place: **Yomciir**
Parties: **Bor Dinka; Murle**
Date: **2002**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLA, NSCC, CAid, CEAS**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Interview with Isaiah Diing, January 2004**

Place: **Nakwatom, Kapoeta County**
Parties: **Didinga; Bor Dinka(SPLM/A); also Toposa, Lotuko, Boya**
Date: **2002 August**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, SPLM/A, HACDAD, WUDRANS, PDA**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Okot and others 2002; NSCC 2002b**

Place: **Abwong**
Parties: **Dinka; Lou Nuer; Shilluk**
Date: **2002 August 02**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **NSCC 2002a**

Place: **Nanyangachor**
Parties: **Toposa; Murle; Jie; Kachipo**
Date: **2003 January 26 - February 4**
Convenors/supporters: **Pax Christi**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Interview with Moses Gai Samuel, 14 December 2003; NCDS 2003b**

Place: **Magang**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer; Shilluk**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: **NSCC 2003**

Place: **Payuer**
Parties: **SPLM/A; Padang Dinka**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Cessation of hostilities; promotion of people to people peacemaking.**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Renk county**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Resolutons for cessation of hostilities; the provision of social services**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Otallo**
Parties: **Anuak; Murle**
Date: **2003 May**
Convenors/supporters: **Pax Christi**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Nyaba 2003**

Place: **Panyagor**
Parties: **'All groups' of Upper Nile**
Date: **2003 June 13-18**
Convenors/supporters: **SPF, NSCC etc**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Agreement on: Unity of the Upper Nile People; cessation of hostilities**
Document references: **UNPDTF and UNIDPC 2003a; UNPDTF and UNIDPC 2003b; Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004; Interview with Isaiah Diing, January 2004, PACT (2003)**

Place: **Gambela**
Parties: **Nuer; Anuak (around Gambela)**
Date: **2003 June 23-30**
Convenors/supporters: **Pax Christi**
Political jurisdiction: **Ethiopia**
Outcomes: **Formation of Gambela Peace and Development Council**
Document references: **Feyissa 2003; NCDS 2003a**

Place: Lekongwole
Parties: Murle sections (SPLM/A; GoS)
Date: 2003 June
Convenors/supporters: PCOS-Pibor
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: The first stage in a progressive reconciliation and cessation of hostilities between Murle communities divided partly by competing allegiances to GoS and SPLM/A, and their neighbours. (See follow-up meetings: Boma, Feb. 2004; Lekongwole, June 2005)
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Langkien
Parties: Clans of Lou Nuer
Date: 2003 October (?)
Convenors/supporters: Civil commissioner
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: Interview with Dr Matay Babouth and Moses Gai Samuel, January 2004

Place: Ayod
Parties: Lou-Gawaar Peace conference
Date: 2003 December
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, PCOS / SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Reconciliation and cessation of hostilities, abductees returned
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Boma
Parties: Murle; Lou, Anyuak, Gawar, Bor, Mandari, Toposa
Date: 2004 February
Convenors/supporters: PDA/SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: The second stage in a progressive reconciliation and cessation of hostilities between Murle communities divided partly by competing allegiances to GoS and SPLM/A, and their neighbours. (See also the meetings at Lekongwole, June 2003 and June 2005)
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Riang
Parties: Jikany; Lou (Nuer)
Date: 2004 March 1-5
Convenors/supporters: ACHA, PACT, UK, NCA, NPA
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: Peace agreement between Lou and Jikany
Document references: ACHA 2004

Place: Old Fangak
Parties: All Nuer Sections
Date: 2004 March-April
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Agreement on unity among the Nuer, formation of Nuer Peace Council.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Mading
Parties: Gajok; Gaguong (Jikany Nuer sections)
Date: 2004 March
Convenors/supporters: ACHA, SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Reconciliation and cessation of hostilities
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: **Renk and Payuer**
Parties: **Dongjol; Nyiel (Padang Dinka subsections in Melut and Renk)**
Date: **2004 October**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Cessation of hostilities - reconciliation between Dongjol and Nyiel Dinka Padang**
Document references: **NSCC, Pact**

Place: **Pagaak**
Parties: **Gajaak sections**
Date: **2005 March**
Convenors/supporters: **Gajaak pace committee, GARDOS, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLA/M**
Outcomes: **Reconciliation among Gajaak sections (of Nuer Jikany) and agreements on cooperation between authorities on either side of the Ethiopia-Sudan Boder**
Document references: **GARDOS, Pact**

Place: **Bowac-Mabaan**
Parties: **Maban; Gajaak of Longochot**
Date: **2005 March**
Convenors/supporters: **MRDO, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Reconciliation**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Akobo**
Parties: **Anyuak; Lou Nuer**
Date: **2005 March**
Convenors/supporters: **UNPDF, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Agreement on Anyuak-Lou Nuer reconciliation and return of the displaced**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Lekongwole**
Parties: **Murle sections (SPLM/A; GoS)**
Date: **2005 June**
Convenors/supporters: **PCOS-Pibor**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **The third stage in a progressive reconciliation and cessation of hostilities between Murle communities divided (GoS-SPLM) and their neighbours. (See also the meetings at Lekongwole, June 2003, and Boma, February 2004)**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Yuai**
Parties: **Lou Nuer sections**
Date: **2005 July**
Convenors/supporters: **UNWWA, NPC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Cessation of hostilities and agreement on free movement and unity among divided Lou Nuer sections**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Poktap**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **2005 December**
Convenors/supporters: **GoSS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoSS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Teny-Dhurgon and others 2006**

Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal

Place: **Rumbek**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **1999**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Agreement to hold further conflict transformation workshops and exchange visits**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Wunlit**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka**
Date: **1999 February-March**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC & others**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **A signed Covenant, with an agreement to end 7 years of conflict: Declaration of a permanent cease-fire between the Dinka and Nuer people on the West Bank of the Nile. An amnesty for all offences against people and property committed prior to 1/1/99 involving Dinka and Nuer on the West Bank. Freedom of movement and trade, and the development of services. Local cross-border agreements and arrangements are to be encouraged and respected. Immediate shared use of border grazing lands and fishing grounds. Displaced communities encouraged to return to their original homes. The spirit of peace and reconciliation represented by the Covenant to be extended to all of South Sudan. A series of resolutions were also agreed covering: Missing Persons and Marriages to Abductees; Reclaiming the Land and Rebuilding Relationships Institutional Arrangements; Monitoring the Borders; People Outside the Peace Process Extending the Peace to the East Bank of the Nile and Equatoria.**
Document references: **UNICEF and others 2001; NSCC and others 1999; SSFI (ed.) 1999; NSCC (ed.) 1999b; Jenner 2000; Flint 2001; Nyaba 2001**

Place: **Yirol**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **1999 September 25-29**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, SPLM/A**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Deng and others 1999; Phillippo 2000; Flint 2001**

Place: **Ganyliel**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka**
Date: **2000 April 5**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: **Flint 2001**

Place: **Wunlit**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka**
Date: **2000 April 7**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Reaffirmation of the Wunlit Covenant**
Document references: **Flint 2001**

Place: **Wulu**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka; others**
Date: **2000 November**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: The meeting concluded that the agreements reached at Wunlit, Waat and Liliir had brought a new hope to the people and that the peace process was becoming a collective, southern-wide expression for unity and peace; Support for services, resettlement and police had not been made available. Recommended that the peace process required the continued support of the collective southern leadership; a need to strengthen the peace councils. They warned that a lack of commitment to unity would weaken the struggle and that oil exploration was an increasing threat to southern unity and liberation; and urged that the NSCC should organise Nuer-Nuer dialogue.
Document references: **NSCC 2000b; Flint 2001**

Place: **Kisumu, Kenya**
Parties: **Nuer intellectuals**
Date: **2001 June 23**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, PCOS**
Political jurisdiction: **Kenya**
Outcomes: **Kisumu Declaration** reaffirmed the twin goals of liberation and self-determination; asked the SPLM/A to clarify its position regarding freedom of assembly and freedom of movement. It urged the Nuer to unite the forces of Riek Machar and Michael Wal Duany. Nuer participants presented a Declaration for Nuer Unity and Peace, calling on the SPDF and the SSLM to cease all hostilities and to unite, to hold talks with other southern movements, and for the NSCC to facilitate dialogue among the Nuer.
Document references: **Flint 2001; NSCC 2001c**

Place: **Nyal**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka**
Date: **2002**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **?**
Outcomes: **Consolidate Wunlit covenant; increase humanitarian assistance; hold more peace conferences; increase participation of women in peace conferences.**
Document references: **NSCC 2004a**

Place: **Washington, DC**
Parties: **Dinka; Nuer**
Date: **2002 January 12-13**
Convenors/supporters: **US church organisations**
Political jurisdiction: **USA**
Outcomes: **A commitment to support the resolutions of Wunlit, Waat and Liliir meetings, and to further southern unity. A call to the international community to commit the necessary resources to end the conflict in Sudan**
Document references: **Lowrey 2002**

