

Winning the war for peace in Sudan

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

On May 2, in Doha, the capital of Qatar, Sudanese President Gen. Omar al Bashir and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki signed an agreement to end the state of hostilities between the two countries. At the same time, in Geneva, Dr. Hassan al Turabi, President of the Sudanese Parliament, met with Sadiq al Mahdi, leader of the opposition Umma party, and reportedly discussed the process whereby opposition figures and groups are returning to Sudan. The two developments mark an important step forward in the process of national reconciliation, which the government of Sudan has been pursuing relentlessly over the past several years. It also signifies a potentially fatal setback to the British intelligence establishment which has been steering the Sudanese opposition and insurgency, in their attempt to overthrow the Khartoum government and split the country.

Whether the process toward reconciliation will succeed, will depend largely on whether international forces continue to support the insurgency of John Garang's Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-Army (SPLM-SPLA), which is the sole remaining military group engaged in combat against the government.

That Garang remains the sole obstacle to peace in Sudan, and, by extension, in the entire region, is the point emphasized again and again by leading protagonists of the Sudanese peace process, whom *EIR* met and interviewed during a trip to Khartoum in April. Dr. Riak Machar, head of the South Sudan Coordinating Council, and Dr. Lam Akol, Minister of Transportation, both former leaders of the southern rebels who have opted for peace, hammer away at this theme in their discussions with *EIR* (see interviews). But they are not alone in this

assessment. At literally every level of the Sudanese political establishment, from cabinet members to members of the Parliament, and representatives of the media, the assessment is the same: Garang is blocking peace. And, he is capable of doing so, thanks to the international sponsors he has. Without them, he would be nothing.

As documented by *EIR*, Garang is the puppet of British intelligence, specifically Baroness Caroline Cox, Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords, and leading member of the British intelligence front Christian Solidarity International (CSI). It is Cox who has organized the various components of the Sudanese political opposition, into an umbrella grouping known as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Cox coordinated efforts leading to the convocation of a conference of these groups, including the Umma party of Sadiq al Mahdi, the other leading opposition party, the Democratic Union Party of Mohammad Othman al Mirghani, and the SPLM-SPLA, in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, in June 1995. The conference was a watershed, because the Asmara Declaration which it issued called for the overthrow of the Sudanese government, by violent means. It thus cemented the alliance between the political formations and the armed insurgency. Following that meeting, Cox invited the same political leaders to a conference at the House of Lords, which granted official British support to the effort.

Baroness Cox is also the leading light of the anti-slavery crusade carried out under the auspices of her CSI, whose function has been to motivate economic and political sanctions against Sudan. The specific target in this campaign, has been the U.S. Congress, where Cox has presented testimony



Sudan's Minister of Transportation Dr. Lam Akol and Muriel Mirak-Weissbach review Sudan's transport system. Despite Sudan's vast area, the country's poor rail system forces it to rely heavily on river systems for transport.

on slavery allegedly carried out by the government of Sudan.

Recently, the campaign has been reignited, with a very clear focus. Given that the military situation remains in a stalemate, and significant progress has been being made toward reintegrating political opposition forces into the democratization process in Sudan, the British intelligence unit behind CSI hopes that by whipping up hysteria internationally, it can mobilize an intervention against Sudan, leading to partition of the south. Failing such a political (or even military) intervention directly, CSI would opt for organizing a vote for secession of southern Sudan, during the referendum scheduled to be held there in three years. Slavery, again, would be the "issue" around which international support in particular would be mobilized.

Despite the immense political and financial resources being allocated to this effort (including massive sums of money into publications like the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Fortune* magazine), there are several reasons to hope that the CSI operation—and the entire British intelligence strategy behind it—can be definitively defeated. First, the CSI made a potentially fatal blunder at the recent session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) in Geneva, exposing itself as a political front for the insurgent SPLM-SPLA. This exposure, which has been blacked out of the international press, could lead to the early demise of the CSI, perhaps following legal actions against it in courts of law in several nations. Second, the political process of reconciliation inside Sudan is gaining momentum, and, again in relation to the UNHRC session, also gaining a certain amount of recognition

internationally. Third, the country is succeeding, against overwhelming odds, in holding out: Its economy, which has withstood the effects of international sanctions, is to receive a boost by oil export revenues, beginning in June.

