

Preventing Atrocity in Sudan:

A Human Security Approach

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“Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world”
William Butler Yeats

Introduction: Sudan’s Downward Spiral

Fueled by ethnic tension, the unequal distribution of government resources in Sudan has created a vicious cycle of poverty; a country already at its knees from a history of civil war, now faces mass atrocity for the second time this century¹. According to the Minority Rights Group International, Sudan’s tribal groups are at high risk of victimization²; rape, murder, torture and scorched earth campaigns have ravaged the country for over a decade. This is a nation in crisis and while there are many causes to consider, I will strive to demonstrate that the fundamental issues leading to genocide are radiating from the nation’s capital in Khartoum³ and it is there that atrocity prevention must be seeded. Inequitable access to health and educational infrastructure, state finances and land ownership is the direct result of the policy of the National Congress Party (NCP) under the rule of President Omar al Bashir⁴. Northern Arab Sudanese have been appointed to government positions disproportionately, skewing regional infrastructure decisions, leaving the Western, Eastern and Southern regions with inadequate basic resources⁵ and ultimately fueling the civil war from 1983-2005, leading to South Sudan’s independence in 2011.

Though the primary responsibility for citizen protection lies with the government, the NCP is not upholding its sovereign responsibility leaving the international community with a responsibility to protect the vulnerable population.⁶ Local, regional and international players must engage to support

¹ The Minority Rights Group International ranks Sudan as second (next to Somalia) on the list of “peoples most under threat” (Minority Rights Group International, 2014, p.5)

² “the [Sudanese] government’s expressed intention to bring all rebellions in the country to an end by the summer has led to fears of renewed attacks on civilian populations” (Minority Rights Group International, 2014, p. 3)

³ According to the UNSC’s April 2014 report on UNAMID, the recent increase in violence in Darfur is destabilizing human security at three levels: economic deterioration is exacerbating inter-tribal tensions through battles for land and resources, the deployment of Rapid Support Forces (RSF) by the ruling government is resulting in violence and displacing thousands of peoples and lastly, rebel attacks against government forces and counter-attacks by the Sudanese Armed Forces in areas controlled by rebel forces are resulting in bloodshed. (United Nations Security Council Report of the Secretary-General on UNAMID, 2014)

⁴ Eberhart, 2014

⁵ Cobham, 20, p. 463

⁶ “The international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes. If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the

Sudan's crawl out of violence⁷; in order to have the greatest impact, given limited resources, the domains of human security⁸ must be addressed in the following order: political, community, economic, food and health. Tackling political stability and equal representation of the population in the security and judicial sectors as a first step is key⁹: the cascading effect of successful mediation between rebel and government forces, followed by internationally supported and monitored implementation of the agreements made, has the potential to birth a stable level of rule; to be successful, these actions must include disarmament, ethnic resolution and a focus on economic capacity building.

The climate is complicated: the number of rebel factions involved, depth of ethnic tension, unstable natural environment, large numbers of displaced people¹⁰, concentration of small arms, prevention of humanitarian access to conflict zones¹¹, poor maternal and infant health¹², economic sanctions on Sudan, lack of punctual funding from international donors and divisive nature of the peace talks (with respect to tribe and region) all play a role. To say the history of conflict and attempts at peace in Sudan is a long and complicated one would be an understatement, but I will focus on addressing the root issues that are causing the current atrocities, with the understanding that the way forward is long and arduous; there is simply no easy solution to the years of divide in Sudan.

Background to the Violence

To prevent atrocity, we must understand who is behind it and why. The marginalization of tribal communities peripheral to the predominantly Arab centre has led to poor quality of life for minority tribes.¹³ In February 2003, Darfur rebel groups¹⁴ took up arms in response to their claims of oppression from the ruling Arab party. Khartoum reacted by targeting Darfurians through violent attacks carried out by armed Arab militias known as the Janjaweed, resulting in the first genocide of the century.¹⁵ The

international community must be prepared to take collective action to protect populations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations." (UN, Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, 2014)

⁷ Ki-moon, 2014 (Fulfilling our collective responsibility...)