Place: **Wunlit**
Parties: **Nuer; Dinka**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Collective call for support for paralegal training; provision of communications equipment; management of small arms; harmonisation of administrative structures; formation of courts and legal system; design of early warning and response systems; promotion of peacebuilding initiatives; resettlement of IDPs; enhance security; promotion of justice; establishment of courts. Reaffirmation of the Wunlit Covenant**
Document references:

Place: Renk county
Parties: Dinka; Nuer
Date: 2003
Convenors/supporters: NSCC
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Resolutions for cessation of hostilities; the provision of social services
Document references: NSCC 2004a

Place: Thiet
Parties: Dinka; Nuer; SPLM/A
Date: 2003
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Lugala 2003; NSCC 2004a

Bahr el Ghazal

Place: Panekar
Parties: Dinka sections of southern BeG
Date: 2002 September - October
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, PACT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Development of 10 point plan for peace and governance, Initiation of Peace Council
Document references: Murphy (2002) Panekar Consultative Meetings

Place: Rumbek
Parties:
Date: 2003
Convenors/supporters: BYDA
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Interview with Kuol Athian and Riak Gok, January 2004

Place: Cueibet
Parties: Padhol; Pacuel (clans of Ayiel Gok Dinka)
Date: 2003 February
Convenors/supporters: BYDA, Oxfam, UNICEF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: PRECISE Communication Limited 2003; PRECISE Communications Limited 2003; Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004; Interview with Kuol Athian and Riak Gok, January 2004

Place: Panekar
Parties: Social leaders from Yirol and Awerial Counties
Date: 2003 April 20-22,23-25
Convenors/supporters: BYDA
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: BYDA 2003a; BYDA 2003b

Place: Lakes (12 meetings)
Parties: Dinka sections of southern BeG
Date: 2004 March-June
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, Panekar Peace Council, SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: A series of community peace agreements
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: **Tonj**
Parties: **Bongo; Dinka**
Date: **2005 February**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Peace and reconciliation and return of displaced communities**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Wau**
Parties: **Lou Fertit; Sudanic Fertit; Dinka of Marial Bai**
Date: **2005 March**
Convenors/supporters: **HARD, WORD, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Reconciliation and restoration of free movement and peace**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Mayenrual**
Parties: **Dinka of Rek and Gogrial**
Date: **2005 June**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC, SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Restoration of peace and establishment of committees to restore looted property**
Document references: **NSCC, Pact**

Bahr el Ghazal and Darfur or Kordofan

Place: **Buram**
Parties: **Nuba (SPLM/A); Misseriya**
Date: **1993 February**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLM/A, Misseriya**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **The agreement spelled out conditions similar to those in later agreements: a cessation of military action, both sides recognising the right to move freely in the other's territory; a joint committee to intervene to settle a dispute or violation of the peace; animals stolen to be returned, and the thieves punished. Under the agreement killings were to be investigated, and those responsible to be punished; trade was to be safeguarded; information of military relevance exchanged; and travellers to either side to have safe passage and, when necessary, assisted to reach their destination. The agreement opened up a trade route into Buram, Misseriya traders brought in essential goods and the Buram trade flourished until late 1993 when government troops overran Nuba positions in the area. Sporadic trade continued, but the government succeeded in weakening the accord. Some Nuba rebels joined the government and were used to attack the Baggara and rekindle their feuds with the SPLA. However, a number of Baggara also fought with the Nuba against the government in Buram and continue to honour their agreement.**
Document references: **Suliman 1999a; Suliman 1999b; El-Ehaimer 2003**

Place: **Nyala**
Parties: **Dinka; Rizeigat**
Date: **1999 September 13**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Agwer and others 1999**

Place: Kiir River
Parties: Humr Misseriya; Ngok Dinka
Date: 2000
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references:

Place: Malwal Agak
Parties: SPLM/A; Ngok Dinka; Twic Dinka
Misseriya
Date: 2000 April 12
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A, Misseriya
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: An agreement was reached, with articles concerned the authority of SPLM/A, the carrying of weapons, access to pasture, commerce, payment of tax, protection of citizens and property and the establishment of a committee to resolve violations of the agreement peacefully
Document references: Adyang and others 2000; Netherlands Embassy 2002

Place: Wanyjok
Parties: SPLM/A(Ngok & Twic Dinka); Misseriya, Rizaigat
Date: 2000 May
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Agreements were reached on migration and grazing rights
Document references: Johnson 2003

Place: Abyei South
Parties: SPLM/A(Ngok & Twic Dinka); Misseriya Humr ('Ajaira)
Date: 2001 January
Convenors/supporters: Dinka Ngok, Misseriya (Awlad Kamil)
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: A delegation lead by Dinka Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Majok, and Misseriya chief Kabahsi el Thon negotiated the release of cattle taken by the SPLM/A. This led to the formation of the Abyei Peace Committee, chaired by Kuol Deng.
Document references: Interview with Kwaja Yai Kuol Arop and Bulbul Monyluak Rau, April 2002; Interview with Bulbul Monyluak Rau and Amir Kuol, 22 January 2004

Place: Akur/Abu Nafisa, South Abyei
Parties: SPLM/A(Ngok & Twic Dinka); Misseriya 'Ajaira (Awlad Kamil, Marzagna, Fadaliya; Awlad Kimil)
Date: 2001 April
Convenors/supporters: UNDP, Government of Netherlands
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: A meeting of nine days resulted in a signed agreement with articles covering access to pasture, commerce, ending of rape, an end to the burning of villages by Misseriya, a committee to monitor peace, and an agreement on IDP resettlement. From May to August various incidents were reported to have been resolved peacefully and stolen cattle were returned. The Misseriya returned from south of the Bahr al Arab to their rainy season area in 2004 without loss of livestock. The Misseriya were reported to have released many of the Dinka youth whom they normally use as cattle herders.
Document references: Interview with Kwaja Yai Kuol Arop and Bulbul Monyluak Rau, April 2002; UNDP 2002a; Interview with Bulbul Monyluak Rau and Amir Kuol, 22 January 2004

Place: **Muglad (and others)**
Parties: **Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka; Misseriya ('Ajaira)**
Date: **2001 October**
Convenors/supporters: **UNDP, Government of Netherlands, GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: **The Abyei peace agreement was disseminated among the Misseriya ('Ajaira) leadership in Muglad and in Misseriya villages in West Kordofan. In satellite meetings Misseriya leaders, expressed their intent to support the "people to people" peace process, and the resettlement of Dinka in Abyei, by exerting control over the murahaleen and their involvement in the protection of the government trains, and related abduction and looting. Discussions were held with hardliners including leaders of the murahaleen forces (such as Mamoud Ali, responsible for murahaleen in Umdris), government ministers and the state government. The series of meetings concluded with the signing of an agreement on a number of divisive issues: it condemned the conflict between the tribes; it affirmed the co-existence of Dinka and Misseriya and the rights of each over water and pasture; it encouraged the committee to pursue its peace work with the SPLM/A; it endorsed the creation of model villages around Abyei; it proposed the formation of a committee to disseminate the agreement; it supported the return and resettlement of the Dinka communities in Abyei District. A joint committee was established to review the achievements of the peace process, and to deal with violations of the agreement.**

Document references: **Netherlands Embassy 2002; Muglad Conference 2003**

Place: **Abyei**
Parties: **Ngok Dinka, Twic Dinka; 'Ajaira Misseriya**
Date: **2002 January**
Convenors/supporters: **UNDP, donors, GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: **Written agreement signed by 11 tribal leaders, who agreed to: live together in reconciliation and peace; restore good relations that they inherited their ancestors; cooperate in the rehabilitation and development of the region; stop hostilities and reinstate justice. Subsequent to the conference UN agencies and NGOs increased their support for the return and resettlement of displaced families in peace villages around Abyei.**

Document references: **Wassara 2002a; Netherlands Embassy 2002; Abyei Conference 2002; Humanitarian Aid Commission 2004**

Place: **Kauda**
Parties: **Nuba (from GoS and SPLM controlled areas and the Diaspora)**
Date: **2002 December**
Convenors/supporters: **Nuba groups**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **The Kauda Declaration included resolutions on the following: acceptance of the uniqueness of the Nuba; affirmation of a right to self-determination and an autonomous representative government in the Nuba Mountains; religious freedom, regional autonomy and control of economic concessions and land rights; revival of dialogue between Nuba and Baggara; agreement by four Nuba political parties to merge as one and to delegate to the SPLM the mandate to negotiate the future status of the Nuba in the national talks; acknowledgement that rights for the Nuba people are a key to a sustainable peace agreement. The SPLM/Nuba continued to encourage cross-line dialogue between Nuba from the same tribes.**

Document references: **All Nuba Conference 2002; Ghaboush and others 2002; All Nuba Conference 2005**