The indecent exposure of CSI

During the most recent session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, which concluded in April, a rare event took place which exposed British intelligence's CSI as nothing but a front for the insurgents of the SPLM-SPLA.

The CSI, which is accredited as a non-governmental organization (NGO) at the United Nations, had worked for months, to be placed as first speaker at the session on March 23. Many participants and observers expected that Baroness Cox, or another leading light of the CSI, would be the featured speaker. It was a foregone conclusion, that the thrust of the CSI intervention would be a denunciation of Sudan, made in order to motivate a condemnation on the part of the entire assembly. Instead of Cox, the person who entered the UNHRC hall through the VIP entrance—the one UN Secretary General Kofi Annan uses—was none other than John Garang, accompanied by CSI's Geneva spokesman, David Littman, and the CSI's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, John Eibner.

The session opened with a speech by Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson, followed by NGOs. Garang rose to speak, *under the auspices of the CSI*, and promptly announced that he was John Garang, chairman of the SPLM-SPLA. At that point, Sudan's permanent representative to

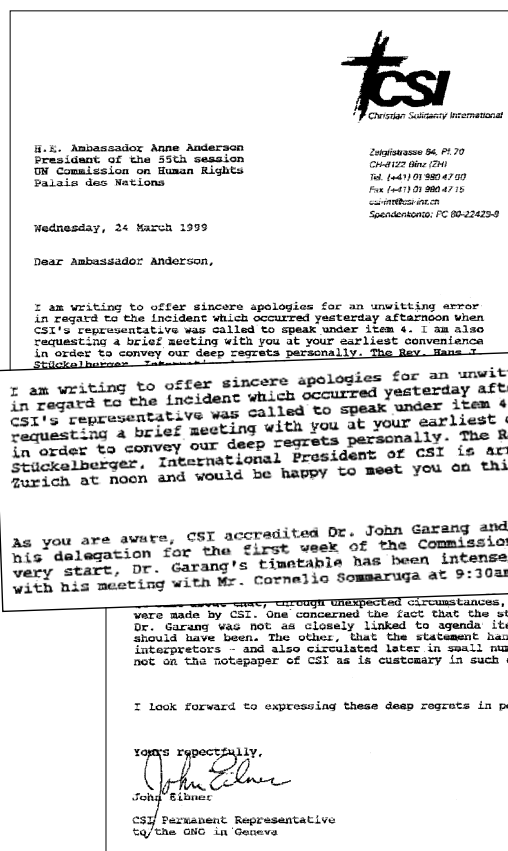
the UN, Dr. Ibrahim Mirghani Ibrahim, intervened, on a point of order, demanding explanations for the fact that such a person, who had committed atrocities against the Sudanese population, and violated the integrity of the country, should be given the right to address the UNHRC. Ambassador Mirghani asked how long Garang had been a “member” of the CSI, and warned that, if the fraud were to be accepted, it would establish a dangerous precedent for the UNHRC. When the chair, after consulting a legal expert, responded that there was no legal means of preventing Garang from speaking, given his credentials supplied by the CSI, Garang again started speaking, again introducing himself as leader of the SPLA.

Ambassador Mirghani then challenged the chair’s ruling, and called for a vote on the ruling, something indeed unprecedented. After considerable turmoil, during which numerous ambassadors expressed their solidarity with Sudan, the meeting was adjourned, for discussion. After it reconvened, Garang was allowed to speak. No sooner had he uttered his first sentence, charging the Sudanese government with genocide, than the chair intervened, declaring him “out of order”; it appears that the guerrilla-turned-NGO had not realized the agenda rules, and was speaking on a country theme, when the agenda item was “general themes.” Flanked by his wife, Eibner, Littman, and the rest of his entourage, Garang abandoned the room, furious.

