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HORN OF AFRICA BULLETIN

ANALYSES • CONTEXT • CONNECTIONS

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Spiritually motivated elders in peacemaking

Religion’s deep structure is positive and remains a commonality across all religions throughout the ages. This dimension of religion encourages truth-seeking, peace-making, and resistance against injustice, the oppressions of political regimes and ideologies.

My focus, peacemaking by spiritually-motivated elders, emanates from the positive undergirdment of all religions. As a scholar of ancient religious literature, I know that peace itself is a religious concept. Messages about peace abound, being practically universal in religion. Religion is and can be a powerful, positive agent of peacemaking and reconciliation. Even if warring cannot be totally eliminated, religion can be a force to reduce it. The work of the Horn of Africa Peace and Development Committee (PDC), with which I am involved, is a prototype of peace negotiation based on that principle.

Spiritually-motivated eldership, mediating, peace keeping, and promotion of reconciliation among individual and social groups is a well-established ancient institution. It behooves professional peace-searching private, governmental, and UN institutions to explore seriously this ancient institution and its potential for peacemaking.

A major unfulfilled goal of PDC is the creation of what we call “a network of elders” of the Horn of Africa. From the very beginning, our peace leaders had projected to generate as a primary goal such a network of elders throughout the region to vigorously promote reconciliation and to empower spiritual groups, including women’s peace groups, that can contribute to and uphold such reconciliation. These efforts still continue, in spite of lack of funds, for spiritual elders do not give up faith and hope, but continue their efforts making personal sacrifices whenever necessary to keep peace afloat.

Professional, regional and bilateral, governmental or non-governmental, and UN mediators, who work to bring about peace from outside the region (in particular in negotiating and arresting open conflicts at which they sometimes indeed succeed), deserve credit for their important, substantial efforts and good will. However, they officially address the parties or their political leaders only. That undoubtedly can help, but that alone cannot bring a morally-grounded resolution of grassroots conflicts, nor lasting peace.

Moreover, the professional mediators might inadvertently interfere with the peace process negatively or derail and delay its outcome, because they only look at the borders on the ground, not the demarcation between the veins and aorta in the human heart where the conflict often resides, the very thing that interests spiritual elders. Let me give two examples.

First, the 1991 Ethiopian-Eritrean truce, which came at the end of a thirty-year war, the longest in modern African history, broke down because the international professionals ignored the vision of our native Ad Hoc Peace Committee (AHPC) elders. The U.S. State Department officials forging the truce knew very well about the advanced negotiation activities of AHPC, the confidential Ethiopian-Eritrean Elders Council, but interfered and *expropriated their leadership instead of engaging their spiritual wisdom*.

The Elders, in agreement with all the political parties themselves, always insisted that there could not be total lasting peace in the region unless all conflicting parties, including the Derg, EPLF, EPRDF, OLF, EPRP, MEISON, EDU, EPDA, ALF and all other big and small conflicting linguistic movements, were included in the truce – and the security forces were also reconciled. But when the State Department got involved and called a meeting in London, they decided that only the Derg, the EPLF, EPRDF, and OLF (only because EPLF and EPRDF insisted in their inclusion) would participate in making the truce.

In London, the professionals from Washington orchestrated a political truce. They congratulated themselves naively calling the war literally “*finished business*”. But sadly no real conciliation of the leaders, the peoples, and the security forces took place. Ironically, the Derg, which had opted for the London meeting, came out as the loser, while the opposition forces, which preferred our conference that was intended to convene in Switzerland to take place first, won the day.

My second example: One quality of spiritual elders is the ability to predict looming tragedies. Long before the 1998-2000 Ethiopian-Eritrean war, which claimed the lives of almost 90,000 people, international professionals ignored our native PDC elders’ vision and concerns. The PDC Elders Council demanded that the 1991 truce be followed by aggressive grassroots reconciliation programs to avoid any possible future development of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea and/or among the Ethiopian peoples.