Place: **Malwal Kon**
Parties: **Ngok**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NSCC and SINGOs**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Interview with Awut Deng Acuil, January 2004; Interview with Kuol Athian and Riak Gok, January 2004**

Place: **Kiir River**
Parties: **Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka; Misseriya ('Ajaira)**
Date: **2003 February**
Convenors/supporters: **UNDP, USAID**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **Leaders from both sides recommitted themselves to achieving and maintaining peace in Abyei, and supporting the safe return of former residents.**
Document references: **USAID 2003**

Place: **Mangar Ater**
Parties: **Rizeigat; Dinka; Misseriya**
Date: **2003 March**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLM local authorities**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: **Changath 2003; anon. 2003a; anon. 2003b**

Place: **Kauda**
Parties: **Nuba**
Date: **2003 June**
Convenors/supporters: **Nuba women from political and humanitarian organisations.**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes:
Document references: **Dhuor 2003**

Place: **Agok**
Parties: **Ngok Dinka**
Date: **2003 June 2-7**
Convenors/supporters: **ACAD and Sudan Peace Fund**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **The conference adopted resolutions on the following: the peace process; repatriation and return; good governance; the restoration of Abyei to Bahr el Ghazal Region; delegating the SPLM/A to represent the Ngok in negotiations with Khartoum; giving assurance to the Misseriya about access to grazing and water; asserting that a unique system of governance could be developed which builds upon and reinforces cultural values and identity; requesting international assistance for the return of people to the area.**
Document references: **ACAD 2003; Ngok of Abyei's Peoples' Conference 2003; Ngok of Abyei People's Conference 2003; PACT 2003e**

Place: **Wanyjok**
Parties: **Aweil population (Dinka; Luo)**
Date: **2003 June 8-11**
Convenors/supporters: **BYDA, ACWA, PACT/SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **PACT 2003b; PACT 2003e**

Place: **Addis Ababa**
Parties: **Aweil Dinka; Jur Luo; Rizeigat**
Date: **2004**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS, SPLM/A, PACT**
Political jurisdiction: **Ethiopia**
Outcomes:
Document references:

Place: **Agok**
Parties: **Dinka traditional leaders**
Date: **2004**
Convenors/supporters: **?SPF**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Place: **Agok**
Parties: **Ngok Dinka**
Date: **2005** **January**
Convenors/supporters: **ACDC, PACT**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Planning for return and reintegration of Abyei IDPs from the North. The meeting reached agreement on the role of the local authorities and traditional leadership in mitigating possible conflicts between returnees and host communities.**
Document references: **Murphy 2006**

Darfur

Place: **Northern. Darfur**
Parties: **Meidab; Kababish**
Date: **1957**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Harir 1994**

Place: **Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Rizeigat; Maali**
Date: **1968**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Harir 1994**

Place: **Northern Darfur**
Parties: **Zaghawa; Northern Rizeigat**
Date: **1969**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Harir 1994**

Place: **Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Zaghawa; Bergid**
Date: **1974**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Harir 1994**

Place: Babanusa
Parties: Dinka; Rizeigat
Date: 1976
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references:

Place: Idd el Fursan, Southern Darfur
Parties: Beni Halba; Northern Rizeigat
Date: 1976
Convenors/supporters: Traditional rulers
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes: A conference organized by traditional rulers was able to bring an end to violence.
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: Rahad el Berdi, Southern Darfur
Parties: Ta'aisha; Salamat
Date: 1980
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: Southern Darfur
Parties: Northern Rezeigat; Beni Halba, Birgid, Daju and Fur
Date: 1980
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: Northern Darfur
Parties: Kababish and Kawahla; Meidob, Berti and Ziyadiya
Date: 1982
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes: This conference was one of many - organized both by the Government and local leaders - that were unable to bring an end to conflict over resources among these groups. The conflict abated when extreme drought conditions forced many to leave the region and as a result lessened pressure on resources that remained.
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: Dar Rizeigat, Southern Darfur
Parties: Misseriya; Rizeigat
Date: 1984
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: Dar Rizeigat, Southern Darfur
Parties: Rizeigat; Zaghawa
Date: 1986
Convenors/supporters: Traditional rulers
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: Cessation of violence
Document references: Mohamed and Badri 2005

Place: **Kataila, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Gimir and Marareet; Fallata**
Date: **1987**
Convenors/supporters: Traditional rulers
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes: Cessation of violence
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: **Um Lebesa, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Beni Halba; Northern Rizeigat**
Date: **1987**
Convenors/supporters: Traditional rulers
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: Cessation of violence
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: **Northern Darfur**
Parties: **Fur; Zaghawa**
Date: **1989**
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: **El Fashir**
Parties: **Fur; Arab tribes**
Date: **1989 May 29**
Convenors/supporters: Governor of Darfur, Massalit Sultan
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Harir 1994

Place: **Jebel Marra**
Parties: **Fur; Arab tribes**
Date: **1989 May 29-July 7**
Convenors/supporters: Sultan of Massalit
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002
International Crisis Group 2004

Place: **Abu Karinka, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Maali; Zaghawa**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: A conference organized by traditional rulers was able to bring an end to violence.
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: **Antekeina, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Taasha; Salaamat**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: Traditional rulers
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: Cessation of violence
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: **Buram, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Habbaniya; Abu Darag**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: **Traditional rulers**
Political jurisdiction: **GOS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **Buram, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Habbaniya; Northern Rizeigat**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: **Traditional rulers**
Political jurisdiction: **GOS**
Outcomes: **A conference organized by traditional rulers banned the Northern Rizeigat from entering Habbaniya lands and thus ended the conflict.**
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **Kataila, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Gimir; Fellata**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Harir (1994)**
Gore 2002

Place: **Kubum, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Gimir; Ta'aisha**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: **Traditional rulers**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **A conference organized by traditional rulers was able to bring an end to violence.**
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **Zalingei**
Parties: **Fur; Arab tribes**
Date: **1990**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **El Fasher**
Parties: **Mararit; Beni Hussein; Zaghawa**
Date: **1991**
Convenors/supporters: **GOS**
Political jurisdiction: **GOS**
Outcomes: **A reconciliation conference was organized, blood money was paid, and most of the recommendations were implemented. As a result the conflict has not recurred.**
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **Kas, Southern Darfur**
Parties: **Fur; Beni Halba**
Date: **1991**
Convenors/supporters: **Traditional rulers**
Political jurisdiction: **GOS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: Shea'ria, Southern Darfur
Parties: Bergid; Zaghawa
Date: 1991
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Dar Massalit, Darfur
Parties: Massalit; Arab Groups
Date: 1996
Convenors/supporters: GOS
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Dar Rizeigat, Southern Darfur
Parties: Zaghawa; Rizeigat
Date: 1996
Convenors/supporters: GOS
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: This and many subsequent conferences (notably also in 2000), have made similar recommendations that have never been fully implemented. The conflict eventually merged with the wider war in Darfur.
Document references: Mohamed and Badri 2005

Place: El Da'ein
Parties: Rizeigat; Zaghawa
Date: 1997
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Nyala
Parties: All Darfur tribes
Date: 1997
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Geneina
Parties: Massalit; Rizeigat; others
Date: 1998
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Dar Rizeigat, Southern Darfur
Parties: Zaghawa; Rizeigat
Date: 2000
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: The conference made recommendations that were not fully implemented.
Document references:

Place: **Kulbus**
Parties: **Zaghawa; Gimir**
Date: **2000**
Convenors/supporters: **GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: This government-sponsored conference in 2000 was able to put an end to violence and collect blood money. However, conflict flared up again in 2001 and has merged with the current civil war.
Document references: **Gore 2002**

Place: **Tine, North Darfu**
Parties: **Zaghawa; Awlad Zeyd**
Date: **2001**
Convenors/supporters: **GOS**
Political jurisdiction: **GOS**
Outcomes: This conference, convened by GoS to resolve conflict over wells and pastures, was perceived by the Zaghawa as biased. It was followed by Zaghawa attacks on government installations, and the formation of the SLA.
Document references:

Place: **Switzerland**
Parties: **GOS; SPLM/A**
Date: **2002 January**
Convenors/supporters: **Governments of US, UK, Norway, Switzerland**
Political jurisdiction: **Switzerland**
Outcomes: This meeting brokered a ceasefire in the Nuba Mountains, which led to a reduction in violence, reactivation of trade, return of some displaced people, and increased involvement of aid agencies. An unarmed international force, the Joint Military Commission (JMC) was established to monitor the ceasefire. The ceasefire held up to the signing of the CPA, though many issues remained about use of land and natural resources.
Document references: **Jenatsch 2003**

Place: **El Fashir**
Parties: **Fur, Zaghawa (SLA): GoS**
Date: **2003 February 24-25**
Convenors/supporters: **GOS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: This "consultative forum on security in Darfur", convened with traditional leaders by GOS, produced a consensus that the government should open a dialogue with the rebels. However, the envisaged process was not carried through.
Document references: **International Crisis Group 2004**