Although it was expected that Garang would attempt to speak the following day, he instead sent Bona Malwal, one of Baroness Cox’s Sudanese opposition boys, to read a statement to the assembly. Unfortunately for Garang, however, Malwal got into a heated discussion with Littman, and, in a tiff, left the hall. Finally, a southern Sudanese was organized by CSI to read the statement, which dealt with the right to self-determination for the people of southern Sudan.

Ambassador Mirghani, as the official government representative, immediately availed himself of the right to respond, and, in a detailed statement, declared that he was honored to announce that what the gentlemen had demanded—the right to self-determination—had been granted by the government of Sudan in its 1997 peace treaty with seven opposition groups. The treaty, he explained, had been incorporated *in toto* in the draft Constitution, copies of which he said were available. As close to 100 diplomatic representatives lined up to receive copies of the Constitution, it was clear that the CSI had failed miserably in its attempt to denounce the Khar-toum government.

As the session proceeded, attention was focussed on positive developments in Sudan, while complaints of the CSI’s outrageous behavior multiplied. Eibner was forced to dash off a letter to the president of the session, apologizing for the “incident.” In his letter, Eibner claimed that the designated CSI speaker, Garang, had made technical errors: that he had not stuck to the agenda; and that he had issued copies of his



Christian Solidarity International, the British intelligence front group run by Baroness Caroline Cox, was caught in the act at the UN Human Rights Commission session in Geneva during March-April. CSI had granted “membership” to Sudanese People’s Liberation Army insurgent John Garang, to allow him to speak. Garang immediately identified himself as the guerrilla leader he is, and distributed copies of his prepared speech on SPLA letterhead! Garang never got to deliver his full speech, however, as the chair cut him off, ostensibly on a technicality. CSI permanent representative to the UNO in Geneva, John Eibner, had to apologize profusely for the “errors” and the “incident,” which could cost CSI its status as a nongovernmental organization.

proposed statement, on the letterhead of the SPLM-SPLA, and “not on the notepaper of CSI as is customary in such cases.” Eibner announced in his extremely defensive letter, that the Rev. Hans J. Stückelberger, international president of the CSI, was arriving from Zurich that day, to meet the president on the unfortunate “incident.”

Things got worse, not better, for the CSI as the session continued. The Sudanese Minister of Justice stepped up to the podium to announce that his government intended to press charges against CSI in Switzerland, Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and France, for practicing slavery. The argument he presented was that, as the CSI had travelled to areas of

southern Sudan under rebel control, and had demonstratively purchased human beings (at \$50 a head), claiming it was “buying them out of bondage,” this constituted slavery, a practice prohibited by the Sudanese state since 1926, and outlawed by the 1926 Anti-Slavery Convention.

The final blow for the CSI came with passage of the draft resolution, prepared by the European Union, which, for the first time since 1993, did not contain any condemnation of the government of Sudan. The charges of slavery were not mentioned. The issue of “abduction of women and children” was addressed, and identified as a tribal practice, exacerbated by the conditions of war.

Those who were condemned explicitly in the resolution, were the SPLA, specifically for having killed four Sudanese workers of the International Red Cross; for looting humanitarian aid destined for civilians; and, for forced conscription, including of children.

Finally, the resolution also welcomed 20 positive developments in Sudan (see box). Not unexpectedly, the U.S. State Department denounced the resolution *tout court*.

The events in Geneva are a bombshell: For the first time, the forum which has been used and abused by the CSI to issue political denunciations of the government of Sudan, as the basis for organizing punitive actions, like sanctions, against the country, has been restored to its proper function. For the first time, the government of Sudan had its say, and the assembly acknowledged progress in various areas of political and social life in the country.