In 1993 – five years before the outbreak of war – the elders of PDC proposed a plan to avert the recurrence of such conflicts. The plan was to have a series of spiritually enriching encounters between Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples of all sectors – active regular face-to-face meetings and retreats of religious leaders and elders, student and youth groups, and sectors of the business, civic and grassroots population.

When the war broke out in 1998, our international friends finally realized and appreciated how far-sighted our elders group had been, but then it was too late to reverse the situation and institute a post-conflict preventive plan that the elders had strongly advocated earlier.

Conventional international, professional mediation has repeatedly failed and will probably continue to fail in the Horn of Africa, witness the extreme case of Somalia. Most conflicts in the region involve the peoples themselves, not merely the political parties, and it is the people who must play a significant role in the resolution of these conflicts. Outside mediators fail due to the inability to reach the peoples involved because of linguistic and cultural barriers and lack of foresight.

Language, which can be used as a weapon of war, like religion, can also be used as a weapon of peace. Only through direct communication with the ordinary people can peace be achieved. And only through language and the understanding of the fine cultural idioms will there be sound communication. (No wonder it is said *traduttore traditore*.) For such communication to bear the fruit of reconciliation, it must be grounded in first-hand knowledge and experience. Our brains may understand conflict, but it is our minds and hearts that long for peace.

The criticisms made above are not meant to be irreverent but are intended to call upon friendly countries and those who genuinely desire peace to understand and learn from their past failures and find a way of working on a non-diplomatic level with people involved in conflicts with the active cooperation of locally known wise elders and spiritual visionaries. Through cooperation of the elders and the international community we can achieve more for the cause of peace.

In conclusion, some fear that if the present respective interstate and intrastate conflicts and hostilities in the Horn of Africa, already draining Ethiopia and Eritrea economically and socially, continue or persist, they would weaken respectively to the point where they could possibly vanish. The potential for leadership possessed by these gifted peoples in the Horn of Africa – leadership not only within Africa, but also in the world – would be destroyed for decades. Damage would be done to the strategically important region that straddles the Red Sea trade route with its riches in oil. However, I, as a spiritual optimist elder, choose to reject such direful predictions.

This year we shall be arriving at a new Ethiopian Millennium 2000 AM, that is during the Gregorian year 2007-8, based interestingly on calendar calculations first made and used by our ancient Eritrean highland brothers. We must forge a new millennium goal of peace and prosperity, a renaissance for the region and all Africa. As allies, Ethiopia and Eritrea could become a 21st century powerhouse, fulfilling the manifest destiny of one of Africa's most outstanding centers of culture in ancient times. I am only sad that the renaissance in which I believe is taking time to happen, because the peoples of our region now suffer from poverty, disease and illiteracy.

Ephraim Isaac

BD (Harvard Divinity School 1963), Ph.D. (Harvard University 1969), D.H.L. (CUNY) D.Litt. (AAU), a founder and the first professor of Afro-American Studies at Harvard University when the Department was created in 1969. He is currently Director of the Institute of Semitic Studies, Princeton, NJ, Chair of the Board of the Horn of Africa Peace & Development Committee, and President of the Yemenite Jewish Federation of America.

Darfur: “There must be a peace to keep”

What does the political process for Darfur look like and what are the current efforts of the international community? In the reflection below, Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Darfur emphasizes the need to focus on the political process rather than on peace-keeping, as “there must be a peace to keep”.

As I was approaching El-Fasher in a helicopter together with my colleague, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, I could see the camps. In one camp, there are perhaps 80,000 individuals living, in another 40,000, in a third another 35,000. Many have been living in these camps up to four years. Children are deprived of their education, women are raped when fetching water and infiltration from different rebel groups is common. Ordinary life is disrupted in the camps, as people have no access to land to cultivate.