Place: **Abeché**
Parties: **GOS; SLA**
Date: **2003 August-September**
Convenors/supporters: **Chad**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **International Crisis Group 2003**

Place: **Garselba**
Parties: **Darfuris including diaspora**
Date: **2003 September 14**
Convenors/supporters: **SLA**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **International Crisis Group 2004**

Place: **Abeché**

Parties: GOS; SLA
Date: 2003 October 26-Nov 4
Convenors/supporters: Chad
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: International Crisis Group 2003

Place: N'djamena
Parties: GOS; SLA
Date: 2003 December 15-16
Convenors/supporters: Chad
Political jurisdiction: Chad
Outcomes:
Document references: International Crisis Group 2003

Place: El Da'ein
Parties: Rizeigat, Berti, Birgid, Maali, Begio, Dagu
Date: 2004
Convenors/supporters: Nazir of Rizeigat
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: The Nazir of the Rizeigat mobilized other traditional leaders to try to sue for peace. The result was an agreement with the Birgid to the north-west, and non aggression pacts with the Berti, Dagu and Begio. There has even been a rapprochement with the Maali to the north
Document references: Flint and De Waal 2005

Place: Geneina
Parties: Massalit; Arab Groups
Date: 2004
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: GOS
Outcomes: In Dar Massalit an agreement was reached between the Sultan of the Massalit and the recently appointed Emirs of the Arab tribes. The agreement called for the Arabs to keep their Emirs who would nominally be under the elected Sultan, thus ensuring that the numerically superior Massalit would always elect one of their own as Sultan.
Document references: Flint and De Waal 2005

Kordofan

Place: Regifi
Parties: SPLM/A Nuba; Misseriya
Date: 1995 November 15
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A, Misseriya
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: The 11-point Regifi Accord reiterated previous commitments to peaceful cooperation and mutual assistance. GoS has since been accused of trying to sabotage the agreement, by assassinating or imprisoning the Misseriya leaders at the negotiations. Some were allegedly bribed and used by the government to undermine the spirit of trust and cooperation between the Baggara and the Nuba.
Document references: Suliman 1999a; Suliman 1999b; El-Ehaimer 2003

Place: **Zangura, Tima**
Parties: **SPLM/A Nuba; Rawawga; Misseriya**
Date: **1996 June**
Convenors/supporters: **SPLM/A**
Political jurisdiction: **SPLM/A**
Outcomes: **Markets and trade were established. The Rawawga were said to be so confident in the agreement that they sold ammunition and army uniforms to the Nuba. The Baggara traders went unarmed to the markets and were later accompanied by women and children. Following suspected GoS interference and spying in the markets, the Nuba leadership closed them, but the peace held.**
Document references: **Suliman 1999a; Suliman 1999b; El-Ehaimer 2003**

Place: **Keilak**
Parties: **Keilak Nuba (Korongo Abdalla, Masakin, Keiga, Al Mashaysh, Kanga, Kofa, Leima), and the Jubarat, Matanin and Salamat clans of the Misseriya Zuruq**
Date: **2001 June 4**
Convenors/supporters: **UNICEF, GoS**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: **There was a restoration of traditional understandings, and an agreement to establish a committee to oversee implementation of resolutions that reinforced them.**
Document references: **Wassara 2001; Awadala 2001; Wassara and Babiker 2001**

Place: **Lagowa**
Parties: **Nuba; Dajo; Misseriya Zuruq**
Date: **2001 June 11**
Convenors/supporters: **GOS, UNICEF**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes:
Document references: **Wassara 2001; Wassara and Babiker 2001**

Place: **Dilling**
Parties: **Dar Bakhota (Hawazma); Birgid Awlad/ Hilal (Nuba Ajang)**
Date: **2002 March 22-23**
Convenors/supporters: **BCIDS, Peace Studies Centre of Dilling University, sponsored by UNICEF, and the SCRC**
Political jurisdiction: **GoS**
Outcomes: **A charter was signed, in which parties agreed to six resolutions including the renewal of customary alliances, the Birgid to keep their Omodiya but under the authority of the Hawazma; a mediating committee to settle outstanding issues.**
Document references: **Wassara 2002c; BCIDS 2002a; BCIDS 2002b**

Place: **Lagowa (Ras el Fil, Tullushi)**
Parties: **Women from GoS & SPLM areas (Nuba, Dago & Misseriya)**
Date: **2002 May 21**
Convenors/supporters: **UNICEF**
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: **Agreement to establish a peace committee, to support cross-line dialogue and exchange visits, and assist with resettlement of displaced Nuba families, to advocate for water and health services.**
Document references: **Wassara 2002d; Wassara 2002b**

Place: **Nairobi**
Parties: **Nuba; Baggara**
Date: **2003**
Convenors/supporters: **NRRDO**
Political jurisdiction: **Kenya**
Outcomes: **Parties agreed on the need to hold wider meetings between the two tribes to discuss develop a strategy for peaceful coexistence in the region. No talks took place in Sudan due to the GoS and SPLM/A interests in controlling the process.**
Document references: **NRRDO 2004**

Place: Nuba Mountians
Parties: Shatt, Logan, Kawalib, Kurtala, Kamda and Jebel Dair (Nuba peoples)
Date: 2005
Convenors/supporters: NRRDO, SPF
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: Atrocities committed during the war were discussed, acknowledged and forgiven
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Kauda
Parties: All Nuba peoples
Date: 2005 April 6-8
Convenors/supporters: NRRDO, SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: The Comprehensive Peace agreement was evaluated and challenges of the peace era internalized. Land, local government, return and reintegration of IDPs were discussed.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Kauda
Parties: Peoples of southern Kordofan
Date: 2005 April 9-11
Convenors/supporters: NRRDO, SPF
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: Resolved to to continue grass roots dialogue between Nuba and Baggara nomads around migration routes and water points. A follow-up committee was appointed.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Place: Kadugli
Parties: Religious groups in Southern Kordofan
Date: 2005 December
Convenors/supporters: PACT, ECS, New Sudan Islamic Council, LPI
Political jurisdiction: GoS, SPLM/A
Outcomes: Agreement to form an interfaith committee in Southern Kordofan incorporating lessons learnt in Sudan (interfaith committee in Khartoum) and Africa at large (Life and Peace Institute). An interfaith committee was formed to follow up on the recommendations. It was a timely intervention to check the freedom of religion clauses in the CPA and the Interim National Constitution.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Northern, Eastern and Central Regions

Place: Mazmum
Parties: Groups in Eastern Sudan
Date: 1976
Convenors/supporters: GoS
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Shendi
Parties: Al Hassaniya; Misaiktab (Jaaliyin Arabs)
Date: 1999
Convenors/supporters: Committee of Khartoum-based local politicians
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: El-Nagar and Bilal 2005

Place: Damazine
Parties: Funj; Kenana; others
Date: 2002
Convenors/supporters: GoS and traditional leaders
Political jurisdiction: GoS
Outcomes:
Document references: Gore 2002

Place: Kurmuk
Parties: Women in Southern Blue Nile
Date: 2003 November
Convenors/supporters: ROOF/PACT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: A strategy and action plan was agreed for women's right advocacy and representation in the national peace process and governance structures.
Document references: Murphy 2006

South Sudan - General

Place: Chukudum
Parties: Inhabitants of SPLM/A areas
Date: 1994
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: SPLM 1994

Place: Kejiko
Parties: SPLM/A; churches
Date: 1997 July
Convenors/supporters: Protagonists and their donors
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes: The SPLM/A endorse NSCC as the lead role in facilitating peacemaking
Document references: Flint 2001

Place: Rumbek
Parties: Not ethnically specific
Date: 2001
Convenors/supporters: BYDA, NSCC, CORAT
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: NSCC 2004a

Place: Kisumu, Kenya
Parties: Political and social leaders
Date: 2001 June 18-22
Convenors/supporters: NSCC
Political jurisdiction: Kenya
Outcomes:
Document references: Flint 2001; NSCC 2002b

Place: Panekar
Parties: Women's representatives
Date: 2002 October
Convenors/supporters: NSCC, Danchurchaid and Norwegian Church Aid
Political jurisdiction: SPLM/A
Outcomes:
Document references: Murphy 2002

Place: Rumbek
Parties: Bahr el Ghazal judiciary, civil and military authorities, civilians
Date: 2003 February 7-11
Convenors/supporters: SPF, SPLM/A
Political jurisdiction:
Outcomes: Call to: eradicate violations against women; increase awareness of HIV/AIDS
Document references: PACT 2003a

Place: Oxford
Parties: Southern Sudanese intellectuals in UK
Date: 2003 August
Convenors/supporters:
Political jurisdiction: UK
Outcomes:
Document references: Jok 2003

