



Working to prevent violent conflict

BRIEFING

Towards peace and security in Sudan

Briefing for House of Commons debate on Sudan, 28 April 2011

The World Bank's *World Development Report 2011*, released earlier this month, concluded that insecurity "has become a primary development challenge of our time."¹ In Sudan ongoing conflict has stalled economic development and kept the majority of citizens living below the poverty line on an income of less than one US dollar a day.²

As the international community decides how it will engage with the two new states which will be created when South Sudan secedes in July 2011, addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity should be a top priority. A wide range of issues will need to be addressed as the period of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) comes to a close, and the international community will need to find a common approach to incentivising actors in both North and South to uphold their commitments, and mitigating any trends toward corruption or violence. This briefing gives recommendations on just some of the ways in which the UK Government can assist the people of Sudan to build sustainable peace.

Development assistance to Sudan must be conflict-sensitive

Development assistance has a crucial role to play in Sudan, especially in South Sudan where such assistance is urgently needed for developing, for instance, health and education services and providing infrastructure. These are essential not just for their own sake, but also because failure to deliver services which meet the expectations of Sudanese citizens carries the risk of worsening conflict.

However, even well intentioned development assistance can inadvertently fuel conflict and insecurity if it is not designed and delivered with sensitivity to its potential impact on the dynamics of a particular context. For example, sometimes cultural / traditional leaders are not the same people as those officially appointed or recognised as formal 'local leaders'. In this situation, aid agencies' choices about who to engage with may give the impression of siding with one set of representatives without considering how this may affect their disputes with others.

Development assistance should therefore always be based on a thorough analysis of conflict dynamics. At the very least development assistance should 'do no harm', but wherever possible development should make an explicit contribution to addressing underlying causes of conflict.

In South Sudan, development efforts have too often failed to make the maximum possible use of local labour and resources, thereby missing opportunities to support weak local economies and provide skills and jobs for local Sudanese people. Aid is often overly focused on working with leaders and elites from the centre, without sufficient effort to ensure resources reach communities outside of Juba and state capitals. Similarly, local civil society organisations in South Sudan are finding it difficult to access donor resources, which does not lend itself to the development of plural local voices critical to shaping a peaceful and well-governed state.

¹ World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (2011), p 2.

² UNDP, 'Achieving the MDGs and Reducing Human Poverty', http://www.sd.undp.org/focus_poverty_reduction.htm, 26 April 2011.

The UK Government should:

- **ensure that its operational plan for development assistance in Sudan, to be published shortly as a result of the Bilateral Aid Review, reflects the Government's detailed analysis of conflict dynamics in the local context**
- **ensure development programmes in Sudan support local economies by making use of local labour and resources**
- **ensure that its development assistance reaches communities outside of national and state capitals, in a way that is mindful of the danger of exacerbating divisions between 'winners' and 'losers'**
- **make it easier for Sudanese civil society organisations to access resources, not just employing them as service providers but helping them pursue their own independent programmes.**

Security and justice as "the bedrock of progress"

While most international attention is currently focused on preventing violence between North and South, serious community-level insecurity persists in South Sudan, often due as much to continued incidents of cattle raiding and resource conflicts that affect almost all of its states as to post-war political legacies.

DFID's Bilateral Aid Review describes security and justice as "the bedrock of progress" in Sudan.³ Without capable, accountable and responsive security and justice services including as police, courts, prisons and armed forces, insecurity in Sudan will persist and sustainable development will be impossible to achieve.

As the new state of South Sudan is established, many governments will be looking to provide assistance to building state institutions. As well as supporting the capacities of an emerging state, the international community should also support the capacity of local and national civil society to hold these institutions to account and become involved in decision-making and oversight of security and justice services.

Helping the new state to develop its security apparatus should mean not just supplying police cars or building law courts, but also supporting efforts to ensure security and justice services are transparent and responsive to the needs of communities. This will help to strengthen the state-society relationship, which is a key part of building a sustainable peace.