I also see the many burned and deserted villages and empty fields. In some places the land of the burned and deserted villages had been taken over by others, which will cause problems for a future repatriation process. Furthermore, there is the obvious desertification, estimated to around 8 km/per year. As a consequence, the struggle for land and water is pivotal.

The task given to Dr. Salim and myself by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN), respectively, is to re-energize the political process based on the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) signed in Abuja 5 May 2006. A political negotiation has to start in order to make the Darfur Peace Agreement work and make it more

inclusive. I foresee a discussion on the main issues: power-sharing, wealth-sharing and security arrangements.

It is worth noting that we in our consultations with the Government of Sudan and the rebel movements, the so-called non-signatory movements to the Darfur Peace Agreement, have reached the understanding that there is no military solution to the conflict. This fact will hopefully open up for a political solution through actions rather than with words, and by ending the hostilities and disarming the Janjaweed militia.

The Government of Sudan has stated that it is prepared to make some amendments to the Darfur Peace Agreement and we have tried to push the rebel groups into embracing the AU and to sit down and negotiate. We have urged them to present realistic demands. We have as mediators urged the parties to demonstrate their commitment to the political process by reducing the level of violence on the ground.

The Government of Sudan has agreed to increase the international peacekeeping presence in Darfur in three stages culminating in a joint AU-UN hybrid operation. The idea is to reinforce the AU mission with UN support in order to secure a larger presence of around 20,000 peacekeepers. Consequently, phase I is being implemented and there is agreement from the Government of Sudan on phase II. Discussions are on-going between AU, UN and the Government of Sudan on phase III (the hybrid operation).

I feel, however, that there is too much emphasis on the peacekeeping track and the transition to a United Nations force. There is an opportunity to re-focus on the political process. There has to be a peace to keep if peacekeepers are to be effective. If the underlying problems of Darfur are not solved, the number of troops on the ground will be irrelevant.

I would underline that the European Union has an important role pushing strongly for a political solution and playing a role in the negotiation process for example by securing a development perspective for Darfur that can help bring parties to the negotiation table.

It is my view that if the conflict deteriorates further, the unity of Sudan may be in danger. A negotiated solution to the Darfur conflict is connected to the unity of Sudan and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that stipulates national election to be held in 2009 and a referendum on self-determination for the South of Sudan in 2011.

In order to achieve peace, efforts must be made in cooperation with all stakeholders, local, regional and international. The inclusion of local leaders and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are vital in order to achieve a lasting peace in Darfur.

Ambassador Jan Eliasson is the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Darfur. He was the President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly 2005/06.

Darfur: Protection by presence

Can we really imagine what goes on in Darfur? In a region as big as France and with a population reaching 5.8 million, almost 2.5 million are internally displaced, and more than 3 million are dependent on humanitarian assistance. There is reason for grave concern when we – the international community and also the Sudanese authorities – know that around half of all internally displaced people have lived in the same place and under horrendous conditions for three or four years.

Access to those in dire need of humanitarian assistance is closely related to the security situation on the ground. Provision of aid is severely restricted. During 2006, more than 450 000 people were newly displaced from their homes due to the rapidly worsening security situation in Darfur. Areas that were relatively safe in 2005 once more became conflict zones. At the same time, the security situation for aid workers has also worsened. In December 2006, as many as 403 aid workers had to be moved

or evacuated from Darfur. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports that in 2006 the attacks on aid workers doubled and attacks on the civilian population tripled. Currently only 64 percent of those who are affected by the conflict are accessible for humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian work in Darfur is regulated by the so-called Darfur Protocols from June 2004, although they have been renewed many times since then, the last time in March 2007. The protocols map out a simplified regime in coordination with the rest of Sudan. This is a welcome step, however, it will only improve matters if it is effectively and consistently communicated, implemented and monitored. In reality the situation is more complicated, despite good intentions. The Sudanese authorities' organ, the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), in Darfur and Khartoum, and the security police are not always in agreement on the interpretation of these protocols. It is an extremely demanding balance, which takes a lot of time and resources.