Place: Naivasha, Kenya
Parties: Key community (political) leaders from Abyei, Nuba and Funj
Date: 2004
Convenors/supporters: SPLM/A, PACT Pact/NRRDO/USNP/ROOF/ACAD
Political jurisdiction: Kenya
Outcomes: The meeting provided advice to the SPLM leadership in the national peace negotiations, regarding arrangements to give the regions more autonomy.
Document references: Murphy 2006

Chronological and Geographical Table of Peace Meetings 1973-2005

	Equatoria	Upper Nile	Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal and Darfur or Kordofan	Darfur	Kordofan	Northern, Eastern and Central Regions
1973	▪ Juba (Dinka; Bari; Mandari)	▪ Fangak (Nuer sections)						
1974						▪ S. Darfur (Zaghawa; Bergid)		
1975								
1976						▪ Idd el Fursan (Beni Halba; Northern Rizeigat) ▪ Babanusa (Dinka; Rizeigat)		▪ Mazmum (groups in E. Sudan)
1977								
1978								
1979								
1980						▪ Rahad el Berdi (Ta'aisha; Salamat) ▪ S. Darfur (Northern Rizeigat; Beni Halba, Birgid, Daju, Fur)		
1981								
1982						▪ N. Darfur (Kababish, Kawahla; Meidob, Berti, Ziyadiya)		
1983								
1984						▪ Dar Rizeigat (Misseriya; Rizeigat)		
1985								
1986								
1987	▪ Uma River (Madi; Acholi)					▪ Katailla (Gimir, Mararit; Fallata) ▪ Um Lebesa, S. Darfur (Beni Halba; Northern Rizeigat)		
1989						▪ Jebel Marra (Fur; Arab tribes) ▪ El Fasher (Fur; Arab tribes) ▪ N. Darfur (Fur; Zaghawa)		

	Equatoria	Upper Nile	Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal and Darfur or Kordofan	Darfur	Kordofan	Northern, Eastern and Central Regions
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ame (Madi, Acholi) 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zalingei (Fur; Arab tribes) Katalia (Gimir; Zaghawa) Kubum (Gimir; Ta'aisha) Abu Karinka (Maali; Zaghawa) Buram (Habbaniya; Northern Rizeigat) Antikinya (Taaisha; Salaamat) Buram (Habaniya; Abu Darag) 		
1991						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kas (Fur; Beni Halba) El Fasher (Mararit; Beni Hussein; Zaghawa) Shea'ria, S. Darfur (Bergid; Zaghawa) 		
1992								
1993					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buram (SPLM/A Nuba; Misseriya) 			
1994		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Akobo (Nuer; Lou; Jikany; other) 						
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ikotos, Isoke, Loguruny (Lotuho; neighbouring groups) Loming, Lalanga (Lotuho; neighbouring groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liech State (Nuer in Liech state) Nasir (Jikany Nuer) Nyibodo (Shilluk; Dinka) Wilnyang (Shilluk; Dinka) 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regifi (SPLM/A Nuba; Misseriya) 	
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiyala (Ilieu, Loming and Chalamini villages) Calamini, Ilyeu (Lotuho; neighbouring groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abienyayo (Shilluk; Dinka) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dar Rizeigat (Zaghawa; Rizeigat) Dar Massalit (Massalit; Arab groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zangura, Tima (SPLM/A Nuba; Rawawga; Misseriya) 	
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobelbel, Lotome (Logir, Boya) 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> El Da'ein (Rizeigat; Zaghawa) Nyala (Darfur ethnic groups) 		

	Equatoria	Upper Nile	Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal and Darfur or Kordofan	Darfur	Kordofan	Northern, Eastern and Central Regions
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobelbel (Lotuho, Lopit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lokichoggio (East Bank: Nuer; Dinka) Mayom-Anyuon (SPLM/A; SSUM; local population) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geneina (Massalit; Rizeigat; others) 		
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kikilai (Didinga; SPLM/A) Lodwar (Toposa, Turkana) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waat (Lou Nuer: soldiers; civilians) Akobo (Dinka; Nuer) Lokichoggio (Women: Nuer; Dinka; Murle) Akobo (Nuer: SPLA; SSDF; GoS militia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wunlit (Nuer; Dinka) Rumbek (Dinka; Nuer) Yirol (Dinka; Nuer) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nyala (Dinka, Rizeigat) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shendi (Jaaliyin; Hassaniya; Misaiktab)
2000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liliir (Dinka; Nuer; Jie; Murle; Anuak; Kachipo) Pochalla (Church people of Anuak, Nuer, Murle) Paluer (Dinka; Nuer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wunlit (Nuer; Dinka) Wulu (Nuer; Dinka; others) Ganyliel (Nuer; Dinka) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kiir River (Humr Misseriya; Ngok Dinka) Malwal Agak (Ngok Dinka, Twic Dinka, Misseriya) Wanyjok (Ngok & Twic Dinka; Misseriya, Rizeigat) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kulbus (Zaghawa; Gimir) Dar Rizeigat (Zaghawa; Rizeigat) 		
2001		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pagak (Nuer: Lou; Gawaar) Gurnyang (Jikany Nuer, Lou Nuer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kisumu, Kenya (prominent Nuer) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abyei South (SPLM/A, Dinka; 'Ajaira Misseriya) Akur/Abu Nafisa (SPLM/A, Dinka; 'Ajaira Misseriya) Muglad (Ngok Dinka; Twic Dinka; Misseriya) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tine, N. Darfur (Zaghawa; Awlad Zeyd) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keilak (Nuba, Misseriya Zuruq) Lagowa (Nuba; Dajo; Misseriya Zuruq) 	
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kakuratom (SPLA; Didinga) Yei (Civilians, civil admin., soldiers in Equatoria) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nakwatom (Didinga; Bor Dinka, SPLM/A; others) Ayod (Lou Nuer; Gawaar Nuer) Panyagor (Lou Nuer; Bor Dinka) Yomciir (Bor Dinka; Murle) Boma (Toposa; Murle; Jie; Kachipo; Anuak) Abwong (Dinka; Lou Nuer; Shilluk) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nyal (Nuer; Dinka) Washington, DC (Dinka; Nuer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panekar (Dinka sections) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kauda (Nuba from GoS & SPLM/A areas) Abyei (Ngok Dinka, Twic Dinka; 'Ajaira Misseriya) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dilling (Dar Bakhota; Birgid Awlad, Hilal) Lagowa (Nuba women from GoS & SPLM/A areas) Switzerland (GoS; SPLM/A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damazine (Funj; Kenana; others)

	Equatoria	Upper Nile	Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal	Bahr el Ghazal and Darfur or Kordofan	Darfur	Kordofan	Northern, Eastern and Central Regions
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kidepo (Toposa; Lotuho; Boya; Lopit; Didinga; Logir) ▪ Tore (SPLM/A; civil soc. & churches in W. Eq.) ▪ Yei (SPLA; civil society) ▪ Ramula (Logir; Didinga; Boya) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Payuer (Padang Dinka) ▪ Renk (Dinka; Nuer) ▪ Gambela (Nuer; Anuak) ▪ Panyagor (Dinka; Nuer; Murle) ▪ Lekongwole (Murle sections) ▪ Langkien (Lou Nuer) ▪ Nanyangachor (Toposa; Murle; Jie; Kachipo) ▪ Otallo (Anuak; Murle) ▪ Magang (Dinka; Nuer; Shilluk) ▪ Ayod (Lou Nuer; Gawaar Nuer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thiet (Dinka; Nuer; SPLM/A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cueibet (Ayiel Gok Dinka; Padhol; Pacuel) ▪ Rumbek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Malwal Kon (Ngok) ▪ Mangar Ater (Rizeigat; Dinka; Misseriya) ▪ Wanyjok (Dinka; Luo) ▪ Kiir River (Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka; Misseriya) ▪ Agok (Ngok Dinka) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ El Fasher (SLA Fur and Zaghawa; GoS) ▪ Abeché (GoS; SLA) ▪ Garselba (Darfuris) ▪ Abeché (GoS; SLA) ▪ N'djamena (GoS; SLA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nairobi (Nuba; Baggara) ▪ Kauda (Nuba women) 	
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mundri (Moru; Bor Dinka, SPLA) ▪ Hiyala (Lotuho clans) ▪ Tabmbura (Zande) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Riang (Jikany Nuer; Lou Nuer) ▪ Old Fangak (Nuer sections) ▪ Mading (Jikany Nuer) ▪ Renk-Payuer (Padang Dinka) ▪ Boma (Murle & neighbours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lakes (Dinka sections) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addis Ababa (Aweil Dinka; Jur Luo; Rizeigat) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ El Da'ein (Rizeigat, Berti, Birgid, Maali, Begio, Dagu) ▪ Geneina (Massalit; Arab Groups) 		
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tali (Moru; Bor Dinka, SPLA) ▪ Kimotong (Lotuho, Buya, Lopit, Bari) ▪ Kamulach (Ketebo, Logir) ▪ Kapoeta/Lauro (Didinga; Toposa) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pagaak (Gaajak Nuer clans) ▪ Lekongwole (Murle sections) ▪ Bowac (Maban; Gaajak) ▪ Akobo (Anuak; Lou Nuer) ▪ Yuai (Lou Nuer sections) ▪ Poktap (Dinka; Nuer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tonj (Bongo; Dinka) ▪ Wau (Fertit; Dinka) ▪ Mayenrual (Dinka sections) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kauda (Nuba; Baggara) 	

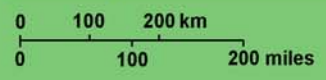
Sudan: Locations of local peace meetings and ethnic groups involved

Rift Valley Institute
Sudan Local Peace Report
Map compiled by Michael Healey




Key

▲ Thiet	Site of peace meeting
■ Tambura	Major town
DANAGLA	Ethnic group (Arab)
GOK DINKA	Ethnic group (non-Arab)
BAH	Province
Bahr el Arab / Kīr	River



Annexe: Comments by Pact on “Local Peace Processes in Sudan” (March 2006)

Pact, the principal international organization supporting local peace processes in Sudan, was invited to comment on the penultimate draft of the present report. Their response is printed below.

A PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVE

DFID and the RVI must be applauded for commissioning and undertaking this initial survey on grass roots peace initiatives. At a time of such heightened political and social change in Sudan, this preliminary work offers insights into a growing and diverse subculture of local-level social and customary processes that in many cases are attempting to address some of the most distressing and complicated of challenges facing communities throughout the country. A complete understanding of how these processes function, how effectively they are executed, how they influence and are influenced by the wider institutional environment, the influence external assistance has on these local process; is not yet adequately known nor appreciated.

A fuller appraisal will no doubt take time and the coming together of different local as well as other analytical standpoints. One such perspective comes from an umbrella program - The Sudan Peace Fund - presently operating in Sudan (under the administration of the NGO Pact), in support of grass roots peace initiatives. Based on experiences acquired through this support mechanism, the following is a preliminary response to some of the conclusions and findings raised by the RVI on the survey. It is offered to further discussion and debate on what is a vital component to grass roots-led governance over the management and resolution of conflict.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Front-line program staff at Pact, working on the Sudan Peace Fund Program, believe that the tone of the report infers a restriction upon the *potential* grass roots peace building has as an agent for change in the community and that this perspective is premature at this stage. Pact would have liked to have seen more balance in the report in favour of its potential as a force for wider influence. For example how in some cases, the grass roots can challenge the status quo and alter local dynamics through these platforms; opening up channels for political engagement at different levels and indeed fundamentally, its proven potential to save human lives.

Overall, the team thought that the “impetus behind the expansion” of GRPB cannot be ascribed to international trends alone, nor just the sometimes fashionable interests of donors, civil society groups, churches or other international agencies; but also to the extraordinary demand from grass roots representatives in their search for opportunities and vehicles to positively influence their lives and the wider environment in which they live. This is particularly the case in the southern Sudan context where, due to the longevity of the war, effective governance frameworks have been extremely limited.

The emphasis presented appeared to us as intent on setting the *boundaries* - which of course is valid and necessary in itself - but not adequately capturing its (albeit limited) potential to *influence* dynamics vertically; and thus we believe the final conclusion underestimated the role grassroots peace building (GRPB) has and is still playing in the wider Sudan’s political setting. Through the Sudan Peace Fund program, we have found GRPB experience in Sudan a useful means of challenging the status quo and precipitating change, but we are the first to point out that we are a long way off from comprehensively (and therefore convincingly for many) demonstrating those linkages. But as well as advocating for better analysis of specific conflict dynamics, we also think there is merit in emphasising the need for “big picture” (southern, country, regional) analysis so that the sum of the many small GRPB parts can be understood, linked and reinforced for positive effect.

The uncritical application of so called “global templates” by international actors has been unhelpful, if not simplistic, when introducing a critical frame to appraise the role of external actors. Undoubtedly, there is a profusion of bad practice in the peace building sector, but the

presentation did not reflect the program's experience of the overwhelming grassroots demand for genuine local peace processes as opposed to just externally driven ones.

It was also felt that the commentary might benefit from more acknowledgement of the often messy, complex and political nature surrounding grass roots peace building; a major consideration for planning and appraising appropriate and sensitive supports to grass roots initiatives. At the same time, the actual treatment given of its political nature may prematurely frighten away critical support for these processes. The political element is deep and the risks high from a programming perspective, but the conclusion should also show that there are ways of sensibly engaging, and that in many instances, engagement is an unavoidable part of reducing conflict, saving lives and promoting healing and recovery in war torn societies - despite the limitations sometimes encountered in conventional aid programming.

Pact would also have liked to see RVI's passion for better documentation treated even more strongly and in greater depth.

We have a number of additional comments following chapters and sections in the document:

COMMENTS ON "Links between Local and National Peace Processes"

It is abundantly clear to all peace actors exposed or involved with Sudan and GRPB that it is indeed impossible to separate local conflict from the wider armed conflict. It is equally the case, implicit in the statement, that there are inextricable linkages to the wider *politics* of the country which need to be understood when addressing local peace processes and while local disputes do reflect competition for representation at the centre this only partly states the case; the inevitable multiple fractures in society resulting from prolonged war, are reflected in the local and sub-regional politics and result in the complex and confusing nature of these conflicts.

The findings and points made under this heading tend to emphasise the limits of GRPB rather than its potential and insinuate that there is significant opinion that GRPB is some sort of a substitute for national peace. Our own experience would suggest that GRPB actors are under no illusion as to the scope of the initiatives they undertake and these activities are never intended to address the problems of scale inherent in a national peace process; we have yet to meet an actor or donor, who subscribes to this position. Nevertheless GRPB from our experience *is* a useful tool to open up channels of debate or challenge that otherwise were not there within the South Sudan context due to the vacuum of government, institutions and mechanisms - other than armed conflict - available for the engagement of the people in political processes. GRPB was and still is potentially a means available to the grass roots to challenge the 'status quo' and thereby possibly influence issues at higher levels.

Note that it is suggested that RVI's citing of the Nuba Mountains example is misplaced here: the 'break through' cease-fire arrangement was never intended to change the conditions that led to war, but it was intended to halt violence and allow humanitarian actors to enter areas that had been extremely difficult to access due to conflict. Different actors then tried to fill that extremely distorted/impossible space in different ways to further their ideas or agendas and create opportunities (GoS, SPLM, UNDP, NMPACT, etc.).

The sustainability and the success of local peace processes are dependent on many factors associated with the conflict or dispute. Not least its scale, longevity, evolution and how it is been expressed in its context. The success and sustainability of a peace initiative is also dependent on the nature and significance of the GRPB initiative itself. While it is logical to suppose that a successful national peace agreement would involve renewed attention to local disputes, this assumes a level of understanding of their importance and a willingness to engage at the lower levels from all actors that may not necessarily be there, and remains to be seen. As noted later in the RVI paper the trend amongst donors is also probably contrary to this supposition.

Ideally it is true that local peace processes need support from representative government at the national level, but again, local SPF program staff experience of GRPB has shown there is potential

to influence the creation of more representative government as well as change the behaviours of those in power; a means towards a greater end.

While there is a case for linking expanded 'external support' for peace processes to the end of cold war at the macro level, perhaps the strong emphasis has been at the expense of possibly more nuanced and complex factors that are now affecting how peace is being addressed at a practical level on the ground.

COMMENTS ON

"Absence of Common Objectives among Participants and Supporting Organisations"

RVI has noted a change in the donor environment that is in accord with Pact and SPF's direct experience; that there is a waning interest in GRPB among donors post CPA, despite the continuing high demand from the 'supposed beneficiaries' for assistance to address local peace issues. The reasons being voiced by these 'beneficiaries' for continued attention and support for this work are partly to restore stability for recovery and address past grievances, partly to prevent or mitigate south-south political divisions, partly to improve local accountability and governance and thus in turn, safeguard the CPA and post-conflict recovery against the threat of northern interference and sabotage. Feedback that staff receive on this issue from people on the ground expresses a degree of bewilderment that external players do not appear to understand the importance of attention to these issues.

The general lesson noted by RVI regarding the interests of actors involved in GRPB is that scrutiny and analysis of all agendas and objectives, hidden or overt, is requisite before entering into GRPB, given the range of interests sometimes separate from supposed beneficiaries. This is well made and resonates deeply with the practical experience of program staff attempting to untangle motives and dynamics between all players. (See comments on UNDP position later on.) Making peace which can be a precursor for making war is linked to the main point but an analysis of GRPB as antecedent to war in southern Sudan deserves a deeper treatment as it is complex, nuanced and can easily be misunderstood. There is no doubt that there is a risk that material support for peace processes may feed the conflicts they are meant to resolve. In fact as noted earlier, without a deep and comprehensive understanding of the interests of all parties involved in the conflict GRPB can have unintended negative consequences which lead to important implications regarding the need and role of credible 'third parties' in these issues. At various times over the past few years, Pact and Sudan Peace Fund have been invited in to assist with initiatives to play this 'neutral' role.