Most important: The CSI exposed itself, most indecently, as the political cover for an insurgent military operation, the SPLM-SPLA of John Garang, thereby confirming the charges raised by *EIR* over years, regarding the true nature of this British intelligence front. Questions that remain to be answered include: How much money has CSI raised, in its campaign against slavery in Sudan? Where has the money gone? Did those who contributed funds to CSI realize the links of the group to the SPLM-SPLA? And, how long will the United Nations allow CSI to maintain its status as an NGO?

Democratization is a process

Among the 20 points commended by the UN session, is the democratization process inside Sudan, which incorporates a process of national reconciliation. The government of Sudan, under massive political pressure from the British-led insurrection and international isolation, has wisely determined to seek political institutional solutions to unify the country, and thus to defend its territorial integrity and national sovereignty. The watershed in the process came in April 1997, when the government signed a peace treaty with the rebel forces — with the sole exception of the SPLA of John Garang. The peace treaty was incorporated as a whole into the draft Constitution, which was approved in a subsequent referendum (see *EIR*, April 18, 1997, p. 53; May 9, 1997, p. 53). In

early 1998, the government announced that political associations or parties could be established, and could take part in elections at all levels. Since then, 12 political parties have been established and registered, and another 10 have applied for registration. State elections are being prepared now, national legislative elections will take place in the year 2000, and in the following year, there will be the direct vote for President.

The introduction of a multi-party system was not by any means a formality. This became evident in the government’s consistent efforts to convince opposition figures and groups, who had left the country, to return and take part in the process. The first major breakthrough occurred in 1998, when Sharif al Hindi, secretary general of the former Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), returned to Khartoum, and accepted a political post (see *EIR*, March 13, 1998, pp. 18-33). Now, Gaafar al Numayri, who was President of Sudan during 1969-85, has announced his intention of returning to Sudan, from his exile in Egypt. Numayri negotiated his return with the Sudanese government authorities, demanding — and receiving — guarantees, that he will be allowed to move about the country freely, and to organize politically. Numayri has called on other opposition figures to follow his example, and repatriate.

The most recent news of a similar development, pertains to Sadiq al Mahdi, the leader of the Umma party, and a former Prime Minister (1986-89). Sadiq al Mahdi met with Dr. Hassan al Turabi, speaker of the Sudanese Parliament, in Geneva on May 2. Although no joint statement was issued following the discreet talks, the subject was national reconciliation. According to a statement released by the Secretary General of the Umma Party, Omar Nour al Dayim, “A frank discussion took place between al Mahdi and al Turabi, in which both sides expressed their opinions of the Sudan problem.” He went on to say, “The result of the dialogue is to work for establishing an agenda and a mechanism to reach a Sudanese political agreement determining and solving all disputed national conflicts.” Furthermore, he stated that the two political figures “are committed to holding wide-ranging political consultations with all parties in the opposition and the government. And it was agreed that the result of the consultations will determine the next steps” to be taken. Al Dayim located the talks in the broader context, saying, “Sudan today is under a great danger and its population is suffering unprecedented pains, and the country is threatened by fragmentation and separation. This led us to seek all possible means and options to bring the country out of this situation.”

One government official told the international Arabic daily *Al-Hayat*, that the talks had come as a “response to regional and international calls.” He added, that Sudan had “responded to these desires, and have nothing against talking about creating a joint government with al Mahdi, on condition that it be done according to a program.” He pointed to the

The friends of John Garang

Militarily, Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) leader John Garang receives the backing of the British, and their American allies, referred to in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, as "the British lobby in the U.S. administration." These are the forces lined up behind Secretary of State Madeleine Albright; her charge, Susan Rice; John Pendergast, until recently of the National Security Council; and a host of Congressional backers, including Reps. Donald Payne (D-N.J.) and Frank Wolf (R-Va.), and Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), to name but the most prominent. Payne and Wolf are the sponsors of Resolution 75, which called for setting up a "no-fly zone" in southern Sudan, modelled on those in Iraq, and for providing the SPLA with Stinger missiles, to "protect" the population. Brownback presented a parallel resolution in the Senate.