⁸ Based on the seven aspects of human security, as discussed in the 1994 Human Development Report. (UNDP, 1994)

⁹ Ki-moon, 2014 (UN Security Council Resolution 2148)

¹⁰ Reeves, 2005, para 25

¹¹ "Clashes between Sudanese armed forces and rebels in North Darfur, as well as tribal clashes in the centre and south of the region, have led to renewed population displacement and accusations that the authorities are denying humanitarian access to the affected areas." (Minority Rights Group International (MRG), 2014, pg. 3)

¹² Finger, 2011, p. 7

¹³ Cobham, 2005, p. 476

¹⁴ The 2003 uprising consisted primarily of the Fur, Massaleit and Zaghawa tribes.

¹⁵ Darfur Genocide, 2013, para 1

ethnic cleansing through slaughter, rape, abuse, burned villages and ensuing famine has led to the death of an estimated 500,000 people and the displacement of almost 3 million others.¹⁶ In addition to being the victims of mass killing, thousands are dying from famine; the militias' scorched earth campaign resulted in environmental degradation, food scarcity, water contamination, and thus to death by malnutrition¹⁷ and the ensuing competition for resources has led to inter-tribal fighting.¹⁸

International awareness of the deplorable situation in Sudan has led to many attempts at peace talks and agreements, the most notable being the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA)¹⁹ and the 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD)²⁰. Both have failed. The absence of principal party signatories, divisive approach, insufficient resources and lack of implementation has meant that neither document resulted in further peace in the region.²¹ UNAMID, the United Nations – African Union Mission in Darfur, is currently poised in western Sudan with a humanitarian mandate²², however, 61 peacekeepers have been killed since the mission's inception in 2007²³, further destabilizing the international community's efforts. The UN has verbalized its outrage, but there has been little effort on the government's part to bring the perpetrators to justice.²⁴ The International Criminal Court (ICC) has an outstanding warrant for the arrest of Bashir²⁵, but he has not been arrested and continues to lead with much the same discriminatory tactic, fueling the causes of violence.

Raging ethnic conflicts over land in the disputed region of Abyei²⁶ are compounded by the oil economy, destabilizing both sides of the border. The matter is further complicated internationally by China's dependence on Sudanese oil.²⁷ South Sudan produces the oil, while Sudan refines and distributes it; in

¹⁶ Darfur Genocide, 2013, para 2

¹⁷ The United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur, 2014, para 5

¹⁸ International Crisis Group, 2014, p. 1

¹⁹ For Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), see <http://www.un.org/zh/focus/southern Sudan/pdf/dpa.pdf>

²⁰ For Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), see http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/documents/Peace_Process_Chronology-DDPD.pdf

²¹ International Crisis Group, 2014, p. i

²² UNAMID's mandate is: "protection of civilians, contributing to security for humanitarian assistance, monitoring and verifying implementation of agreements, assisting an inclusive political process, contributing to the promotion of human rights and the rule of law." (UNAMID Mandate, 2014)

²³ Three UNAMID peacekeepers were killed as recently as October 14, 2014 while guarding a water borehole in North Darfur. (United Nations – African Union Mission in Darfur, 2014, para 1)

²⁴ Three attackers of female peacekeepers were brought to trial in September 2014 leading to the first conviction in the violence against UNAMID peacekeepers since the mission began. (UNAMID welcomes...,2014)

²⁵ Bashir's warrant is for five counts of crime against humanity, two counts of war crimes, and three counts of genocide. (ICC, n.d., para 1)

²⁶ BBC News, 2012

²⁷ Sudan currently provides 7% of China's oil imports. (Shinn, 2014)

2013, Khartoum froze its oil relationship with the South in an attempt to deter the new country from supporting northern rebels²⁸. The economic strain on Sudan has contributed to the current financial crisis, further undermining Khartoum's capability or desire to fund necessary infrastructure in conflict regions.²⁹