The Sudanese authorities organize meetings of "protection groups" to which the UN and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are invited. The UN has a system in place for reporting assaults. Conversely, the Sudanese authorities are very sensitive to reports relating to violence, shootings and reports of assaults. All humanitarian assistance is coordinated by the HAC. UNOCHA facilitates the exchange of information related both to humanitarian assistance and security, and arranges so-called coordination meetings. But in reality it is HAC that makes the decisions. This is a demanding collaboration and requires an open dialogue between the UN/NGOs and the authorities. It is also challenging to strike a balance between implementation issues and substantial discussion about quality, quantity and rights-based assistance.

Darfur is logistically demanding with limited access to remote areas. It becomes a logistical nightmare especially during rainy seasons. Consequently, assistance has to be planned, purchased and stored in advance in areas that cannot be reached during the rainy season. However, these areas do not always have enough security, meaning there are no guarantees that the supplies will not be stolen. Therefore pre-positioning is not always possible, and internally displaced persons in direct need of assistance cannot always be reached.

The presence of international and national organizations may create a situation of perceived false security for the local population. Humanitarian organizations are not able to protect civilians in Darfur, and one has to recognize that from this perspective, their presence means little compared to military violence. When both humanitarian organizations and international military forces are being attacked, the situation will likely become more and more precarious. The task that the humanitarian actors take upon themselves with respect to *The Responsibility to Protect* principle can also contribute to increasing reluctance from the Sudanese Government's side to protect the civilian population. The role of humanitarian agencies is one of providing basic services to the displaced population to supplement efforts undertaken by other agents.

Another dilemma is that the assistance from humanitarian organizations can contribute to increased violence and unrest in the long run. Military factions may use the relative protection of the camps to protect themselves and consolidate. Furthermore, resources that are brought into the area can easily be incorporated into the war economy. Control of the use of resources is decreasing and can only contribute to prolonging the conflict. Prioritizing groups in terms of assistance can also contribute to tensions between those who receive aid and those who do not. It is difficult to know how to best serve both the direct victims of the conflict and the host areas of internally displaced persons. It is therefore very important for humanitarian organizations to be able to plan and implement in a conflict-sensitive manner.

When the UN and NGOs started their work in Darfur, the slogan and the vision from the UN was "protection by presence". Perhaps naïvely, humanitarian organizations thought they could offer a degree of protection to the civilian population. Already in 2005, humanitarian organizations realized they had not been successful in protecting the civilians of Darfur. Reports throughout 2006 and so far in 2007 can

confirm that the spiral of violence has increased dramatically. The security situation is worsening and the African Union (AU) does not have the capacity, nor the right mandate, financial means or equipment to protect the AU soldiers from being attacked and killed.

There is an urgent need for a political process leading to a renewed peace agreement, and the Darfur peace process must be revisited in an effective way. This must be based on the criteria of participation of non-signatories, women and civil society at large. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security should be incorporated in the strategy. Further, in order to find a sustainable political solution it is essential to draw on lessons learned from the Abuja process and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Darfur cannot do without a Darfur Peace Agreement that reflects consensus and makes the different warring factions sign the agreement. Also, an international peacekeeping military force with a strong and clear mandate is necessary for protection, and this could consist of both AU and UN troops.

The legal responsibility to protect the civilian population lies first and foremost with the Sudanese authorities. If the state does not have the power to protect, the wider responsibility lies with the international community. However, currently the international community is lacking the political will required to make protection a reality.

Björg Mide

Head of Division for the International Department Eastern Africa and South East Asia at Norwegian Church Aid

Peace makers charged of being money makers

Conferences on peace building and reconciliation in Southern Sudan have become sources of making money by individual organizations, says the chairman of Southern Sudan Peace Commission (SSPC), James Kok.

– Peace building in southern Sudan has been taken as an income source to different organizations, which has led SSPC into conflict with many NGOs including Partner Agencies Combined Together (PACT). Peace and reconciliation conferences are being made like night clubs..