It was Madame Albright who, in 1997, launched the war cry from Kampala, Uganda, that the government of

Khartoum should be overthrown, after \$20 million had been allocated in aid to the so-called "front-line states" engaged in hostilities against Sudan.

The most active military partner in the SPLA rebellion is Israel. Garang himself travelled to Israel in 1998, to arrange for Israeli delivery of training, as well as high-tech, laser-guided systems. Israeli experts have been training Garang rebel forces in camps in Eritrea, as well as in the southern part of the country. They are being trained in special operations, sabotage, and mine-laying. Already as early as March 1997, when rebel forces mounted a two-pronged attack, from the east and from the south, government troops destroyed 15 rebel tanks which were found to be equipped with Israeli laser-guided systems. The tanks were destroyed in a battle at Mile 39 (measured from Juba to the southern border). The Israeli tanks had been delivered via South Africa, through the good offices of Ugandan dictator Yoweri Museveni, to the SPLA. The tanks were manned by European mercenaries, including British personnel.

Among the institutions operating under the cover of "humanitarian aid," which are supplying the rebels with food, is Norwegian People's Aid.

statement issued by the Umma party, calling it a "great achievement on the way to saving the country, if we compare it to previous statements by the National Democratic Alliance calling for uprooting and eliminating the regime."

Settling the Sudan-Eritrea conflict

Significantly, the Turabi-Mahdi talks in Geneva took place as the governments of Eritrea and Sudan were settling the conflict which dates back to 1994. Sudanese President al Bashir, who conducted the negotiations with his Eritrean counterpart Afwerki, said a joint commission would meet to lay down "programs for normalization of our bilateral relations." Afwerki said that Eritrea was "completely convinced of the need to go beyond the mistakes of the past, and circumstances now favor a normalization." The agreement they signed foresees the solution of problems politically; the reestablishment of diplomatic relations; the cessation of acts of aggression; the respect for national sovereignty, and non-interference into internal affairs; the cessation of hostile media campaigns; and, the resort to international law and norms in political relations.

It must be added that relations between Egypt and Sudan, which had reached the breaking point when British assets spread the slander that Sudan had been behind the failed assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in 1995, have been steadily improving. President al Bashir

laid down conditions for normal relations late in April, identifying the need for Egypt to desist from providing support to the NDA in Cairo. Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa responded days later, asserting Egypt's commitment to "work with Sudan in all its political trends," to solve Sudan's problems in a positive context and not a negative context, or a context that would threaten Sudan. Moussa reiterated Egypt's commitment to the territorial unity of Sudan.

Finally, the news was released on May 6, that former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has undertaken a mediation effort between the Sudanese government and Uganda.

The importance of these events cannot be overstated. It must be recalled that the entire strategy of the British has been to utilize the so-called front-line states—Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Egypt—as bases of military and/or political operations against the Khartoum government. Eritrea had been selected by the British, as the base of operations for the opposition alliance put together by Cox in the form of the NDA. The Eritrean government had in fact given the NDA the former Sudanese embassy, as its headquarters in Asmara. Egypt had been used by al Mahdi and al Mirghani of the DUP, as well as Numayri, as their chosen exile.

Now, it emerges that the careful piecing together of political relations, between the Sudanese government and different factions of the opposition, is a process which is embedded in a broader process of regional stabilization. It is significant, in

this light, that al Mahdi, following his meeting with al Turabi, left for Libya to brief Muammar Qaddafi, who had been involved in mediating regional reconciliation; and that al Mahdi will visit Uganda and Ethiopia, and return to Egypt. In Egypt, al Mahdi is scheduled to meet with al Mirghani, the DUP leader whom Khartoum would also like to see return to the country.