In considering the contradictions between the rationale presented for local peace processes and the nature of the support provided by donors, RVI has touched on what has been a central preoccupation surrounding the impact of GRPB from our experience: that it is 'unclear how attitudinal change and Civil Society Capacity Building can influence underlying causes of violence'. There is a danger however that the heading may be a distraction from this *critical point*. While we believe for example GRPB can contribute to wider change over time, it has proven difficult to demonstrate *how*, but the topic is clearly worthy of more detailed and sophisticated research and analysis. This also begs the question of the level of 'investment' GRPB requires and deserves - especially in further research - but which is not forthcoming. While some 'sponsors' may over-emphasise 'superstructural phenomena', we have found GRPB an opportune 'entry point' for wider programming on Civil Society and governance generally. It is not the goal or end, but again, a useful and sometimes in the past, the *only* entry point or step when addressing broader structural issues.

The finding that support for processes of dialogue and mediation are inadequate without support to implement agreements also deserves greater elaboration as it is clear from our work that with *improved* support results may be enhanced. Agreements may identify perceived benefits associated with a peace achievement (the so called 'peace dividend'), or, institutional arrangements designed to ensure that peace achievements are monitored and honoured and any threats managed (eg through committees, judiciary, police etc). Nevertheless the nature of agreements and the implementation of them is also contingent on many factors, in both the internal and external environment and require an 'untangling' of the threads to assess how they can best be addressed.

This, not surprisingly, is particularly difficult in a complex environment where trust is not secure and peace is fragile and requires a large degree of investment in process.

COMMENTS ON “Strengths and Weaknesses in the Analysis of Local Conflict in Sudan”

Points in this section (#1 linked to #5 above) regarding the documentation, written analysis and perceived gaps that appear to highlight inadequacies in comprehension and therefore in the potential success of the GRPB initiative in addressing the issues are we assume an important point for the purpose of the publication. Nevertheless the position on this issue from a practitioner’s perspective is not as straightforward and the paper should possibly acknowledge *why* there may be reasons for analysis gaps: it’s a very politically charged terrain, where protagonists are often circumspect in what they say, how they say it and in particular what gets documented - within a predominantly oral tradition. It does not mean things are unsaid or that people at the grass roots don’t know what is happening, but the point should emphasize who can/should undertake such a broader analysis in environments like Sudan where there are limited protections for local actors and the risks are high.

Documentation is acknowledged by all to be important but the Sudan Peace Fund program has moved away from referring to GRPB documentation as *baseline* given the ever-changing dynamics they reflect and the fact that peace meetings tend to reveal only partial insights into more complicated grass roots peace processes. However again, linking back to the earlier point above where research into attitudinal change is critical there is a need for deeper research over adequate time to understand evolutions and impact of peace processes and GRPB initiatives.

The observation that peace building is “evolving” and understanding is still very limited is worth strengthening and emphasizing from our perspective; as in order to achieve greater understanding adequate investment is required and the subject certainly deserves this attention. It should be noted that GRPB actors are generally preoccupied with overseeing the delivery of a product in complex circumstances, and rarely have the capacity or space to do the type of analysis alone required to bring true dividends from such an investment or process.

COMMENTS ON “The Role of Culture and Tradition”

Experience gleaned from the Sudan Peace Fund program would reinforce the finding that suggests a more systematic understanding of indigenous traditions of reconciliation and forgiveness, *and sometimes “resolution”* (we would add this latter aspect) is perhaps even *necessary* (rather than simply desirable) within the Sudan context. This finding also raises the tricky terrain of the need to mediate the necessary, though at times uncomfortable interface between statutory and traditional institutions.

A minor point; but perhaps rather than referencing Condominium rule per se, given some colonial legacies and potential sensitivities, it may be worth emphasizing the desirability of seeking out appropriate and updated mechanisms for the shared use of natural resources so as to broaden the opportunity of ensuring different models can be drawn on that would be helpful for the Sudan context.

The rather sweeping treatment of the observation that international organizations do not always speak the same moral and political language as the people they are assisting may distract from important conclusions implicit under this heading. The point is linked to a previous observation that typically, numerous and sometimes competing interests converge around GRPB. However practically we have seen, it is not just international organizations that “impute moral and political significance”, but also controlling authorities, traditional institutions and civil society members (as it were) themselves. Admittedly, some actors can be one dimensional in terms of which element of the “global moral template” they are adopting at the time and de-linked from the particular context under review. But practical engagement from practitioners would place the emphasis on whose “local understanding” of key events is being identified, captured and in many instances, protected. What approach or process is applied to ensure a greater understanding from those

either affected by conflict or genuinely seeking peace in a given situation (a problematic task constantly faced by the SPF program)? We were cautious about the example (Kerubino) given, as it can be interpreted in different ways; demonstrating how either political expediency, or the fact that people can be pragmatic in an unpredictable environment, can prevail; deferring or suspending justice for more immediate benefits, may not also be the full picture as these decisions must be judged in specific contexts and over appropriate time scales. As the report says, outsiders should be slow to impute meaning without careful scrutiny.

COMMENTS ON “From Peacebuilding to Governance”

There is a danger that the heading regarding International aid agencies seeking to fill the vacuum of government sidetracks the intended emphasis as in fact, few international aid agencies actually *seek* to fill the vacuum of government. The reality is much more complex and in many cases, GRPB constituents themselves make specific requests to churches or NGOs for different types of interventions (either because of the absence or mismanagement of governing authorities). But these tend to be time bound and in the context of wanting and eventually expecting the existence of a functioning and fair local governing system. That there are agencies who uncritically and therefore negatively continue to displace legitimate or potentially legitimate local authorities is not disputed, but in general, the aim is to improve practice in how agencies deal with non-, emerging or corrupt authorities.

Again with respect to the notion that “civil society” remains undefined, we would suggest that the emphasis is on the need to apply strict stakeholder and political analysis on GRPB as it is known that notions such as Civil Society in Sudan, due to the legacies of war and the chaotic nature of the environment, is “undefined”. Is there a danger in this presentation that people will thus choose not to engage in GRPB at all for fear of entering waters that are too deep and risky rather than ensuring that the potential to facilitate and help change an environment positively and accede to the wishes of people in addressing their concerns and conflicts?

COMMENTS ON “Observations on the Political Economy of Local Peacemaking in Sudan”

We were a bit mystified when it came to the representation of the Sudan Peace Fund in this section. Of course, an increase in external funding inevitably alters the evolution of GRPB, but we believe the assumptions and outcome attributed to SPF in the document need to be reviewed. SPF was designed to deepen and broaden GRPB as epitomized in Wunlit (which was characterized by its grassroots nature, its appeal to customary tradition and symbolism, the role adopted by local - non-authority - facilitation, and significant external funding). After Wunlit, the body of GRPB experience diversified, especially in the context of a national peace process, and as you would expect from any “scale-up”, produced good and sometimes less effective practice - though the resources available were in fact miniscule in relation to the level of demand and the legacy of local conflicts to be addressed.

While we would never say Wunlit brought political merger in the south and led to a wider peace process, we do think it made a significant though largely underestimated contribution. GRPB after Wunlit expanded and diversified, and in the later context of a national peace process, modestly sought or was bequeathed opportunities that reinforced that wider political dynamic, though it is far too early to assess if GRPB had sufficient opportunity to positively alter the process (as noted earlier, a theme worth researching). Of note in relation to this were the cross line meetings of the Dinka, Miseryia and Reizegat and those in Tali, Wau and Lekwangale and the impact of the All Nuer meeting (for additional references see table of peace meetings).

COMMENTS ON SPF and STAR

Though linked in that they were supported by USAID, it is highly questionable that they operated from the same rationale or framework from our perspective. STAR was a political statement by the

Clinton regime against the north and to a lesser extent, somewhat uncritically pro-SPLM, but did little in terms of shaping or influencing the SPLM to better govern or strengthen its institutions. We assume the Sudan Peace Fund had political interest around southern unity and improved accountability, though USAID never really articulated that very clearly, and it was after the establishment of the Sudan Peace Fund that the US Government could actually link it to a wider national peace process. Hence we would suggest that this section should take more into account; firstly the changing broader political environment and secondly the formation of government and the changing southern political perspective. The international framework of analysis for these scenarios therefore is changing (cf the current considerations around fragile states, analyzing geopolitics through a security or stability lens, etc.) as well as donor government mechanisms, and this is likely to alter by whom and how this type of work will be continued.

Curiously, the Sudan Peace Fund eventually became a point of deep controversy internally, as strong elements in USAID championing Dr Garang and the SPLM wanted to shut it down as it was seen to be overly challenging, or with the potential to challenge, the authorities. As time went on, the emphasis actually driving the program - generating stability locally - became dominant and is an objective that even the SPLM could not but embrace.