Kok said that different organizations have their own approach without any coordination with SSPC.

Many NGOs purporting to be peace makers have engaged people from different counties for peace and reconciliation, but at the end of their five days conference, organizers rush back to either Nairobi or somewhere else, leaving conference recommendations and resolutions hanging, even without informing SSPC about the outcome of their conference.

– We want to be transparent and accountable in our approach to peace building. Therefore, I would not allow any NGOs to directly deal with any county commissioners, declared the chairman of SSPC.

Kok says that some NGOs come with two bags of sugar, three roles of plastic sheet and three plastic chairs and then claim to be peace makers, while reserving for themselves huge amounts of money given to them by their main donors for a particular conference.

He announced that SSPC is in partnership with all the civil societies, including church organizations, which ought to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to guide their operations in various counties.

Gordon Soro, chairman of the Local Government Board of southern Sudan told the conferees of Greater Equatoria states that there is a fund for basic recovery services amounting to US\$ 30 million, but it is channeled through NGOs who have allowed the donors to bid for it.

He further disclosed that the bid was competitive with both the Government of Southern Sudan and local governments fully represented during the bids. The fund is

specifically created for providing basic services such as primary education, primary health care, water and sanitation

Soro further disclosed that the African Medical and Research Foundation (AM-REF) in collaboration with Accomplish, a local NGO, has applied for the fund for providing education, health and water services in Terekeka County and were getting US \$400,000 to 800,000 as from last year. He added that a report rendered indicated that the governors and commissioners are involved, but that money was a problem.

The Rapid Recovery Funds programme is under UNDP, and five counties are benefiting from this programme: Aweil, Renk, Gogrial, Juba and Torit. Juba County has US\$ 4.5 million for providing services provision, while Torit County has Euro 4.5 million (5.5 million dollars)

Also the local government's recovery programme last year received money for either re-construction or construction of offices for counties. The immediate beneficiaries were Ikwotos County of Eastern Equatoria State, Terekeka County of Central Equatoria State and Nagero County of Western Equatoria State, whose money were given to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to the tune of US\$ 100,000 per county. However, last year it was US\$ 50,000. CRS Peace Building Manager, Anisia Aceng, has confirmed that CRS has received funds from UNDP for local government recovery programmes but did not disclose how much was received.

But Commissioner of Terekeka County, Brig. Wani Nyambur Boughta, denies receiving any basic recovery fund.

– This Governors-Commissioners forum has given me very good information, and I will immediately summon AMREF, Accomplish and Oxfam on how they sneak into my county without my knowledge or that of Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, remarked Boughta.

Meanwhile the County Commissioner of Torit, Col. Masimino Alam, said he has never received any fund for basic recovery.

However, Fr. Moris Loguti, Chairperson of Peace and Reconciliation Commission of the Diocese of Torit, revealed that they have received funding for basic recovery from Caritas International through the Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference secretariat in Nairobi for the church, including people in Eastern Equatoria state.

The Commissioner of Nagero, Lino Ufu, confirmed that CRS has informed him that they had got US\$ 50,000 for reconstruction of his county due to start in March. Meanwhile the Commissioner of Ikwotos, Pasquale Angasi, denied having received any money from local government recovery funds.

It is to be recalled that the Rapid Recovery Funds programme is funded by the European Union, while the Basic Services Funds is funded by the DIFO organization, and the Local Government Recovery funds has many donors.

Isaac Vuni

Chairman of the Journalists Union of Southern Sudan

NEWS AND EVENTS

World Council of Churches:

Visit for peace and reconciliation in Eritrea

The World Council of Churches (WCC) General Secretary, Rev Dr. Samuel Kobia, visited the Eritrean capital of Asmara on 16-19 May 2007. He met church representatives and the president of the country, and affirmed the Council's commitment to churches engaged in peace, reconciliation and nation building efforts.