If all this paints an encouraging picture of stabilization — exactly of the type which both Dr. Machar and Dr. Lam Akol described in their interviews with *EIR* — it also adds up to a stunning defeat for the British faction, from British intelligence, down through Cox's CSI, and to her minions in the U.S. Congress and State Department. Although the process is still fragile, if it is provided minimal international support, it could defeat the British plot for destabilization, and open the perspective of durable peace.

Economic resistance

Part of the British war plan against Sudan, has been economic warfare. It was through the efforts of the British that the sanctions against Sudan were pushed through the United Nations Security Council in January 1996. The thinking behind this, and other, related sanctions, was that if the country could be isolated economically, the population, under increasing hardship, could be prevailed upon to rise up against it. The joint military operations by the SPLA and the political agitation of the NDA, combined to prepare for uprisings, especially in the capital.

It did not work.

On the contrary, Sudan has demonstrated an extraordinary capacity not only to resist such economic warfare, but also to succeed in establishing food security, through agricultural production providing for the needs of the population. In addition, it has forged ahead with plans to develop its oil resources, and is expected to begin exporting oil — to China, among other countries — in June.

As *EIR* learned in background briefings at the Ministry for Water Resources and Irrigation, and the Khartoum State Ministry for Agriculture, Sudan has been under economic warfare since the current government of General al Bashir took power in 1989. Following that event, World Bank and other support was withdrawn. In addition, wheat shipments, for example, which Sudan had ordered and paid for, were diverted to other ports (Djibouti), in hopes of sparking food riots.

The government proceeded with a ten-year plan, which aimed at establishing food security for the nation. This involved a vast reforestation program, whereby forests were saved, and a transition was made from firewood as a source of fuel, to fossil fuels. It also entailed a program for conversion of agricultural lands from cotton crops to wheat. Although Sudan enjoyed a relative advantage with cotton, and could reap greater margins of profit through its export, the govern-

ment opted for wheat production, in the interests of security food, as a strategic consideration. Through the introduction of high-yield varieties, Sudan's production of sorghum grew steadily, until self-sufficiency in this basic foodstuff was reached. This was also facilitated by the significant increase in mechanized rain-fed agriculture. The area of land cultivated increased in the decade after 1989, from 2.5 million hectares to 6.3 million hectares. This made possible the record harvest of 6.5 million tons of wheat (70% of which was durum) in January, according to a report in the Swiss financial daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* on May 5.

At present, Sudan produces a surplus of sorghum, millet, and wheat. Thus, for example, the humanitarian aid organizations engaged in providing food aid to the civilian populations in the war zones of the south, do not have to go abroad for food, but can commission it from the Sudanese government.

As for the southern part of the country, it too could become self-sufficient, in tea and coffee, and could send its banana and pineapple harvests to the north in exchange for wheat, if the war were not preventing the necessary transportation connections. Currently, due to the ongoing hostilities, river traffic is not secure.

Notwithstanding, Sudan's national production of livestock has continued to improve, such that the country has become a major exporter of meat. Sudanese beef, lamb, veal, and camel meat goes to markets in Libya, Egypt, and the Persian Gulf.

The other crucial component of Sudan's economic survival, is oil. The oil pipeline inaugurated in early 1998, was completed in March of this year, to transport oil from South Kordofan to the refinery outside Khartoum, and thence, to Port Sudan, for export. The pipeline, which was built as a joint effort with Malaysian and Chinese firms, should allow for Sudan to export, thus vastly increasing its foreign exchange revenues. Initial production figures are estimated at 150,000 barrels per day, to rise to 250,000.

This means, that the economic warfare policy, through UN and other sanctions, has not succeeded in starving Sudan. Thus, it should come as no surprise, that the armed insurgency would target precisely these productive capacities for destruction. As reported in the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on May 6, an SPLA spokesman in Nairobi announced that, since the insurgency believes the Khartoum government will allocate oil revenues for pursuing the war, "we consider installations of oil firms as well as their personnel, to be legitimate military targets." Officials in Khartoum confirmed to *EIR*, that they expect rebel attacks on the installations, which, however, lie outside rebel-controlled areas, and are heavily protected.