A Way Forward – Prioritizing Political Stability and Security Sector Development

The perpetrators of the atrocities targeting non-Arab citizens are primarily the Arab militias funded and endorsed by the Sudanese government. In addition, inter-tribal conflict has resulted in further loss of life. In order to decrease the likelihood of atrocity, warring ethnic communities, the rebel forces that represent them and, most crucially, the government must recognize the rights and citizenship of Sudan's entire population equitably. Respecting state sovereignty, all Sudanese must be given the "right to shape and determine their own destiny".³⁰ Therefore, peacebuilding must address "social relations, in particular restoring or building trust within a broader context of inclusive development and social integration."³¹ This commitment to ethnic resolution capacity building combines political and community security to create fertile ground for fair representation of all citizen groups, supporting trust-building and the legitimization of security and judicial sectors.

The rebel factions of Sudan are many, but it is important to consider the rebellion's non-signatories to the DDPD; the JEM³², SLM-Minawi and SLM-al Nur³³. The NCP has been slow to instigate the DDPD for both economic and political reasons, leaving it even less likely that the rebel factions will move to sign, as they see no honest implementation by the government.

The men behind the government's atrocities in 2003 are still in control, highlighting the need for international incentives to be placed on both Sudan and neighbouring countries to honour the warrant for Bashir's arrest.³⁴ If Bashir's warrant continues to be ignored, the risk of delegitimizing the ICC's role in human security is real. In addition, the violence of the civil war has largely gone unjudged, and the security and judiciary systems are filled with recycled Janjaweed militia. The impact on human security is profound, as the minority tribal groups have no reason to trust that they will be protected; in order for

²⁸ Timberlake, 2013

²⁹ International Crisis Group, 2014, pg.1

³⁰ International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001, p. 7

³¹ Futamura, 2010, p. 6

³² Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and

³³ Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) is divided into SLM-Minawi and SLM-al Nur.

³⁴ Since the ICC warrant was issued, Bashir has visited Qatar and Egypt. Both countries failed to arrest him. (Darfur Genocide, 2013)

trust to grow and individual safety to improve, the security and judicial sectors must equally represent all populations.

Despite the clear need for honest rule, a change in leadership or in the leadership's policy can be destabilizing.³⁵ The movement towards liberal institutionalization produces a period of instability during which local capacity building must be supported and monitored through regional and international partners.³⁶ This is a gigantic task, one that requires multilateral assistance, and securing the resources and political will to carry it out is complicated.³⁷ In this case, the AU, UN, US, China and states surrounding Sudan have to agree on a direction towards peacebuilding through transitional support. The players have such diverse tactics, economies and security concerns making the task of working in fluid relationship with the leaders of Sudan daunting. In order for a successful transition to a stable state to occur, the international and regional community must provide support through monitoring the timely application of peace agreements, the development of security and judicial sectors, disarmament, monitored ethnic dispute resolution and the delivery of humanitarian aid.

To be successful, genocide prevention must include the implementation of a ceasefire and disarmament program for both rebel and government armed forces, and this program must be supported at the international level.³⁸ Brian Wood of Amnesty International expressed, "the Darfur conflict is sustained by the constant flow of weapons from abroad. To help prevent further serious violations of human rights, all international arms transfers to Sudan should be immediately suspended."³⁹ Arms are definitely a major part of the problem, but human agency is key, highlighting the importance of ethnic resolution capacities, led internally, but with external guidance, support and monitoring.

The Dynamic Role of Economic Security

On the heels of supported political security, ethnic resolution and disarmament, both macro and micro economic growth must be addressed, as well as short and long term economic scenarios. Politically fragile nations require economic policies that "mobilize resources for the peace process and financing

³⁵ "Even democratic changes and accelerated development can undermine human security, as the experiences of transition countries attest." (Tadjbakhsh, 2007, p. 100)

³⁶ Paris supports the "establishment of domestic institutions that are capable of managing the transition from war while avoiding the destabilizing effects of democratization and marketization." (Tschirgi, 2004, p.15)

³⁷ Tschirgi notes that after the Iraq war began, during a gruesome part of Sudanese history, the deteriorating nation had been "relegated to 'second tier' international concerns" due to 'higher risk' conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq (Tschirgi, 2004, p.17)

