



The Future of Sudan: Challenges Ahead

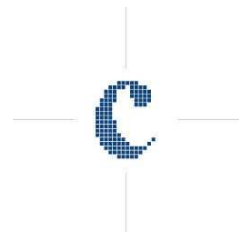
Brussels 9 December 2010

Club Prince Albert
Rue des Petits Carmes 20

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Background

Devastated by a two-decades long conflict (1983-2005) between its Southern and Northern parts, the future of Sudan is still at stake with the uncertainty of the referendum in January 2011 and the end of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) framework in June 2011. Sudan, the largest African country, benefits of important oil revenues but is unequally developed as a whole: a strong centre (located in the North along the Nile valley) concentrates most of the wealth and power. Its geopolitical location, with nine neighbouring states, links it to all the major ongoing crises in the Horn and Central Africa. A stable Sudan (united or as two entities) could help bring stability to the whole region.

Since the signature of the CPA in 2005, peacebuilding efforts between the North and the South have received support from a wide range of international and regional actors, though the implication of some players in these efforts has however proven ambiguous since they often sought (and are still seeking) to promote their own agenda rather than helping to find solutions to the Sudan crisis. With two major missions deployed in Sudan (UNMIS and UNAMID), the UN has been playing a critical role in the country. The AU has been facilitating bilateral talks between the NCP and the SPLM as to reach a framework agreement. The EU has recently designed a new strategy towards Sudan.

The CPA interim period will end in 2011, six months after the South and Abyei referenda and popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan on the implementation of the CPA. The voting is expected to take place on 9th of January but preparations for the referendum and other consultations are running late.

While the prospect of the January referenda fuels antagonisms between NCP and SPLM, with both sides accusing each other of troop-build up along the North-South border, serious issues are still to be negotiated in the framework of the CPA. These include wealth sharing, management of oil revenues, border demarcation, citizenship and nationality. The future of the Abyei region remains a contentious issue as well, while the Darfur crisis is far from being resolved. No matter what will be the outcome of the January referendum, if the two parties do not reach any definitive agreement on these issues by June 2011, the risk of a relapse into civil wars is real. To reach an agreement between the NCP and SPLM on these critical issues, there is a need for dialogue including other political forces from all over the country.

The follow-up of the CPA implementation shows that it is a hard task requiring constant efforts and mobilisation from all actors at all levels. The post referendum period may well require as much effort as the CPA itself. The question of the political and economic viability of the hypothetical two new entities of South and North Sudan is of great importance: if they are to separate, the risks and constraints concerning the future of each entity have to be kept in mind. This will require a strong regional and international cooperation and well prepared multilateral negotiations in which the EU may want to play a role.

Process and practical information

As a follow up to its 2009 seminar and reports, the EUISS will convene a seminar dealing with the challenges facing Sudan in the future.

By gathering key experts on Sudan from the country itself but also from a large range of states and organisations involved in the peace processes, the seminar will discuss the local, regional and international dimensions of Sudan's post-referendum era, while providing a number of scenarios and potential options for policy makers, and addressing the new EU strategy towards Sudan and challenges ahead of its implementation.

The following issues will be discussed:

- 1) The readiness of Sudan for the referendum and its aftermath
- 2) Scenarios for the future of governance and conflicts in Sudan
- 3) International and regional actors perspective

The event will take place in Brussels on Thursday 9 December with the support of the *Observatoire de l'Afrique*. Participation is on invitation basis. Due to the limited number of seats (60), the EUISS reserves itself the right to adjust the participant list. Participants are requested to complete the participation form and send it to Mrs Sylvie Devèze, (Sylvie.Deveze@iss.europa.eu) by the 25th of November at the latest.

The working language will be English.

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- 09.00 – 09.15 Registration
- 09.15 – 09.30 **Opening**
Mr. Rudi Brieven, COAFR, Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU (*tbc*)
Mr. Álvaro de Vasconcelos, EUISS Director
Professor Koen Vlassenroot, Ghent University – Egmont Institute, (*tbc*)
- 09.30 – 11.30 **Session I. Is Sudan ready for the referendum and its aftermath?**
Keynote Interventions from:
Amb. Najeib El Khair Abdelwahab, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan in Brussels (*tbc*)
Dr. Francis Nazario, Head of the Government of Southern Sudan Representation to the EU and Belgium, (*tbc*)
- Chair: Mr. Mohammed Nagi, Chief Editor, Sudan Tribune
- Speakers :
- Preparation for the referendum: where do we stand? Ms. Marina Peter, Senior Analyst, Sudan Ecumenical Forum
 - EU referendum observation mission, Ms. Malgorzata Wasilewska, Head of Unit at European Commission, RELEX DDG1 (*tbc*)
 - Citizenship rights and border demarcation, Dr. Jérôme Tubiana, Independent researcher
- 11.30 – 11.50 *Coffee break*
- 11.50 – 13.15 **Session II. Future scenarios for governance and conflicts in Sudan**
- Chair: Mr. Jort Hemmer, Research fellow, Clingendael (*tbc*)
- Speakers:
- Short term governance and security challenges, Mr. Suliman Baldo, Director of Africa Program, The International Center for Transitional Justice
 - Long term challenges and post referendum arrangements, Mr. Peter Dixon, Chief Executive, Concordis International
 - Conflict and governance in South Sudan, Dr. Tim Allen, Professor, London School of Economics
- 13.15 – 14.15 *Lunch*
- 14.15 – 15.45 **Session III. The future of Sudan in regional and international diplomacy**
- Chair: Mr. Rashid Saeed Yacoub, Chief Editor, TTU
- Speakers:
- UN & AU mediation work, Mr. Muin Shreim, Director Political Affairs, UNMIS
 - Regional Actors perspectives, (*tbc*)
 - European perspectives, Ms. Rosalind Marsden, EU Special Representative for Sudan (*tbc*)
- 15.45 – 16.00 **Conclusions**
Dr. Damien Helly, Research fellow, EUISS.