At a meeting with President Isaias Afewerki, Kobia expressed that the WCC will continue advocating for peace and reconciliation in the region with special reference to the long-standing border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia. He also acknowl-

edged the role played by the President in the peace processes in eastern Sudan and Darfur. President Afewerki said he would welcome greater involvement of the WCC in these processes.

The WCC General Secretary paid a brief visit to the headquarters of the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, which is the only WCC member in the country. Given the current difficulties affecting the leadership of the church, Kobia only conveyed greetings to the members of the church staff, both lay and ordained, who were present. He took advantage of the opportunity to learn first hand about the situation of the church.

During his visit Kobia met the president of the Evangelical Church of Eritrea (Lutheran), Rev. Asfah Mehari, and the General Secretary of the Catholic Secretariat - Eparchy of Asmara, Abba Teclemicael Tewalde, as well as country representatives of Norwegian Church Aid, Dutch Interchurch Aid and the Lutheran World Federation.

The visit followed action taken on the situation in the Horn of Africa by the WCC Executive Committee in February this year. In a public statement, the committee stressed the need for the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments to “reengage in efforts to resolve their long-standing border dispute in a peaceful and amicable manner”. The committee also appealed to both governments to “foster dialogue with opposition political parties to establish democracy, human rights and the rule of law”.

The WCC General Secretary was accompanied by Dr Agnes Abuom, a member of the WCC Central and Executive Committees and former WCC president from Africa, and by WCC staff Rev. Dr André Karamaga, responsible for Africa regional relations.

A renewed one Sudan Council of Churches

In beginning of May the General Assembly of Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) took place in Khartoum. For several years the SCC has faced financial and administrative problems, and during this time discussions have also been ongoing to merge the two councils, the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) and the Sudan Council of Churches.

In the first week of May NSCC dissolved itself and the formation of a renewed one Sudan Council of Churches took place. The SCC General Assembly elected Rev. Peter Tibi, a pastor from Africa Inland Church, to be the General Secretary. Rev. Tibi was the former Acting Executive Secretary of NSCC and since October Interim General Secretary of SCC.

SCC is still facing many problems but has during the last six months managed to reduce its financial crisis by selling off assets and renting out property. Now the main task ahead is to secure funding to rebuild the Council and to make it a facilitating body to serve the churches in Sudan and the people in general. One of the main priorities for the renewed SCC is in the field of peace, advocacy and reconciliation.

In connection to the SCC General Assembly a Day of Dialogue with SCC’s international partners was held to discuss the way forward.

Uganda:

Seizing the opportunity for peace

After peace talks between the Ugandan government and the Lords’ Resistance Movement/Army (LRM/A) resumed in Juba, Sudan, a deal was signed on 2 May, setting targets on what must be achieved in order to end the two-decade conflict. The foes agreed on “principles of comprehensive solutions to the political, social and economic problems in Uganda,” said rebel spokesman Godfrey Ayoo.

– This agreement is not a solution to the problems in Uganda, but a torch that will guide us to reach durable solutions. It sets targets on what must be achieved at the peace talks, Ayoo said.

The talks are seen as the best chance to end the conflict that has claimed tens of thousands of lives and displaced nearly two million people. The conflict has spilled

over into southern Sudan and Congo, causing further instability in the region. If both sides reach a comprehensive deal, it will be a breakthrough in pacifying northern Uganda, eastern Congo and southern Sudan.

The head of the LRA delegation, Martin Ojul, apologized for crimes committed by its soldiers on innocent people in southern Sudan. He promised that such atrocities would not happen again.

The Deputy Chairperson of the LRM/A delegation to the Juba peace talks, Josephine Apira, appealed to the Sudanese women from Eastern Equatoria to demand from their government the removal of the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) from southern Sudanese territory.

– As the Ugandan parties to the conflict have already signed a cessation of hostilities, there is no reason for UPDF occupying southern Sudanese territories, she remarked.