³⁸ China, Russia and other local states supply small arms to Sudan. (Amnesty International, 2012)

³⁹ Amnesty International, 2012

the immediate cost of peace while addressing the longer-term relationship among economic growth, income distribution and the consolidation of peace.”⁴⁰ In vast parts of Sudan, national and individual economic insecurity grew from limited land use for agriculture and animal husbandry, scarce sources of individual income, deliberate destruction of food production and the inadequate distribution of basic infrastructure and state finances to civil society. There is significant evidence that to achieve positive results in peacebuilding, weight should be put on poverty alleviation and sustainable income generation.⁴¹ Because individual economic security is heavily dependent on one’s access to land, used to grow food and traditional medicines, a primary step on the path to preventing atrocity must be to support ethnic dispute resolution with the goal of clarifying land claims and equally distributing agricultural resources so that personal income generation is possible.

Khartoum is lagging on delivering funds promised in the DDPD to conflict zones and this has a cascading negative effect on the programs that support the basic needs and microeconomic development of minority citizens already ravaged by war.⁴² Lying beyond the complications from ethnic tensions is the poor economic reality; the NCP is running a country in financial crisis. In order for the government to function and uphold its promises, international economic relief must be considered. Emphasizing economic security has the potential to lead to equitable government resource distribution in the health care and education sectors, but ensuring implementation is necessary; the fortification of these aspects will increase the human security of Sudanese people directly by providing essential services and indirectly through education aiding to resolve ethnic tension.

Economic Ties to Environment, Food and Health Security

Minority communities in the Darfurian, South Kordofan and Blue Nile regions striving for economic security have been met with extreme challenges. Vast regions of destroyed crops, contaminated water and insecurity have led to the inability to harvest and seed at the required times, resulting in failed fields.⁴³ The harvesting environment, particularly in the Darfurian region, is fragile at the best of

⁴⁰ Tschirgi, 2004, p. 14

⁴¹ “Contrary to a liberal economic approach, the evidence suggests that the emphasis should be upon poverty alleviation and employment generation.” (Futamura, 2010, p. 3)

⁴² Ismail, et al., 2012, p.5

⁴³ The principal cash crops are cotton, sesame and peanuts, while sorghum, millet and wheat support food security in the region. Cash crops also include “sugar-cane, dates, citrus fruits, mangoes, coffee and tobacco,” and other sustenance crops include “cowpeas, pulses, corn and barley”. (Sudan-Agriculture, 2014)

times.⁴⁴ The rains are critical for productive crops and climate change is thought to contribute to perennial water shortages.⁴⁵ Seeking water, harvestable land from which to grow food and medicinal plants to maintain health, nomadic groups and displaced people have come into conflict with tribal communities practicing sedentary agriculture.⁴⁶ As small arms are prolific in Sudan⁴⁷, many of these groups are now armed and violence has ensued.⁴⁸ The large amount of internally displaced people fleeing violence is putting pressure on an already stressed environment and citizens weakened by poor nutrition and health care are susceptible to disease.⁴⁹ The number of indirect deaths from environmental, food and health insecurity is astronomical and, according to the UN, this is genocide,⁵⁰ supporting Futamura's claim that "the coordination of economic development and the security sector is crucial,"⁵¹ a multi-pronged approach to atrocity prevention is necessary as environment and food insecurity will collapse strides made in the political and economic realms.

Attempts at Peace and Learning from Mistakes

There have been multiple attempts at peace processes and mediation; however major deficiencies in ethnic representation, resources, and implementation have produced devastating side-effects. Following peace talks in Chad in 2004, the international community's efforts to address the underlying issues of the 2003 Sudanese genocide led to the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). It failed from the beginning, as one of the rebel factions did not sign.⁵² Further, the DPA included no maps to aid in the proper implementation of governmental promises which affected land and state revenue distribution.⁵³ The DPA does have its strengths: it includes Darfurian representation in national institutions, financing

⁴⁴ The bulk of the area's surface covered in one of four different land features: sand, basement rock, water courses and mountains formed by ancient volcanoes. (de Waal, 2005, p. 36)