National survival for Sudan, is, thus, a day-to-day struggle, a war waged against an insurgent force, heavily backed, at least until recently, by international powers.

The record of the past ten years has shown, that the Suda-

nese leadership is committed and able to defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Fighting against immense odds, it has demonstrated the capacity to resist. Furthermore, as events over the past months have documented, the correlation of forces regionally and internationally is undergoing a change in favor of the Khartoum government. The events at the UN Human Rights Commission session, though theatrical, signal a definite shift on the part of certain European and developing sector nations, toward a balanced view of the situation.

The big question mark hangs over Washington. The news in late April, of a slight loosening of sanctions against several countries, including Sudan, may indicate a shift in emphasis there as well. The decision on the part of the Clinton administration, to unfreeze the accounts of Saleh Idris, the owner of the Al Shifa pharmaceutical factory, bombed by the United States in August 1998, also indicates that the wind seems to be blowing in a new, healthier direction.

If the "British lobby" in the U.S. administration and Congress is capable of reading the writing on the wall, it will wake up to the fact that its decade-long crusade against Sudan, is turning out to be a pathetic, tragic failure. Powerful forces internationally are moving now in support of efforts to secure peace in Sudan, and thereby to establish stability for the entire region. It would be high time for Washington to throw its weight into this effort.

Documentation

Sudan assesses its human rights record

The following statement was issued by the Republic of Sudan's Permanent Mission to the UN Office in Geneva, on April 24. It was translated by Hussein al-Nadeem.

Subject: A report on the release of a positive and balanced resolution on Sudan by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in Geneva.

- The report ended the series of condemnations leveled against Sudan since 1993.
- The international community appreciates Sudan's constitutional, political, social, and cultural achievements that are related to human rights.
- The decision to condemn Sudan in the past six years, which was adopted by the United States, disappeared from the agenda of the HRC in Geneva.
- The international community clearly denounced the SPLA and sanctioned it for the first time since 1983.

- The international community exonerated Sudan from the charges of slavery which have been leveled against Sudan since the mid-1980s, despite the ferocious campaign which was led by Christian Solidarity International (CSI).

- Despite the CSI slanders, the EU draft resolution removes the charges of slavery.

- The Sudanese Justice Minister addressed the HRC and vowed to pursue the CSI legally, to indict it for the slave trade, according to its own confessions.

The strategic content of the HRC resolution

The resolution was based on two strategies:

First: That the armed conflict in Sudan is the main cause of all the charges and violations of human rights in Sudan, and that achieving peace will redress these charges completely.

Second: The international community must appreciate and support each positive development achieved by the targeted states in the HRC, and not resort solely to condemnation, which often serves political ends and not international human rights.

The positive aspects of the HRC resolution

The Resolution, which showed appreciation for the Sudanese government, contained 20 aspects:

1. The Peace Agreement of 1997.
2. The government's endorsement of the Declaration of Principles as a basis for the IGAD negotiations.
3. The government's declaration of a comprehensive cease-fire on April 5, 1999.
4. The government's inviting of the HRC's Special Rapporteur, Mr. Franco, and its full cooperation with him.
5. The government's invitation to the Special Rapporteur in charge of religious fanaticism and the Special Rapporteur in charge of freedom of expression and the working group in charge of all forms of modern slavery.
6. The government's declared commitment to respecting and improving human rights and the rule of law.
7. The government's declared commitment to establishing democracy in order to create an elected government.
8. The reference to human rights and the basic freedoms in the Constitution of Sudan which was enacted in July 1998.
9. Establishing a constitutional government.
10. The reports referring to the recent improvements in freedom of expression and creating associations and parties.
11. The government's educational revolution.
12. The freeing of all political detainees by the government.
13. The government's efforts to solving the problems of refugees.
14. The government's cooperation with the Special Representative of the United Nation's Secretary General in charge of the issue of children in armed conflicts during his visit to Sudan.