The Representative of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Khartoum, Ogala Eune Odera, appealed to LRA leadership to stop blocking roads, looting food, raping women and killing innocent people, because they are scaring southern Sudanese IDPs in Khartoum from returning to their homes and participating in the coming census and election in their home areas.

According to a report of the International Crisis Group concerning the peace talks, a more comprehensive strategy is needed both to address the conditions that have created a cycle of conflict in northern Uganda, and guard against destabilisation in neighbouring Congo and Sudan.

– The peace talks have improved security and begun to allow a few of the 1.4 million internally-displaced northern Ugandans to return home, says Adam O'Brien, Crisis Group analyst, but some of the wrong issues are on the table, the wrong LRA negotiators are present, and UN Special Envoy and ex-Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano does not yet have sufficient leverage to overcome the mutual mistrust.

– A solution to one of Africa's longest and most brutal conflicts requires two tracks. The first, the Juba talks, should focus on ending the LRA security threat. Chissano needs to be empowered to present a package of security and livelihood guarantees directly to the reclusive LRA leader, Joseph Kony. The second track should focus on a follow-up national reconciliation forum that addresses the north's political, economic and social alienation, he added.

Urgency to create and sustain peace in Sudan and Somalia

At a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, in April, foreign affairs ministers from the eastern African region called for an urgent summit to discuss the implementation of the Sudan Peace Agreement, saying key deadlines had lapsed.

"We recommend an urgent extra-ordinary meeting of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Assembly of Heads of State and in this regard, instruct the executive secretary of IGAD to undertake the necessary consultation and make preparations for the summit", a communiqué from the meeting said.

The ministers noted that certain progress has been made in the implementation of the CPA, which ended a 21-year long war between northern and southern Sudan. However, they added concern that "the implementation in some important areas is lagging behind schedule as stipulated and therefore causing loss of momentum."

Sudanese officials attended the meeting, which also called for an urgent deployment of troops to Somalia to contain the escalating security situation in the country. The ministers called on the warring parties in Somalia to cease the hostilities and called on the international community to take urgent steps to calm the worsening security situation in the Horn of Africa region.

"The prevailing security situation in Somalia affects not only the peace, security and stability of the Horn of Africa but poses a threat to global peace and security," the communiqué said.

The IGAD states, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Uganda, agreed to provide individual support to Somalia.

Darfur:**Collecting firewood is a threat to women**

The dangers associated with the collection of firewood for internally displaced women in Darfur are well documented. All too often they are attacked by men in the forest, who rape and beat them.

– We don't know where they are, but we are afraid of these people. They are living in the forest with their camels and horses and they have weapons and we don't, says Hawa, one of the displaced women.

– A relative of mine in another camp went to get firewood and was attacked by one of them. When she refused him, he tried to stab her with a knife and she took several days to recover from her injuries, she adds.

It is a risky business but these women have little alternative. They depend on wood in order to cook meals for their families. For 100SD (US\$0.50) a small bundle can be bought at the market, but for most families it will only last one day. And many families have no money or anything to sell in exchange for firewood.

The women in the camp arrange to go in groups of three or four. Although the African Union (AU) offers firewood patrols, the women refuse to be accompanied, as they do not trust the AU and do not think the AU can protect them. (Charlotte Brudenell, ACT/Caritas)

Churches protest against attacks on relief efforts

Churches in East Africa are urging warring groups in Somalia to respect humanitarian efforts, as reports indicate that relief workers and installations are increasingly becoming targets of attacks.

Pastor Fred Nyabera, Executive Director of the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, is anxious for the violence to stop:

– We condemn any attack on humanitarian workers or installations and urge the fighting groups to desist from targeting these agencies that are helping the people, he said. (Nairobi, ENI)

RESOURCES AND LINKS**Sudan****Children and armed conflict**

"Sudan's Children at a Crossroads: An Urgent Need for Protection" (April 2007).