According to DFID, only 15% of Sudanese have access to formal justice.⁴ Apart from some important inputs by the International Labour Organisation and the UN Development Programme, little effort is being made to rectify the serious weakness of the justice sector.⁵ Despite the lack of access to formal justice mechanisms, some communities already have informal justice mechanisms to deal with community-level disputes. These should be supported if they offer just and accountable solutions to security problems.

The UK Government should:

- **continue to support the new state of South Sudan with technical advice and assistance in developing capable, accountable and responsive security and justice services**
- **explain how it plans to support communities and civil society organisations in South Sudan to be involved in shaping security and justice provision in partnership with the state, and holding it to account**
- **explain how it plans to support informal justice mechanisms to prevent and resolve community-level conflict where these offer just and accountable solutions to security problems.**

³ Department for International Development, *Bilateral Aid Review Results: Countries Summaries* (2011), p 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Saferworld, *Sudan: Hoping for the best, preparing for the worst?* (2010), p 15.

Arms Control

"The problem of guns is really terrible here. So many people have died from the fighting and many people are very afraid. But they will not give up their guns because they fear insecurity."
Woman in Jonglei State, Southern Sudan.

As a result of Sudan's prolonged civil war, which ended with the signing of the CPA in 2005, there are nearly three million small arms and light weapons (SALW) circulating in Sudan.⁶ While weapons in the hands of non-state armed groups pose a direct threat to the lives and livelihoods of Sudanese people, the acquisition of SALW by civilians, which has continued even since the CPA was signed, is both a product of, and adds significantly to, insecurity.

The Government of South Sudan's Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control (CSSAC) has estimated that there are 2 million arms held by civilians in South Sudan.⁷ In Saferworld's experience, physical security and protection of property are cited as the main reasons for community members acquiring weapons, however small arms are also used in robbery, cattle raiding, child abduction and other criminal activities.

While guns themselves may not cause conflict, the widespread availability of automatic weapons makes conflict within and between communities more likely to escalate into violence. Addressing this situation means controlling the flow of arms into and around Sudan, and the peaceful disarmament of civilians and combatants. It also means taking steps to reduce the insecurity which causes people to arm themselves; for example, by providing more effective security and justice services and improving citizens' trust in their government.

Where does the flow of arms come from?

It is difficult to identify the origin of SALW circulating in South Sudan, as several routes of trafficking exist in the region (between South Sudan, Northern Kenya, Northern Uganda and Somalia). This situation is the result of successive flow of weapons and ammunition to the region, sometimes legally transferred in the first place under government-to-government transfers and subsequently leaked from national stockpiles; attacks on army facilities, for instance, occurred repeatedly in Uganda in the last 20 years.

In Darfur, the UN Panel of Experts has reported that the majority of the equipment used by armed groups originated from government stockpiles in Sudan, Chad, Eritrea and Libya – transferred in violation of the UN arms embargo on Darfur.⁸

UN embargo

A UN arms embargo on Darfur established in 2004 has been described by the UN Panel of Experts on Sudan as "without discernable impact".⁹ The UK plays an important role on the UN Security Council in the support, formation and continued monitoring of the embargo, and while continuing such support is important, there are serious gaps in the embargo's mandate, implementation and enforcement that require greater levels of attention. The Panel of Experts has found the Government of Sudan's continued transfers of armed personnel and ammunition to Darfur to be in violation of the embargo.¹⁰ Furthermore, China continues to export military equipment to Khartoum, and the Panel has found ammunition in Darfur bearing markings consistent with those of Chinese ammunition exported to Khartoum.¹¹

⁶ *Op cit* Department for International Development, p 12.

⁷ Miraya FM, '2 million arms still in civilian hands in South', http://www.mirayafm.org/htmlarchive/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7200&Itemid=99, 26 April 2011.

⁸ UN Panel of Experts on Sudan, 2006-9 reports, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1591/reports.shtml>.

⁹ UN Panel of Experts on Sudan, *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005)* (2011), p 4.

¹⁰ *Ibid* p 27, 28.

¹¹ *Ibid* p 25.