⁴⁵ Akasha, 2014, p.10

⁴⁶ The UN-African Mission in Darfur, 2014

⁴⁷ HSBA, 2014. The country is wrought "with Kalashnikov-pattern assault rifles, general-purpose machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and in some instances 12.7 mm heavy machine guns [which] have all been documented in significant quantities." See the following link for the current small arms assessment in Sudan:

www.smallarmssurveysudan.org

⁴⁸ "widespread arms proliferation among non-state actors has long been identified as a critical factor leading to the outbreak and escalation of armed violence and conflict in Sudan and South Sudan." (HSBA, 2014)

⁴⁹ Death from malaria, dengue fever, meningitis and typhoid fever is a threat in Sudan. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014)

⁵⁰ "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." As cited from International Committee of the Red Cross, n.d.

⁵¹ Futamura, 2010, p. 6

⁵² The SLM-Wahid did not sign, while Bashir's man Majzoub and the SLM-Minawi did. (de Waal, 2006)

⁵³ de Waal, 2006

for Darfur, ceasefire, disarmament of the Janjaweed, and ethnic conflict resolution.⁵⁴ What it lacked was proper implementation, timely funding, international oversight and the backing of all parties involved.⁵⁵ To make matters worse, Bashir opposed humanitarian work in conflict regions.⁵⁶

Simultaneous to the separation of South Sudan in 2011, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) was signed in Qatar. Unfortunately, the government has neglected to act swiftly in its implementation of the document⁵⁷ and the DDPD did not include the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) as signatories.⁵⁸ In order for any peace agreement to be successfully implemented, the SRF must be involved; therefore, international pressure has been mounting for the rebels to create a political platform including all Sudanese. There has been additional criticism that separating Darfur's challenges from the rest of the nation weakens attempts at peace everywhere, as the core issues surrounding the Khartoum regime's unequal treatment of Sudanese people affects all regions: "the fates of those in Darfur, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, the East, and the far north, as well as opposition in the center, are inextricably tied together."⁵⁹

Conclusion: Prioritizing for Prevention of Atrocity in Sudan

The primary actions to inhibit atrocity must prioritize humanitarian access to conflict zones in conjunction with political mediation between warring parties with the goal of developing a settlement which represents and distributes resources equally amongst all regions, ethnic groups and gender. Security sector and judicial stability must be supported through monitored implementation of disarmament⁶⁰ and ethnic resolution capacity building, followed by an emphasis on micro and macroeconomic reform leading to infrastructure development. Tackling human insecurity using this

⁵⁴ Militia disarmament notably did not include the mention of a UN peaceforce. (DPA, 2006)

⁵⁵ De Waal, executive director of the World Peace Foundation and an expert on Sudan and the Horn of Africa who was present at the DPA talks in Abuja, notes that the African Union, charged with the responsibility of monitoring Sudanese progress, failed to "establish a functioning secretariat, a political affairs unit or a strategy tea." (de Waal, 2006)

⁵⁶ This is for two possible reasons: he feared the ICC warrant on him would be implemented by the United Nations and/or he saw international assistance to Darfur as a likely way for Darfur to gain independence, a major threat in light of the impending South Sudanese split. (de Waal, 2006)

⁵⁷ "the three most glaring violations of the DDPD's provisions are the government's failure to transfer funds to the Darfur Regional Authority, or DRA, its reluctance to cooperate with the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, or UNAMID, and its hostility to humanitarian actors, including continuing to place impediments to unfettered humanitarian access." (Ismail, et al., 2012, p. 5)

⁵⁸ The SRF is the alliance of the main rebel groups - JEM, SLM-Minawi and SLM-Wahid. (DDPD, 2011)

⁵⁹ Ismail, et al., 2012, p. 5

⁶⁰ "civil conflicts are fuelled by arms and monetary transfers that originate in the developed world." (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), 2001, p.5)

multi-pronged approach has the potential to reap cascading benefits on vital aspects of food and health security, ultimately enhancing holistic individual security.

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