15. The government's abstention from recruiting children below the age of 18 into the army.

16. The government's continued cooperation with the Co-ordination Office for Humanitarian Issues of the United Nations and Operation Life-Line.

17. The government's continued cooperation with the IGAD.

18. The government's efforts to adapt the legislation to the articles of the new Constitution.

19. The continued efforts by the government to make its national legislation coherent with the texts of international human rights, and ensuring that all citizens enjoy these rights.

20. The government's commitment to establishing democracy and the rule of law and to creating the conditions leading to a process of moving into democracy, expressing in full the aspirations of the people of Sudan and ensuring its full participation.

Commentary

Hence, the international community acknowledges all the constitutional, legislative, and humanitarian developments that are related to human rights, and especially its acknowledgment and welcoming of the Peace Agreement of 1997 and the new Constitution, which contains chapters and sets up institutions to protect human rights, such as the chapter on "basic rights" and the "constitutional court," and all the mechanisms included in the Constitution that achieve democracy and the active public participation in government.

The HRC resolution against the SPLA

1) The word "condemnation" was used only once—unlike what was done in the previous resolutions since 1993—and this one condemnation was clearly against the SPLA for murdering four Sudanese aid workers recently while they were held hostages by the SPLA. 2) Condemnation of abduction, use of children as soldiers, recruitment by force and torture in the context of the conflict in southern Sudan. 3) Condemnation of the SPLA, especially, for using civilian facilities for military purposes. 4) Condemnation of the SPLA specifically to make it stop its offenses against aid workers, and the demand that the SPLA allow a comprehensive investigation of the circumstances of the death of four aid workers. 5) Condemnation of the SPLA specifically for diverting the flow of humanitarian aid, including food, away from the civilians for whom this aid is intended. 6) Condemnation of the SPLA for recruiting children below the age of 18 as soldiers.

This is the first time that the so-called Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has been subjected to a straightforward condemnation by the international community and by a major UN organ, the Human Rights Commission, concerning important issues related to human rights and humanitarian aid activities.

Interview: Dr. Riak Machar

Prospects, obstacles to peace in Sudan

Dr. Machar is president of the Coordinating Council of the South of Sudan and vice-president of the Sudan National Congress; he was the leader of the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), an armed faction against the government in southern Sudan. As recounted in his interview in EIR of Feb. 22, 1998 (see also his interview in EIR of July 24, 1998), his movement chose a course for peace in 1995, and entered into direct talks with the Sudan government in March 1996. On April 21, 1997, they signed the peace accord with the Sudan government. Dr. Machar was interviewed by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach and Uwe Friesecke in Khartoum, on April 14, 1999.

EIR: Dr. Machar, could you bring us up to date on where the peace process stands, one year after the peace treaty was incorporated into the Constitution?

Machar: After we promulgated the agreement, and the Constitution was made, we thought that, for the peace to be complete, there was a need to bring in other players, who were not involved, and particularly John Garang [head of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, SPLA], on the question of the South. I made efforts to meet face to face with John Garang, and this happened in June, in Uganda). My aim was to explain to John Garang that the political issues on which the war has been fought, had been resolved. Whether it was the national state we wanted to establish in Sudan—Sudan being multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural, with the definition of citizenship as the basis for rights. So, I explained to him that this was the cornerstone solution to resolving the conflicts in the country, whether there are differences on rights and freedoms, or differences on the system of government. We recall that the South, since 1947, has been calling for implementation of a different system for the country, because Sudan is so large and so diverse. So, I explained to him that we can resolve all these issues within a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious Sudan.

Now, I also explained to him that the South has its special characteristics, as has been addressed in the Coordinating Council; therefore, the South can handle its own problems. The Coordinating Council would give us an umbrella government for the whole South, and even if there were legislation which we felt were not good for the South, the Coordinating