The UK Government should:

- **work at the UN to ensure better implementation and monitoring of the embargo on Darfur**
- **seek opportunities for bilateral engagement with China on best practice to prevent diversion of arms to embargoed destinations.**

EU embargo

The EU established an arms embargo on Sudan in 1994, which was strengthened in 2004, and covers all state and non-state actors within the entire territory of Sudan. While the embargo has been effective in preventing direct transfers to Sudan, there is evidence of arms produced in EU Member States ending up in Sudan – for example, arms originating in Spain, Belgium and Bulgaria, originally exported to Libya, have subsequently been discovered in Darfur.¹²

The most effective tool of the EU for ensuring responsible arms transfers remains the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. If the EU Code of Conduct was fully implemented, the EU would not need to establish embargoes or specific *ad hoc* measures, as the existence of ongoing instability, armed conflicts or human rights violations in the recipient country represent criteria that should prevent any export from the EU.

The UK Government should:

- **ensure that countries importing UK defence and security exports are compliant with end-use declarations and do not transfer those goods on to Sudan**
- **press for a review of the effectiveness of the EU Code of Conduct in preventing the flow of arms from the EU to destinations of concern.**

Civilian disarmament

Programmes of forceful civilian disarmament implemented by the Government of South Sudan have been controversial. Disarmament has not always been consensual, or accompanied by awareness-raising and a fuller comprehension of the need to disarm and what effect this would have on insecurity. In these cases, it has resulted in human rights abuses, and violence between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and those being disarmed. In processes that were not comprehensive, communities who had been disarmed were frequently attacked by neighbouring communities who still had their weapons. These communities rearmed themselves due to the absence of public security forces who could provide protection.

By contrast voluntary civilian disarmament processes, for example those carried out in Pibor and Akobo counties in Jonglei state in 2008/9, did not result in similar violence. These processes were accompanied by community awareness raising events to highlight the dangers of firearm use and the resulting need to disarm.¹³

Peaceful and sustainable disarmament requires the full participation of those affected in order to build their confidence. It needs to take place in conjunction with greater provision of public security services to alleviate the fear of attack from neighbouring communities and to ensure the safety of those who are disarmed. Moreover, it needs to be linked up to the broader development programmes and projects at community level.

The UK Government should:

- **seek to work directly with the Government of South Sudan on projects that address SALW proliferation, such as the CSSAC, and maintain support for regional initiatives such as the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA)**
- **within the UN Programme of Action on SALW framework, give priority to initiatives that focus on delivering concrete impacts for communities rather than regulatory and legislative-oriented action**
- **engage with China and South Sudanese authorities on how China could support practical initiatives to combat the proliferation of SALW.**

¹² UN Panel of Experts on Sudan, *Final report of the Panel of Experts as requested by the Security Council in paragraph 2 of resolution 1779 (2007)* (2008) p 63, 64.

¹³ For more information, see Saferworld, *Conflicting priorities: Government of Southern Sudan security challenges and recent responses* (2009), p 4-7.

Saferworld's work in Sudan

Saferworld is an independent international NGO that works to prevent violent conflict and promote cooperative approaches to security. Through our work in the Horn of Africa, South and Central Asia and Eastern Europe we aim to understand what causes violence by talking to the people it affects and then bringing together communities, governments, civil society and the international community to develop solutions.

Saferworld has had a programme looking at South Sudan since 2005. We encourage an integrated approach to security-building which includes improving small arms controls, increasing community security and supporting the development of security and justice services. We provide technical support to the Government of South Sudan, including through facilitating exchange visits to neighbouring states affected by similar security issues, both to share learning and to increase the involvement of South Sudan in regional small arms control mechanisms, as well as capacity-building on SALW issues. We support civil society groups such as the Southern Sudanese Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA) to strengthen networking, co-ordination and engagement of civil society on community security and SALW issues in Juba and at the state level. We are also initiating community security interventions with local partners and community-based organisations in three locales, both to contribute to improved security in those locations and to develop appropriate models that could be replicated elsewhere.