COMMENTS ON “The Sudan Peace Fund and Peace through Development”

SPF never intended nor functioned by bringing “peace through development”. In fact, it was quite the opposite in our mind by consistently backing communities, civil groups and the authorities in deepening their analysis of their environment and seeking out the causes of their local unrests. Sometimes, to the point of contention with authorities, the SPF avoided the quick fixes demanded by politicians and local figures in favour of grass roots processes and buy in. SPF focus was on giving support to local grass root initiatives through local organizations (churches, committees, CBOs etc.) to reduce conflict and promote stability and peace. The approach and processes deployed in achieving this aim were strategic in that they were aiming to support a web of specific initiatives that eventually could bring broader stability in sub-regions of the south and by allowing platforms of opinion and demand to align and influence their socio-political environment. Though perhaps early to assess, we believe the outcome has been generally positive and possibly was among the more critical AID programs for the peace process, outside of the main political process (NB Norwegians, British and Italians all contributed to the SPF fund). Additional comments on the theme of peace through development are incorporated in the section on Nuba below.

COMMENTS ON “Case Study I: Wunlit and the ‘People-to-People’ Movement”

When it comes to peace actors, we fail to actually recognize the view presented of NSCC and the later role of other international agencies in this section. To suggest that SPF is less concerned about exploring the spiritual dimension in reconciliation misunderstands what has actually been happening:

- Firstly much of the dialogue work under the Sudan Peace Fund was still through NSCC (an integral part of the SPF and a consortium partner),
- Secondly GRPB expanded and diversified significantly after Wunlit, and consequentially support for GRPB has been altering,
- Thirdly the impact of the wider peace dynamics upon GRPB was significant in both shaping the environment and demand for peace dialogue and in the manner peace actors and support organizations responded
- Fourthly with the increase in demand and the scale up in terms of the opportunity and ability for more groups to meet and dialogue, it was not always possible (even desirable) to maintain the “Wunlit standards” but where possible, the aim was to adapt them to the particular context being addressed.

The context after 1999 also shaped broader and sometimes overlapping variations on the community to community theme:

- Strict people to people dialogue at the grassroots
- Interface and dialogue between the grassroots and their authorities and leaders
- Cross-line dialogue
- Cross border dialogue
- Chiefs' or women or youth "conferences"
- And of course the more political South-South Dialogue

We agree that there was insufficient willingness from donors to fund follow up activities to local peace initiatives, but also should note first that NSCC was not necessarily the right agency to do the follow up, and, second, that other agencies were unable to for reasons of funding or being prepared to access insecure areas. It would probably be more useful to make some comments on what the role of external actors should be at the different levels - donors, INGOs, and their relationships to the Sudanese. Should they be just funding? Or engaging with grass-roots? Who sets the agendas and how they relate to SPLM? Should they be facilitating conferences and processes? Many INGOs are reliant on donors who decide on the availability of funds. This is where the links between national and local processes should also be made more explicit.

In many respects, SPF was more closely tied to institutions on the ground and was able to operate where NSCC was not welcome to preside. That it is doubtful that Pact for example could have orchestrated an event like Wunlit is putting the emphasis completely in the wrong place: firstly it wouldn't have, secondly NSCC (who did and were in a position to take advantage of the competitive political environment in the south at the time) were a part of SPF and thirdly, as we will reference below, popular movements typically have inspirational events or persons they draw from (but rarely emulate); GRPB in Sudan uses Wunlit in this regard (for example addressing Nuer/Nuer issues). So we believe it is not a question of replicating Wunlit (though we would often loved to have seen a better standard of documentation and even organization), but use it as, say, as the symbolic baseline for contemporary grassroots peace processes, or a model that informs other initiatives. It became a moral and ritualistic emblem of grassroots potential in overcoming adversity and an inspiration for a new generation of what is, proven conflict reduction institutions. Essentially, every context is unique. Its application in the changing context of Sudan has subsequently seen many manifestations and adaptations, mostly inspired by Wunlit's essential appeal to community dialogue.

When it comes to documentation:

- As the approach was replicated it was not always possible to achieve the same standards of documentation. The time and resources were not available given the extraordinary demand to meet and address local issues and the capacity of local (and indeed regional) institutions to oversee and document such processes.
- This does not mean that higher standards shouldn't be sought after - they must. However, it must be acknowledged that existing documents are at best a partial reflection of the actual processes that have taken place (a problem for anthropologists that depend on such documents as their sole source). They are often even a poor reflection of what was actually said (and even good writers fail to interpret and capture the idiom, a frequent and preferred mode of communication at these meetings). Very often, the organizations that assume responsibility for documentation come from the same oral tradition as the protagonists themselves, and find write-ups a difficult task.
- In a similar vein, it is also difficult for those overseeing peace processes to successfully capture or document vertical linkages between GRPB and wider political processes; not least because these linkages require access to a much broader analysis and can only be

really discerned over time - and should be the focus of serious research. However, this does not mean they are not happening.

- Peace meeting reports also tend to focus on the days of the actual meeting and rarely reflect the often intricate and protracted processes that take place long before and after a peace meeting event.

COMMENTS ON “Case Study II: Ceasefire and local dialogue in the Nuba Mountains” (with additional comments on NMPACT and its evolution):

The Nuba Mountains Program was the brainchild of UNDP and the then Resident Representative. At the time it was blocked by the SPLM Nuba and strongly resisted by international organizations working on their side, and never took off. UNDP’s record of ARS is correctly recorded (Nuba and Darfur being classic examples of their limited success), but some of its assumption was being carrying forward under the NMP. This precipitated a new round of discussions, which continued within the now new context of the Cease Fire Agreement. NMPACT itself was shaped by many stakeholders - not just UNDP as the document might imply. It was a tough battle, especially between and within international agencies as well as between the SPLM (SRRA) and GoS (HAC). UN agencies in the north in particular were reluctant to sign up initially, and in the end, only partly embraced the spirit of the program. In fact while directly administered by UNDP, the program was also answerable to the Resident Representative because of the program’s sensitivity as well as to ensure that the program would remain accountable to its principles and reflect the multi-stakeholder basis on which it had been founded.

The cease-fire was a reprieve, politically dangerous for the SPLM Nuba, which was not as successfully negotiated by them as they had hoped: it was not, as the report correctly says, a peace initiative. NMPACT was aiming to exploit what it could during this unique but politically suspended circumstance under the Cease Fire Agreement, by:

- deepening an analysis/awareness as to why there was a war in Nuba, especially for northern based international actors whose analysis was generally in accord with the northern GoS perspective
- maximizing the opportunity for Nuba voice and association, otherwise denied by the GoS and as the only legitimate position for outsiders (ie allow the Nuba to decide for themselves)
- deepening a notion of what *humanitarian equity* and *doing least harm* might mean and how it should be applied, given the appalling record of the humanitarian community from the north in the Nuba up until then.

It also created the first genuine cross-line framework that allowed extensive Nuba to Nuba and Nuba to neighbour dialogue to take place; much of it independent of external actors or funding. (NB PACTA was not a cross-line initiative, but did make some useful cross-line linkages.)

The battle within NMPACT between a UNDP “peace-through-development” approach and alternative perspectives continues and sadly, UNDP ethos is likely to prevail as new actors join the CPA melee, but it is incorrect to say that NMPACT ‘continues this approach’.

COMMENTS ON “Case Study III: Abyei and the North-South peace process” (with comments on PACTA and its evolution)

Our impression is that PACTA preceded NMPACT? It was not developed with the same framework and principles as NMPACT, but observers and some stakeholders hoped and expected that PACTA would have evolved in a similar way to the NMPACT. However it was difficult for this to happen without the “Dinka, Misseriya, Reizegat” (DMR) process taking off, and the SPLM and GoS kept

stalling at the higher political levels. PACTA at the time was a “pushing the boundaries” project from the north without the benefit of a cease-fire, and therefore failed to get the type of genuine cross border buy-in it required. However it did achieve much given the constrained context it operated in and enabled good contacts in the south to be developed.

It was assumed, though debated locally, that a PACTA type initiative would evolve under a broader DMR framework. The 2003 Ngok conference was supposed to be the first opportunity to debate a broader framework, but the GoS prevented northern Ngok participation. A big additional theme at this conference was not just IDP return but safety of passage for IDPs in general. On the importance given to ‘self reliance’, we consider that your extrapolations have been a little generous! Yes, self-reliance continues to be part of the aid rhetoric, but development practice has either moved on (for some more effective agencies) or for perhaps the majority, is so ineffectual that it is meaningless anyway. Were ACAD using the limited concepts that were available to them or deliberately speaking to what they assumed an international organization would like to hear is unknown, but to say the meeting was a forum ‘for the promulgation of international liberal models of development’ might be going a little far! As noted in earlier comments Pact would prefer to see the emphasis on encouraging future research to assess how GRPB approaches influence approaches to development (or not), and whether notions like inter-dependence actually challenge notions like self reliance. [see note on documentation under Wunlit.]