Country report

This report launched by Watch list on Children and Armed Conflict addresses violations against Sudanese children in six major categories such as killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abduction, and recruitment and use of children into armed forces and groups.

www.watchlist.org/reports/sudan.php

The Gurtong Peace Project

Web forum with an aim of creating an information network regarding issues touching upon South Sudan and its peace process, includes useful information on governmental structures, an updated timeline for the peace process as well as recommended books on Sudan and other useful resources.

www.gurtong.org/

International Crisis Group

Darfur: Revitalising the Peace process

Africa Report N°125, 30 April 2007

The international community needs to complement efforts to get peacekeepers on the ground with a new approach to negotiating a political settlement if there is to be peace in Darfur.

www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4769&l=1

The European Coalition on Oil in Sudan

Oil and The Future of Sudan

Conference Report 1-2 November 2006, Juba, Sudan

Focus of the conference was on the question how oil and its revenues can underpin the objectives of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and contribute to peace and equitable development in Sudan. This report contains a summary of the presentations and discussions that took place during the conference.

www.ecosonline.org/

UN Report on violations of Arms Embargo

“Report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan”

Monitoring the implementation of the arms embargo imposed by Security Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1591 (2005). On the basis of continuing research and information provided by reliable sources and its own observations, the Panel maintains that violations of the arms embargo continue. Weapons, specifically heavy weapons (artillery pieces), small arms, ammunition and other military equipment are entering the Darfur states from other countries and from the region of the Sudan.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/632/74/PDF/N0563274.pdf?OpenElement>

The UN Common Map Shop Khartum

The UN Common Map Shop is a joint effort of several UN agencies, offering over 1,000 different maps of Sudan in a variety of sizes and formats. All products are available free of charge to UN, NGOs, and government organizations. The shop is now open for business in its new locations in the basement of the OCHA office, House 23, Block 11, Riyadh, Khartoum (3 streets east of the UNMIS compound).

Map to the new office:

<http://ochaonline2.un.org/LinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docid=1008995>

Products may also be viewed and downloaded at:

www.unsudanig.org

General

Small arms control

The Small Arms Survey is the principal source of public information on all aspects of small arms. It serves to monitor national and international (governmental and non-governmental) initiatives, and acts as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of best practices in the field. The site puts special emphasis on documentation about Sudan.

www.smallarmssurvey.org/

Crisis in the Horn of Africa

This US-based Social Science Research Council web forum brings together social science analysis digging deeper into the complexities of the social and political crises afflicting the Horn of Africa.

<http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/>

Religion and Conflict

“Religion and Conflict in Africa: with a special focus on East Africa”

Bjørn Møller: DIIS REPORT 2006:6

Religion appears to be motivating a growing number of people to participate in armed conflict. This paper examines the assumption that violence in East Africa is related to religion. Case studies of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are provided.

www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2006/RP_06_6_bmo_religion%20and%20conflict.pdf or www.frient.de/materialien/detaildoc.asp?id=549

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Editorial information

The media review Horn of Africa Bulletin (HAB) was published by the Life & Peace Institute between 1989 and 2006. The re-formatting of HAB as an e-bulletin 2007 is done in close collaboration with the Nairobi-based All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA). The electronic base of HAB is LPI and the editors are Tore Samuelsson, tore.samuelsson@life-peace.org, and Kristina Lundqvist, kristina.lundqvist@life-peace.org. For subscription matters contact: Selin Amirthalingam, selin.amirthalingam@life-peace.org. For a link to HAB and more information see www.life-peace.org

Editorial principles

The Horn of Africa Bulletin (HAB) is an international newsletter, compiling analyses, news and resources primarily in the Horn of Africa region. The material published in HAB represents a variety of sources and does not necessarily represent the views of the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) or the cooperating partners, the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA). Writers and sources are normally referred to, although in exceptional cases, the editors of the HAB may choose not to reveal the real identity of a writer or publish the source.